ON MISSION AND POLITICAL PURPOSE IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: HOW TWO JESUIT UNIVERSITIES RESPONDED TO THE COMPLEXITIES OF DACA

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ON MISSION AND POLITICAL PURPOSE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

INSTITUTIONS: HOW TWO JESUIT UNIVERSITIES RESPONDED TO THE

COMPLEXITIES OF DACA

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Vana M. Zervanos
DEDICATION

For my mother, Victoria
my husband, Jim
and my darling boys, Nikitas and Victor
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ABSTRACT

ON MISSION AND POLITICAL PURPOSE IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: HOW TWO JESUIT UNIVERSITIES RESPONDED TO THE COMPLEXITIES OF DACA

Vana M. Zervanos

J. Matthew Hartley

Throughout American history, higher education institutions have confronted political and cultural events that challenge society. The academy, as the nexus of the pursuit of knowledge and of a prosperous society, must recognize its potential role in the political process, lest the health of our democracy weaken. Recent political issues, such as those surrounding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy of 2012, have profoundly impacted students and stirred the attention of colleges and universities. Leaders of higher education institutions can and should seize the opportunity to respond to such issues, especially during an unsteady and vulnerable time in government. In an effort to understand the phenomenon of higher education institutions’ engagement in politically charged cultural matters, using DACA as an example, this study explores two essential research questions:

- What are the ways in which Jesuit institutions and their leaders have responded to DACA?
- How did these leaders leverage their mission in order to navigate through this complex, divisive, and value-laden terrain?
The study was conducted using a case-study method and cross-study analysis. Georgetown University and Loyola University Chicago, two institutions that have been highly responsive to DACA, provided the data for this study. The primary means for gathering data included personal, telephonic, and Skype interviews with institutional leaders (trustees, ex-trustees, presidents, faculty, chief academic officers, alumni, and administrators), as well as with past and present leaders of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU). I also collected data from archival materials, including presidential speeches and position statements, university mission statements, and university publications. Drawing from the work of Marc Lavine, I examined the ways in which conflicting values intersect with institutional responses to national political events. The contributions of Robert Birnbaum also provided the backdrop for how presidents led their institutions and the interpretive and instrumental approaches in doing so. The study found common characteristics and differences in how leaders at the two institutions responded to DACA, how internal and external forces figured in their calculus, and how institutional missions informed their decision making.
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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

But what I also believe…is that the basic longing to live with dignity, the fundamental desire to have control of our lives and our future, to want to be a part of determining the course of our communities and our nations—these yearnings are universal. They burn in every human heart….That’s why the most important office in any country is not president or prime minister. The most important title is “citizen.”

—President Barack Obama, Athens, Greece, November 16, 2016

Being called upon to make a direct commitment in politics involves placing oneself at the service of reconciliation and justice, and is both complex and necessary.

—Fr. Arturo Sosa, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, 2018

Throughout American history, from pre-Revolutionary days, through the tumult of the 1960s and beyond, the academy has played a crucial role in serving its communities and in fulfilling the public good. Higher education institutions have often responded to political and cultural events challenging society and continue to do so. As of 2019, recent political issues such as gun violence, immigration, and tax reform have stirred the attention of certain higher education institutions, whose leaders have responded effectively to these crises.

Kettering Foundation’s President David Mathews warns of “a citizenless democracy”—a collection of nonparticipating citizens content with incivility, polarization, and divide (The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012, p. 1). No doubt, our political landscape is highly divided and our society ill at ease with respect to civil liberties and the protection of human rights. The academy has a responsibility to respond to the complex demands of pluralism, to engage
with the most pressing issues of our time, and to influence culture. The difficulty of managing tensions between the work of the common good and the preservation of institutional interests may prevent leaders from political participation. However, these tensions can be reconciled, as institutional interests and promoting the good of society need not be mutually exclusive.

On June 15, 2012, President Obama announced that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would not deport undocumented youth who came to the United States as children and who were (a) physically in the United States on June 15, 2012; (b) continued to reside in the United States since June 15, 2007; (c) are currently in school or graduated with a GED; (d) have not been convicted of a felony or significant misdemeanors; and (e) pose no threat to national security. The term “undocumented” refers to students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the United States, who do not possess a visa to reside in the United States, and who have not applied for legal residency in the United States. Deferred action is a “discretionary grant of relief granted to individuals who are in removal proceedings, who have final order of removal, or who have never been in removal proceedings” (The Dreamer Committee, 2017). Individuals who have deferred action status can apply for employment; however, DACA does not grant lawful permanent residence or citizenship. While it directs that DACA persons will not be deported for a given period, deferred status can be revoked at any time.

DACA recipients have commonly been referred to as “Dreamers.” This term relates to several attempts to introduce and pass the Development, Relief, and Education
for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. There have been several iterations of the DREAM Act proposed to Congress, but it has never been passed into law. Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) first introduced the bill on August 2, 2001. On July 20, 2017, Senators Durbin, Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), and Chuck Schumer (D-NY) introduced the DREAM Act of 2017. This bipartisan piece of legislation would have provided a direct path to citizenship for undocumented individuals who have either DACA status or temporary protected status (TPS) and who have graduated from a U.S. high school, been admitted to an institution of higher education, entered the workforce, or enlisted in the military (National Immigration Law Center, 2017).

As of November 2017, there were 690,000 current DACA holders, 55% of whom were employed. Sixty-two percent of those who were not employed were in school. Eighteen percent of DACA holders were enrolled in college, compared to the national average of 20%. Four percent of DACA holders have completed a bachelor’s degree, compared to 17% of U.S. adults ages 15-32 (Zong, Ruiz Soto, Batalova, Gelatt, & Capps, 2017). Dreamers have made extraordinary achievements in American higher education. For the first time, a Dreamer was chosen as a Rhodes Scholar in November 2018, one of 32 Americans to receive the honor that year (Durkin, 2019).

The rhetoric during the Trump campaign leading up to the 2016 presidential election incited fear of immigrants, laying out policies that would revoke protections to immigrants and undocumented individuals, including programs like DACA. Through an executive order, with a stroke of a pen, President Trump has the authority to take such
action. Or, he could simply let the program expire, grandfather those in the system, not accept new applications, or retain the program as is.

Since Trump took office, his administration has vilified immigrants and refugees promising to build walls and destroy opportunity. This position has been confounding in that it is antithetical not only to the American Dream, but also to the DACA policy. House minority leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate minority leader Charles Schumer met with President Trump in September 2017 to work out a “Clean DREAM Act,” a bill that would protect Dreamers but that would not have other immigration issues tied to it. Despite public and bipartisan support of the bill, the President insisted on tying DACA to other immigration legislation, including funding “The Wall” along the southern border of the United States (McGuire, 2018). Through 2019, anti-immigrant sentiments have proliferated from the White House, and policy decisions remain elusive since the protection of Dreamers still is not guaranteed under law. The level of uncertainty, fear, and insecurity that Dreamers endure cannot be overestimated. The potential to lose work permits and driver’s licenses and face deportation are possible outcomes given the current elusive political climate.

Eighteen states offer in-state tuition for undocumented students, six states permit undocumented students to received state financial aid, and a few states prohibit undocumented students from enrolling at any college or university (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019). Due to the consequential decision made by the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit against the administration’s rescission order, DACA remains in limbo. The Ninth Circuit’s opinion in *Regents of the University of California*
v. USDHS (November 2018) observed “the cruelty and wastefulness of deporting productive young people to countries with which they have no ties.” While the Ninth Circuit’s decision provides some short-term relief for DACA, the Supreme Court will likely hear the issue soon.

The purpose of this study was to explore how higher education institutions, and specifically how leaders of Jesuit institutions, navigated through politically contentious moments, specifically DACA. Jesuit education embodies a rich history of social justice, mission work, and service learning. Credos of service toward justice and solidarity are distinguishing characteristics of Jesuit institutions which may inform and motivate political involvement. When a government passes laws or when society moves in a direction that challenges such ideals, those institutions may be expected to serve as a model for a righteous response. Of course, there are institutions that do not make explicit claims to stand for such values and yet work toward social justice. But since Jesuit schools claim an obligation to improve society as a foundation of their institutions, it is important to understand how and to what extent they live up to their ideals. The religious component to their existence might facilitate Jesuit institutions’ ability to transcend political controversy and may rightly feel compelled to set a higher standard for confronting societal and political matters.

DACA has triggered a call to action from higher education institutions. This study explores how two distinct Jesuit universities responded to policies relating to DACA, a divisive national issue, and how the leaders at these institutions leveraged mission to navigate through controversy.
In order to build a complete narrative of the phenomenon, I used a collective case study method in order to explore in great detail how leaders at two Jesuit institutions responded to DACA. Current literature provides few examples of how institutions and their leaders have addressed socio-political issues. This study seeks to contribute to the body of literature in this area. Because the Jesuit tradition encourages action toward social justice, values welcoming the stranger, and emphasizes care of the whole person, investigating how leaders used mission-informed decision making was a rich and powerful layer of this study. The study also explored how complex and value-laden political issues require leaders to wrestle with tensions and paradoxes stirred by competing interests. The study also unearthed how leaders’ symbolic and tactical leadership approaches demonstrated a commitment to advocacy for undocumented students. Given the rich mission of the Jesuit tradition, the choice of investigating Jesuit institutions was a deliberate one. Yet, the study’s methodological approach could be applied to a variety of institutions. The findings, as well, would be instructive to audiences of any institution that strives to play a central role in civic participation. Appropriate audiences for this study include: university presidents, academic deans, faculty leaders, and members of boards of trustees.

The Jesuit higher education community, in particular, could benefit from this study, as leaders of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) are calling on institutions to be more intentionally engaged in healing the ills of society and to serve toward justice. The currency and cultural relevance of this study is immeasurable as immigration policies are still unresolved and immigrants’ dreams are unrealized. At
the same time, however, the academy can have a strong role in advocating policy not only for DACA but also for innumerable other issues that directly or indirectly impact their students.

The findings of this study will illuminate how leaders, in response to a challenging political issue, were informed by the Jesuit mission.

The following questions were considered when investigating the phenomenon:

- What are the ways in which Jesuit institutions and their leaders responded to DACA?
- How did these leaders leverage their mission in order to navigate through this complex, divisive, and value-laden terrain?

Chapter 2 offers a discussion of the historic and present civic purpose of higher education and of Jesuit colleges and universities in particular as well as the two theoretical concepts that informed the data analysis of the study. Chapter 3 describes in detail the methodology of the study. Chapter 4 provides a data analysis of the study. Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate the case studies of the study. Chapter 7 analyzes the cases using the lens of theoretical constructs and offers implications for practice and future research.
CHAPTER 2 – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Purpose of Higher Education

American colleges and universities have contributed to the purpose of society, from instilling knowledge and seeking truth, to grooming future leaders, to building a nation. Since the founding of the colonial colleges, the role of the academy was set to educate its students toward pursuits bigger than themselves—through the maxims of the classics—to be refined citizens, as they learned to be political leaders (Thelin, 2011). Charles Eliot, Harvard’s 21st president, believed that colonial universities’ focus ought to be on promoting a democratic spirit. In fostering a more balanced form of government, the connection between the academy and the outside world would be unbroken. Princeton University’s long-time faculty member Woodrow Wilson suggested that the spirit of service would offer public purpose for academic institutions (Boyer, 2016).

Before the Civil War, American colleges had two primary objectives: one, to train the intellect and build character; and two, to foster a civic commitment and intellectual competence in order to participate fully in public life (Bok, 2006). Colleges’ mission statements and charters since before the Civil War have pronounced a commitment to civic participation and a higher purpose. The University of Pennsylvania’s own motto, “Leges sine moribus vanae” (Laws without morals are useless), intersects justice with a moral standard (Thelin, 2011, p. 37). Beyond imparting foundational skills and knowledge, institutions of higher education can partner with communities to solve civic, economic, and moral problems, and pay homage to a historic commitment enacted by a
“scholarship of engagement” (Boyer, 2016, p.18) that is holistic and part of the institution’s core values.

Expansion efforts like the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 provided practical training for agriculture and the mechanical arts students through the establishment of land-grant institutions in rural parts of the country. Land-grant institutions served a public good by opening access of higher education to individuals based on ability and not on wealth, and they were believed to present values of ethics, mutual respect, and the promotion of active citizenship (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Due to the historical commitment of applied teaching and research, land-grant institutions over the years had focused their mission on serving the needs of their communities. The legislation that followed, the Hatch Act of 1887 and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 were actions that appropriated funds for teaching, research, and service “designated to meet the needs of community stakeholders and America at large” (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018, p. 41).

**Civic Engagement and a Strong Democracy**

Civic engagement, as it is oriented toward uncovering the underlying social, political, and economic structures that cause injustices, seeks to solve social problems and improve society. How higher education institutions enact their commitments to civic engagement, and what forms of engagement are emphasized, vary among institutions.

Higher education is the conduit for achieving both truth and democratic ideals; therefore, securing a strong democracy is grounded in the pursuit of knowledge and truth. Student citizens are best served by the academy if they are guided to reach truth, which then can be shared to enlighten others in contributing to a prosperous society. In Plato’s
*Allegory of the Cave*, the philosopher-hero seeks to dispel myth and “noble lies” by enlightening the common man, who is capable of living only in a world of false truths. *The Cave* is a possible model for a political community. Indeed, to Plato, the educated individual is one who “bring[s] the liberating light to an oppressed society” (Plato, trans. 1968). Truth can be discovered only through the open exchange of ideas, a central function of the classroom, a microcosm of democratic participation, and a gateway for democratic engagement into society.

The goals of civic engagement are to achieve the ideals of society, “working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities…and promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes” (Ehrlich, 2000). Civic engagement from a political dimension is the point at which the interests and care of a society are fully expressed and where the human needs of one individual are the imperative of a nation.

A strong democracy requires a collective consciousness. In his acute observation of American political life and society, French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville, in *Democracy in America*, offers his skeptical admiration for the American democratic life, posing that individualism, rather than equality, had been the focal point throughout American history (de Tocqueville, 1835/2000). He expressed grave concern that a lack of collectivism would tarnish the democratic spirit of America, that individualism, perhaps entangled in democracy, might have a destructive quality—“threatening to the survival of freedom itself” (de Tocqueville as cited in Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 2008, xlviii) and causing concern of the self to repress the potentialities of the whole.
Chief architect of The Federalist Papers, James Madison, argues that the public good is central to all values of government and to democratic ideals. So too did Madison emphasize the role of government in improving the lives of many, saying that “The public good, the real welfare of the great body of the people, is the supreme object to be pursued; and that no form of government whatever has any other value than as it may be fitted for the attainment of this object” (Federalist 45 as cited in Bellah et al., 2008, p. 253). The Federalists had not abandoned a tradition of civic humanism, and many hoped that individuals would transcend material interests through virtue and moral character, devoting themselves toward the common good (Wood, 2011). Wherein higher education institutions formulate the virtues, disciplines, and qualities of an individual’s moral character, these attributes cannot substitute for the common goals and pursuits of a prosperous society.

The seminal work of John Dewey, Democracy and Education, points to the imperative of cultivating an engaged society, where all citizens, not just the privileged few, can take part in intellectual pursuits, and an intellectual life absent civic participation is insufficient (Dewey, 1916). Like de Tocqueville, Dewey argued that the potentiality of the individual and of the community is realized through civic engagement (Dewey, 1916), as civic engagement can promote a healthy society. It is the responsibility of the academy to develop the civic capacities of its students, since colleges and universities are at the center of this engagement: “Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife” (Dewey, 1916).
The leap from the non-political to the pro-political form of civic participation is a phenomenon that scholars and educators have considered to be a necessity of the academy, lest our democracy weaken. In “The Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait,” Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, and Jenkins (2002) intimate that civic participation is necessarily connected to our political systems, that, “In many ways, it is the glue that holds us together” (p. 4). Civic engagement gives power to our beliefs, values, hopes, and dreams. Political participation, as an example of civic engagement, contributes to the understanding of collective interests and purposefulness, and of identity and trust; it seeks to realize significant societal change.

Yet while many colleges and universities devote a great deal of attention to community engagement and social justice work, few devote their attention to civic engagement, specifically political participation (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, Corngold, 2007), lest they be perceived as political, let alone partisan. While faculty generally regard themselves as politically conscientious, they tend not to bring politics into the classroom to avoid conveying partisanship (Smith, Mayer & Fritschler, 2008). Administrative leaders may worry about disrupting donor and alumni loyalties.

Some institutions espouse the ideological positions that learning and intellectual discipline, not personal fulfillment, is what students ought to be focused on and that endeavors like civic engagement are distractions from the pure purposes of the academy. Recent president of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU), Carol Schneider reported after a five-year qualitative study of dozens of colleges, “I have been persuaded that there is not just a neglect but a resistance to college-level study of
United States democratic principles” (Bok, 2017). Others suggest that the academy has been debased as a transactional enterprise as institutional reputation, student credentialing, and faculty tenure are central to policy decisions, and issues of national concern are less crucial for administrative leaders (Boyer, 2016). Others argue that it is not the responsibility nor is it within the purview of the academy to ensure civic capacities in students. Therefore, the academy should not be in the business of confusing democratic values with academic ones (Fish, 2003). So long as the academy is unintentional about promoting political engagement, however, civically engaged students will not create themselves (Keeter, et al., 2002). As a result, a public voice of our young people simply will not be heard and their interests will not be represented.

**Learning for Action**

In the tradition of de Tocqueville, contemporary scholars and academics underscore that the primary function of education is to encourage the fundamental truths of democracy, in order to achieve a *democratic enlightenment*—i.e., an understanding of and commitment to the democratic ideals that facilitate collective interests (Rahn, Brehm, & Carlson, 1999). Therefore, colleges and universities can help to protect our social and national interests as conduits for civic engagement so long as civic engagement involves learning for action. The complexity of educating for democracy involves a commitment to the values and virtues of equality, respect, open-mindedness, civil liberties, and pursuits of the common good. Ernest Boyer, former president of the Carnegie Foundation, implores higher education institutions to realize their *larger purpose* in building a more just society and a more secure nation (Boyer, 2016).
Higher education has the responsibility to prepare students to be thoughtful, conscientious citizens, as members of a pluralist democracy (Colby, et al. 2007). A responsible citizenry involves navigating between the ideals of this nation and the reality of the daily lives of its people (Quigley, 1999). Higher education institutions must reestablish democratic ideals and opportunities for participation. What is required is a holistic approach to civic engagement, which includes a pro-political dimension, where learning for action involves confronting real-world problems transforming the “institutional identity of colleges and universities” as well as the “larger public culture of democracy” (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011, p. 11). In other words, higher education in the United States must include an institutional commitment to civic engagement in order to effect transformative change on society.

The capacity to understand and digest political information and to navigate a variety of views, enabling a mastery of civic literacy is a precursor to political involvement. Therefore, students’ lack of knowledge of issues breeds apathy toward politics and a lack of enjoyment in the political process (Bogard, Sheineit, & Clarke, 2008). Yet there is little reason for students to be uninformed about politics when, on most college campuses, they have ample access to instructors, resources, and news media (Niemi & Hanmer, 2010).

The academy’s neglect to teach students about citizenship does a disservice to our young people and to the health of our democracy. Nancy Thomas, Director of the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education at Tufts University, cautions that our fear of appearing partisan has caused educators to “not educat[e] for democracy” and instead,
we are “chipping away at democracy” (Anft, 2018). This unease to deal with politicized work is a reaction formation to the unpredictable nature of confrontation (Robinson, 2000a). The stakes of appearing too political may be too high for some institutions, an irony encapsulated by Abigail Thernstrom, a conservative critic of the academy, who describes American campuses as “islands of repression in a sea of freedom” (as cited in Smith, et al., 2008, p. 71).

Youth and Politics

Youth disillusionment in the democratic process and politics has unfortunately resulted in perennially low electoral participation in our modern political history. Compared to older cohorts, today’s youth are less likely to participate in traditional areas of politics, such as voting; they are less likely to express interest in public affairs; and they are less likely to consider that citizenship involves traditional mores, such as voting or being politically conscientious (Zukin et al., 2006). On an international scale, the United States lags behind its counterparts in voter turnout, ranking 14 out of 18 developed countries, with 55.7% of the voting-age population casting ballots in the 2016 election (Desilver, 2017). Yet, when it comes to volunteer activities, community service, and economic-based forms of public engagement like boycotting or “buycotting,” today’s youth lead among all age groups in America. These volunteer and public activities are characteristically apolitical and episodic (Keeter, et al., 2002) and do little to address electoral participation.

Over the last three decades, voter turnout for Americans over 25 has been stable. Yet for younger voters, turnout has dropped 15 points since 1972 (Keeter, et al. 2002)
when the voting age dropped from 21 to 18 and the country saw a startling jump in the youth vote, which helped to elect Richard Nixon. Voter participation rates among 18– to 29–year-olds in general elections fell considerably to 41% in 2000, and then bounced back in 2008 to 52% with the election of the first African American president, only to decline to 49% in 2012 (Pew, 2017). A slight rise in voter participation occurred among the same age group at 50% in 2016, with the election of Donald Trump, when Trump won one third of the youth vote compared to two thirds for Hillary Clinton (Desilver, 2017). Comparatively, Obama earned 60% of the youth vote to Mitt Romney’s 37% in 2012 (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, 2016).

Youth concern about public affairs and voter turnout is low. Young people’s disapproval rating of the current administration is highest among all age groups, and yet this same cohort trails older Americans with respect to their concern about public affairs and electoral participation (Pew, 2017). Still, it has been through sociopolitical activism that the young have inspired watershed moments in our history. In the 1890s, 1930s, and 1960s, young people responded to political turbulence, organizing antiwar protests, participating in monumental civil rights movements—adhering to our rebellious core as a democratic republic. Most recently, our courageous youth have inspired an unprecedented gun-legislation movement.

**University Activism and Political Participation**

Advancements to society happen during the most turbulent times, when institutions, including colleges and universities, are propelled toward transformational
movements (Piven & Cloward, 1977), and many transformational and watershed times in our nation’s history have included the steady sociopolitical activism of our youth.

Cries and confrontation characterized many college campuses in the 1960s and 1970s, as students led social movements in reaction to high-stakes issues they considered worthy of protest and political activity—i.e., the military draft and civil rights injustices. University leaders wrestled with the institutional challenges inherent in such student advocacy.

Howard University, during the decades leading up to the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, navigated through the tensions between student activism and political order. An institution known for black intellectualism and civil rights advocacy, Howard University felt the paradox between its institutional mission and the political forces of a Jim Crow era. Howard’s president, Mordecai Johnson, and its academic deans and faculty felt the dual responsibility to both secure congressional appropriations and the political backing of elected officials and to aggressively pursue civil rights (Poch, 2015). Esteemed faculty in departments of sociology, law, religion, and political science balanced competing interests of contributing to civil rights progress, while avoiding undue harm to Howard’s reputation and political support that might come from active protest. Howard students, during this consequential time for the institution and for the civil rights movement, challenged university leaders to not succumb to complacency. In the end, undergraduate and graduate students secured a stronger voice and more access to university leadership internally. Externally, they were able to desegregate local businesses and play a role in the advancement of civil rights.
In the 1960s, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), frustrated by the insufficient attention to, and disingenuous treatment of current affairs in the classroom, urged higher education institutions to expand the scope, and strengthen the integrity, of civic education (Robinson, 2000a). Written at a meeting with SDS in Port Huron, Michigan, the Port Huron Statement of 1962 urged colleges and universities to make the seminal issues of that time, such as poverty, racial inequality, and militarism, academically more relevant and predominant in the classroom and curriculum (Robinson, 2000a).

A student movement at San Francisco State College in the late 1960s sought to ignite curricular reform, racial equality in college access, and degree attainment for African Americans. Multi-ethnic and multi-racial groups were important participants in demanding greater access to higher education for underrepresented groups (Thompson, 2004). America’s involvement in the Vietnam War resulted in antiwar and dissident movements on college campuses throughout the nation. On May 4, 1970, a protest at Kent State University ended as National Guardsmen fired into a crowd of students, killing four and severely injuring nine others (Small, 2002).

In 1963, through athletics and civic action, Loyola University Chicago contributed to the civil rights movement. In March of that year, the college basketball team won the national championship, which became known as the “Game of Change” with four African American starting players. Making history, Loyola team’s coach defied unwritten rules which stipulated that two African American players could play at home games and only one could play at away games. Later that spring, Loyola’s Black and
White students protested a race discrimination policy at the Illinois Club for Catholic Women, which was on Loyola’s campus. Seven Franciscan nuns joined the demonstration, along with a Catholic priest and lay activists. Photographs capturing the first time nuns protested the civil rights of Black Americans were displayed in newspapers and magazines nationally and internationally (Neary, 2018).

In 1988, Georgetown University’s head basketball coach, John Thompson, walked off the court before a game against Boston College in protest of Proposition 42, a controversial NCAA rule that tightened GPA requirements of freshmen, which many believed would discriminate against minorities. Fast-forward to 2016 to when the Hoyas, coached by Thompson’s son, became the first college basketball team to wear “I Can’t Breathe” t-shirts to bring attention to the death of Eric Garner (Auerbach, 2016). On February 3, 2004, Georgetown’s Students for Justice in Palestine erected a 20-foot-high “apartheid” wall bringing attention to the 400-mile wall Israel was building in Palestine. Signs on both sides of the wall read “U.S. Tax $ Israel’s Wall on Palestinian Land=Barrier to Peace and Oppression” and “Stop the Land Grab.” Counterprotests led by the Georgetown Israel Alliance passed out flyers illustrating “facts” about the “security fence” (Al-Arian, 2004).

**Political Participation of Youth Today**

Today our nation suffers from political division and a loss of confidence in our democracy. Many Americans have lost confidence in our nation’s leadership as well. In November 2017, just shy of a year into his first year as president, Donald Trump held an approval rating of only 34%—the lowest of any President during his first year in office—
and a disapproval rating of 59%. Congressional leaders’ job approval ratings were even lower at 22% for Republicans and 29% for Democrats, down 12 and 8 percentage points respectively since February 2017. Sixty-three percent of traditional college-aged Americans (ages 18-29) disapproved of the president, more than any other age demographic. Those who earned post-graduate and four-year college degrees disapproved of Trump at 71% and 65% respectively (Pew, 2017). A similar percentage of this age group did not cast a vote in the 2018 election.

**Civic Literacy**

Civic education can lay the groundwork for inquiry and discourse of civic matters. In the form of required civics courses or civics-embedded courses across the curriculum, civic education has been determined rare and absent in most academic curricula (Bok, 2006; Anft, 2018). As a response to a neglect of civic education at the undergraduate level, scholars of The Carnegie Foundation conducted a study to see if by incorporating political learning in the classroom, students’ level of political interest would also increase. The Carnegie Foundation’s Political Engage Project (PEP) uncovered characteristics of university courses and cocurricular programs, among 21 higher institutions, that underscored democratic participation (Colby, et al. 2007). The findings of this study revealed that as a result of enrolling in PEP courses, students gained substantive political understanding and anticipated future political participation. Indoctrination or a change in political affiliation or ideology did not occur, and students who had initially limited political interests made strides in their appreciation for politics.
Additional studies of schools using the PEP model have resulted in students’ increased sense of political efficacy among students who took PEP courses, compared to those who did not (Csajko & Lindaman, 2011). The Democracy USA (DUCA) project, which aimed to inspire civic engagement through interdisciplinary experiential learning courses, revealed little change in students’ civic engagement when only enrolled in DUCA classes. However, students who participated in cocurricular activities and programming, indicated an inclination to participate in politics in the future (Yanus, Kifer, Namaste, Elder, & Blosser, 2015).

For colleges and universities whose rooted tradition and mission are connected to social justice work, such as Jesuit schools or land-grant institutions an opportunity exists where service and political engagement can reside as complements to each other, not as disparate parts. Moreover, such institutions can value their role as central to a social movement, one that seeks progress and transformative change to include cultivating democratic practices that are perennial and not episodic (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). A commitment to a social movement necessarily would mean that civic engagement exists in parallel with political activity, that it would be virtually impossible to consider helping a society without exploring, uncovering, and taking action on the underlying and systemic roots to injustices and its ills. Colleges and universities, as principal players in the civic and public good, are in a unique position to promote voting by the mere fact that many young people are on college campuses when they are first able to exercise this right (Brandon, 2014).
Service-Learning

The service-learning movement, as an element of civic engagement, implicitly suggests a moral imperative for universities to heal the ills of society and to “manifest a tender regard for the weak and unfortunate” (Counts, 1932, p. 41). The first documented service-learning endeavor in 1892, founded by Jane Addams, was intended to serve as a laboratory for social reform, a school of citizenship and social service. Hull-House settlement, in Chicago, was home to social justice reformers, philanthropists, and social Christians. This hub of openness of ideas and information was void of any one particular political or religious affiliation and it also served as a purveyor of the arts. Open to her immigrant Jewish and Roman Catholic neighbors, Addams was also interested in Greek plays and ethnic social events. She took an interest with women’s labor and the early civil rights movement and wanted to align gospel with social problems in constructing an imagined “cathedral of humanity” (Schultz, 2015, p.211). Demonstrative of interracial work, Hull-House held meetings with W.E.B. Du Bois and Ida B. Wells, who shared meals with whites during Jim Crow America (Schultz, 2015).

In the 1960s, the “action university” established by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) (Robinson, 2000b, p. 605), and in the 1970s, the service-learning movement asserted the university’s role as a springboard for social critique and public advancement (Robinson, 2000b). The university involved in these movements would do more than simply educate its students, as it would be a conduit for them to assert their agency as “citizen-students” (Robinson, 2000a, p. 143) during times of social and political unrest.
Service-learning advocates assert an opportunity for the academy to heal discord within society (Barber, 1998) and to restore a sense of responsibility. To put a finer point on it, proponents of the movement posit that service-learning programs can (a) deepen a knowledge and understanding of sociopolitical and economic facets around diversity (Musil, 2011) (b) are critical to the health of the nation (Kraft, 1999), and (c) are “an indispensable prerequisite of citizenship and thus a condition for democracy’s survival” (Barber & Battistoni, 1993, p. 10). Drawing on a moral consciousness, students who learn more about politics and are more politically engaged become more sensitive to collective interests (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Colby, et al. 2000).

Yet, skeptics of the service-learning movement believe that the enduring benefits of service work are absent due to the lack of political or social agendas (Zlotkowski, 1996) and that most service-learning models lack an emphasis placed on the systemic sociopolitical underpinnings of poverty (Bok, 2006). Some studies suggest that most students regard service work as a substitute to political engagement rather than an impetus for political participation, a missed opportunity for educators and a root in the failings of higher education (Bok, 2006; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins, & Delli Carpini, 2006). This position regards that there is no direct correlation between community service and a positive attitude toward politics (Hunter & Brisbin, 2000; Ball, 2005). Further, as a reaction-formation, serving the community can be a satisfying response to political frustration and an expression of distrust toward the polity. Young people are drawn to volunteerism as a form of political rebellion, a rejection of traditional politics, which in their view is ineffective, corrupt, and irrelevant to their inherent beliefs.
and values (Galston, 2001). Moreover, as college students’ interests in community service and volunteerism have increased in recent decades, students’ interests in politics have not (Sax, 2000).

The lack of careful consideration about social hierarchy and power structures between privileged and marginalized groups has also been a criticism of service-learning. Neglecting the systemic and structural sources of problems can undermine the potential of the student as change-agent and can exacerbate “a service-learning language of individualistic therapy and ‘helping’ rather than a language of political resistance, conflict and social transformation, silenc[ing] students as agents of political and social change” (Lisman, as cited in Robinson, 2000a, p. 145). Less than half of undergraduate students participate in some kind of community service, and of those who do, less than half make the connection between service in the community and the coursework that aligns with it (Bok, 2017). If, more often than not, students do not make a connection between volunteerism and civic action, then it is a fallacy to suggest that traditional models of service-learning can sufficiently inspire a mindset of, and enact civic and political affairs.

**Citizenry**

More commonly, schools cultivate and inform a *personally responsible* and a *participatory* citizen—the former describing the individual who donates time, supplies, and money for the poor, while the latter describes one who organizes the donation drive, solicits funding, and organizes folks to support the cause. The *justice-oriented* citizen, with an orientation toward discovering the underlying social, political, and economic
structures that are causal to endemic injustices, is less emphasized among higher education institutions. Yet, the *justice-oriented* citizen is one that cultivates the analytical care and commitment to solve social problems and to improve society (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Colleges and universities can fulfill their promise of stimulating real and enduring solutions to the problems of society by embracing a paradigm shift, a cultural transformation, and a revolution towards justice (Benson, Harkavy, Puckett, 2011, p. 84).

A model of service-learning that has a *justice-advocacy* component would allow students to be engaged in the political dimensions of poverty, where they would grapple with systemic problems and work toward social transformation (Robinson, 2000b). Simply *being* good citizens is insufficient for the proliferation of a healthy democracy; what’s missing is the capacity to think, reason, and wrestle with complex ideas, to change one’s mind (Dreger, 2017) and to envision solutions to these problems. Unless there is an intentional framework that encourages students to think critically and question the social and political factors that contribute to social problems through service-learning work, a civically-minded worldview will only develop in a student by happenstance (Hartley & Saltmarsh, 2011).

**A National Movement**

It was not until 1999 that higher education was put to task to reexamine and affirm a public purpose, through teaching and action, to fulfill democratic participation. “The Presidents’ Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education” (1999) was drafted by college and university presidents from private and public colleges and universities across the country to respond to both an urgent and long-term civic crisis
involving lower voter turnout, disaffection toward politics, and disengagement from democratic processes by college students. The answer to the call would be a “national movement to reinvigorate the public purposes and civic mission of higher education” wherein the academy would be “agents and architects of a flourishing democracy” (Campus Compact, 1999). Campus Compact aligns with colleges and universities to increase civic engagement among its students. The organization’s membership is composed of over 1,200 colleges and universities; it supports and offers resources to administrators, faculty, staff, and students who are “committed to the public purposes of higher education in community engagement, teaching, and action toward the common good” (Campus Compact, n.d.-a). As the only national education organization devoted to campus-based civic engagement, Campus Compact educates students toward “civic and social responsibility,” where higher education institutions are central actors in achieving democratic purpose (Campus Compact, n.d.-a).

National leaders, along with educational organizations, have also brought civic participation center stage in their policy and rhetoric calling the academy to fully commit to educating students as future citizens. Democracy at Risk, a study sponsored by the American Political Science Association in 2006, sought to promote civic engagement, including participation in the political process, performance of public service, and work with various voluntary and community groups. Civic engagement, in this sense, would promote a reciprocal relationship between service and purposefulness.

As a response to a national decline in civic literacy among American college students, the Association of American College and Universities, along with the Obama
Administration, issued a report advocating progress in civic education at colleges and universities. *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future* was a mandate to colleges and universities to expand civic education to civic engagement (National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012). Heralded for its analysis and encouragement for civic engagement at colleges and universities, *A Crucible Moment* was viewed as the impetus for a reemergence of civic education, service-learning, civic engagement, and democratic citizenship (Yanus, et al., 2015). This decree called for the renewal of the country’s social, intellectual, and civic capital through higher education as a laboratory for learning and engaging in civic and democratic practices. What is more, to enact transformational change, *A Crucible Moment* implored the academy to “foster a civic ethos that governs campus life, make civic literacy a goal for every graduate, integrating civic inquiry within majors and general education, and advance civic action as lifelong practice” (National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012, p. 14). This broader vision would assure that students would have the capacity to learn about and seek solutions for the social and economic problems of our communities, and ultimately contribute to a stronger democracy.

*A Crucible Moment* also argued that skill formation, career development, and degree completion are insufficient priorities for colleges and universities. The greater responsibility of colleges and universities, and one that concerns national interests, is to cultivate “informed, engaged, responsible citizens” (National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012, p. 13) along with career preparation.
Workforce preparation and civic participation do not need to be mutually exclusive as measures of success for higher education. Civic engagement, as an ambitious standard that is pervasive, perennial, and fundamental—not incremental or reactionary—will contribute to an institution’s culture and ethos in ways that will endure beyond the tenure of an institution’s president and beyond the term’s end of a strategic plan.

*A Crucible Moment* underscores the value in cultivating an ethos of civic engagement. While volunteerism and community service are often first steps that students take toward civic engagement, community service often does not involve democratic engagement or even establish reciprocal partnerships that lead to solving systemic problems. And since community service activities are often episodic (Keeter et al., 2002), colleges and universities must not depend on these activities alone to benefit societal change.

Other national organizations have made great strides in encouraging and providing resources for civic engagement activity. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) founded the American Democracy Project (ADP) in 2003, which includes a membership of 199 public colleges and universities representing over 1.7 million students. Serving as a hub of resources and information, conferences, and thought leadership, the ADP is a national initiative set to elevate students’ appreciation for civic participation (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, n.d.).

The policy arm of the American Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) is involved in political activity, as its leadership is involved with federal house and senate
budget committees. AJCU works on appropriations; it advocates for student aid, work study, and loan programs; and it responds to social justice issues such as healthcare, immigration, and undocumented students. On October 25, 2017, Rev. Michael J. Sheeran, SJ, president of the AJCU—inciting his audience’s civically educated sensibilities as well as obligations—urged each Jesuit alumnus serving on the 115th United States Congress to pass the bipartisan DREAM Act, “We taught you about responsible citizenship. Republican or Democrat, that sense of civic responsibility is an underlying part of why you are in Congress today” (Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, 2017). The connection between social justice and political engagement is one that Jesuit colleges and universities steer through over a spectrum of varying degrees of commitment and intensity.

**History of the Jesuits**

The Society of Jesus, composed of Roman Catholic priests and brothers, was founded by Ignatius of Loyola, a Basque soldier and nobleman, in 1540. Members of the Society (also referred to as Jesuits) established an enterprise and philosophy that has endured through periods of suppression and acts of violence for over 450 years. While St. Ignatius had not originally intended to establish a platform for education institutions, he and the Society established high schools and higher education institutions; an educated society would be a more empowered society. For St. Ignatius, love would be expressed in word and in deed and the promotion of justice would be “a concrete, radical, but proportionate response to an unjustly suffering world” (Kolvenbach, 2000).
An international enterprise, the Society established the first Jesuit school in Italy in 1548. By 1773, before the suppression of the Society, over 800 Jesuits schools were founded (AJCU, 2010). Jesuit refugees, who had fled Europe and settled in Maryland, founded the first American Jesuit higher education institution, Georgetown College, in 1789. American Jesuit higher education was born out of a commitment to serving immigrant populations throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Many of the 28 schools in the United States were founded in or near urban areas, in order to serve the educational and religious needs of poor immigrant communities. The establishment of schools served a civic mission of the Society as education contributed to the “public weal” (O’Malley, 2016, p. 14).

The order also committed to serving people of all cultures. In 1995, the Society’s Thirty-Fourth General Congregation said:

It is part of our Jesuit tradition to be involved in the transformation of every human culture, as human beings begin to reshape their patterns of social relations, their cultural inheritance, their intellectual projects, their critical perspective on religion, truth, and morality, their whole scientific and technological understanding of themselves and the world in which we live. We commit ourselves to accompany people, in different contexts, as they and their culture make difficult transitions. (AJCU, 2010).

Considered to be the intellectual elite of Catholic orders, the Society of Jesus established educational tenets that went beyond intellectual education toward social justice and still influence Jesuit higher education to this day. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, SJ (2000) provides a contemporary interpretation of education of the “whole person.” In view of an emerging global reality, Kolvenbach believes that the “whole person” must solve an “educated awareness of society and culture with which to contribute socially,
generously, in the real world” (Kolvenbach, 2000, p. 8). Living in solidarity with others must involve “contact” and not simply “concepts” (Kolvenbach, 2000, p. 8), a fundamental act of love and moral engagement.

In the 1960s, after the Second Vatican Council, Pedro Arrupe, SJ, a Basque like Ignatius and the Jesuits’ newly elected Superior General, articulated a new commitment toward the poor and outreach to the world. During this time, Catholic colleges and universities made efforts to improve their educational quality as well as their relevance. In response to Vatican II’s 1965 document, *The Church in the Modern World*, Jesuit colleges and universities committed themselves to become less isolated and remote and more involved and entrenched in the “messy valley of human challenges, risks, and ambiguities” (Currie, 2011, p. 349).

In 1966, Arrupe pronounced that the Society of Jesus would fulfill its good works and respond to the demands of social problems through the academy and its other institutions (Arrupe, 1966). He expressed concern about the contradictions of poverty and Gospel teachings, and wrote that “from this situation rises the moral obligation of the Society to rethink all its ministries and every form of its apostolates to see if they really offer a response to the urgent priorities which justice and social equity call for” (Arrupe, 1966). This decree led to a new social mission that prioritized working directly with the poor and helping to end poverty.

A few years later in 1971, the Synod of Bishops proclaimed in its post-synodal document “Justice in the World” that promulgated “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear…[as the] church’s mission
for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.”

Arrupe framed a social conscience connecting the Gospel with economic, political, and cultural realities (Traub, 2008), and coined the phrase, “men and women for others” which is at the center of Jesuit higher education.

In 1975, at the 32nd General Congregation, the Society of Jesus articulated a radical stand connecting faith and justice (Kolvenbach, 2000). Superior General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, SJ evoked this seminal gathering at the 2000 Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education at Santa Clara University. In his speech entitled “The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American Jesuit Higher Education,” Kolvenbach asked the audience to consider higher education’s role in “promoting justice through faith” and asserted that the “purpose of the Society of Jesus, namely the service of faith, must also include the promotion of justice,” and an “integrating factor” of the Society’s works through this promotion, should include educational institutions (Kolvenbach, 2000). He went on to say that students,

…must let the gritty reality of this world into their lives, so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to its suffering and engage it constructively. They should learn to perceive, think, judge, choose and act for the rights of others, especially the disadvantaged and the oppressed.

As a response to Kolvenbach’s challenge, AJCU institutions recommitted to education for a “faith that does justice” (AJCU, 2010).

Pope John Paul II (1990) in Ex Corde Ecclesiae, or The Apostolic Constitution of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on Catholic Universities, also noted the important role of the academic community in addressing social problems:
In order to better confront the complex problems facing modern society, and in order to strengthen the Catholic identity of the Institutions, regional, national and international cooperation is to be promoted in research, teaching, and other university activities among all Catholic Universities, including Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties.

**Mission of Jesuit Higher Education**

Since the 32nd General Congregation, Jesuit institutions have adopted “service toward justice” at the core of their mission. A report generated from the 2002 United States Jesuit Conference, “Communal Reflection on the Jesuit Mission in Higher Education: A Way of Proceeding,” laid out principles of Jesuit higher education anchored in mission including academic excellence. Then-Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Peter-Hans Kolvenbach began the statement enumerating the importance of higher education institutions, rooted in Jesuit and Catholic traditions, for all who are involved in this “enterprise.” Kolvenbach continues, “What governs the enterprise is its sense of mission” (Jesuit Conference, 2008). The culture and articulation of mission among the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States vary, of course, as a result of the identities that uniquely define these institutions.

In 2016, at the 36th General Congregation, which elected Fr. Arturo Sosa as superior general, Sosa’s address to the audience pronounced that an abundant life includes “plunging into the broad range of skins and cultures that make up humanity.” Committed to the process of reconciliation, universities must also experience “the tensions of social and cultural complexity” in daily life and commit to be to be a source of life. Sosa also asserted that Jesuit universities have a responsibility to prepare students to be active citizens and to participate in political processes. Sosa made a striking
emphasis on connecting one’s identity with a broader purpose of higher education through political engagement. “Being called upon to make a direct commitment in politics involves placing oneself at the service of reconciliation and justice” (as cited in McCarthy, 2019).

The murder of six Jesuits and their coworkers at the Universidad Centroamericana (UCA) in El Salvador in 1989 during that country’s civil war had a huge impact on modern Jesuit colleges and universities. This attack in itself demonstrated a violent hatred of Jesuit ideology, and the vulnerability of Jesuits. However, this event also strengthened the new Jesuit commitment to the “national reality of poverty and oppression” (Currie, 2011, p. 350), and it has since influenced how Jesuit institutions value their level of engagement with a globalizing world. Scholars point to the event in El Salvador as a metaphor of the dynamic intersection between the Catholic Jesuit intellectual tradition in a pluralistic academic setting, with the realities of confronting global challenges.

Months after the massacre, in the *Ex corde ecclesia*, Pope John Paul II asserted that Catholic colleges and universities are formidable places that must engage in dialogue between faith and reason and that dialogue must include the entire world, especially the poor and deprived of our society (Currie, 2011). In this document, it proclaims that research activities of Catholic institutions “will have to be directed toward in-depth study of the roots and causes of the grave problems of our time.” It continues to assert that “The Christian spirit of service to others in promoting social justice…should be shared by professors and fomented among students” (Brackley, n.d.).
The mission of Jesuit higher education also includes a dedication to social service through research, teaching, and the co-curriculum that aligns with institutional culture. Jesuit universities are called to be a social force in living within the realities of the larger cultural context. Evoking Ignacio Ellacuría, one of the slain Jesuit priests at the UCA, Kolvenbach writes that the work of the Jesuit University is “to shed university intelligence upon it and to use university influence to transform it” (Kolvenbach, 2000).

Contemporary interpretations of the mission of Jesuit higher education are grounded in its history and looking ahead to the future. Core tenets include: “finding God in all things;” a spirituality “that fosters a relationship with Christ as the model for our adulthood;” care for the “whole person;” a commitment to the “uniqueness of every individual;” living out a “faith that does justice;” striving to do “more and better;” a pedagogy that involves “experience, reflection, decision, and action;” and “commitment to partnership with others” (AJCU, 2010). Providing an education that reflects a spirit of solidarity is central to the mission of many Jesuit colleges and universities. This commitment is articulated in Jesuit institutions’ mission and identity statements. For example, Gonzaga University fosters,

A mature commitment to dignity of the human person, social justice, diversity, intercultural competence, global engagement, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable…The common good and a just society cannot be attained without working to positively impact the state of the poor, the vulnerable, and those marginalized by society at large (Schlichting, 2017).

Fairfield University highlights how faith can enhance a pluralistic society as it is,

…is committed today to the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement…it welcomes those of all beliefs and traditions who share its concerns for scholarship, justice, truth and freedom, and it values the
diversity which their membership brings to the university community (Schlichting, 2017).

Fordham University believes that “students have to be invited to wrestle with the great ethical issues of their times. We want them to be bothered by the realization that they don’t know everything and be bothered by injustice” (Schlichting, 2017).

Institutional mission and rich tradition and values, much like those espoused by the Jesuits, can help frame an institutional commitment toward political responsibility. How this commitment is manifested and communicated varies among higher education institutions, which can set a tone for the degree of import political participation plays in the campus culture. The ways in which colleges and universities accentuate political engagement within mission, strategic plans, and presidential addresses are a few methods that political responsibility may be institutionalized (Billings & Terkla, 2014). Fulfilling the purpose and goals that align with the institution’s mission is critical to the longevity of that institution (LaBelle & Kendall, 2016). “The interaction between Jesuit institutions and their surrounding social milieu presents a unique opportunity to examine the effects of institutional identity, mission, and environment on higher education survival” (Platt, 2014, p. 1).

Catholic Social Teaching has informed a viewpoint on immigration, a position which places an obligation on more prosperous nations “to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his own country or origin” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2013). In January 2003, The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) distributed a letter on
migration, “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope” which addressed conditions for immigration reform to include 1) earned legalization, 2) future worker program, 3) family-based immigration reform, 4) restoration of due process, and 5) addressing root causes. On September 5, 2017, the President and Vice President and Chairmen of the USCCB released a statement condemning the Trump administration’s policy to terminate DACA. The statement read, “The cancellation of the DACA program is reprehensible. It causes unnecessary fear for DACA youth and their families…Today, our nation has done the opposite of how Scripture calls us to respond. It is a step back from the progress that we need to make as a country” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Leadership Theory

As a bridge between the academy and the larger society, college and university leaders must value higher education’s impact on society and embrace a deep commitment to making a positive contribution in the world throughout their tenures (Fisher & Tack, 1988). Leadership is complex, particularly during times of social discord. University presidents are only as influential as is their capacity to understand the culture of the institution and the overarching role of higher education; they must possess the skills to effectively deal with the public sphere in which they can demonstrate purpose (Birnbaum, 1988).

Culture, defined as “the collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups”
(Kuh & Whitt, 1988), is thought to be connected with leadership (Schein, 1985). Both Schein (1985) and Birnbaum (1992) question whether leaders shape culture and whether the fate of an institution lies in the hands of one individual. Culture “induces purpose, commitment, and order; proves meaning and social cohesion and clarifies an organization through the people within it” (Masland, 1985, p. 158). Often, culture and leadership can be intertwined, where the former predicts the latter (Schein, 1985) and where the most effective leader aligns is or her vision and strategy with the institution’s culture rather than compete with it (Chaffee & Tierney, 1988). Presidential influence is one aspect of how leadership makes a difference, and it can be manifested in two ways—*instrumental* and *interpretive*. *Instrumental leadership* relies on tactical decisions, experience, and technical competence, whereas interpretive leadership involves a commitment to collective values and articulating a vision that either mirrors others’ interests or moves others in a direction that has been unrealized (Birnbaum, 1992). Instrumental approaches to leadership can include planning, allocating resources, and making budgetary and hiring decisions. These actions rely on a leader’s expertise and technical capabilities and are successfully executed even without strong constituent support (Birnbaum, 1992). Presidents who are able to manage the technical and often predictable day-to-day responsibilities along with the non-formulaic and “fortuitous match between the individual’s characteristics and institutional characteristics” (Birnbaum, 1992) can have significant influence over the actions institutions take and the reasons for them.

Birnbaum offers that leaders’ expression of their vision can be most effective through the use of rhetoric, symbolism, and ritual—less through planning and decision
making (Pfeffer, 1981). *Interpretive leadership* effectively captures the psychological and emotional needs of followers to feel more confident and secure and to help individuals envision what is possible (Birnbaum, 1992). By virtue of their legitimacy, presidents are expected to convey institutional purpose and renewal by evoking values, beliefs, and mission.

Constituent support of faculty, administration, and trustees elevates the leader’s impact on the institution when stakeholders perceive the university president as a leader who can think through complex ideas and is competent, legitimate, and value-driven. When these qualities are in place, a president can effectively serve as a leader and “can be a force for institutional renewal” (Birnbaum, 1992).

Harkening back to the leaders who built our democracy over two centuries ago, Gardner (1988) reaffirms the degree that one individual can influence the broader society and says that contemporary leaders must be deeply knowledgeable about the past, informed about the present, and willing to influence change for the common good. While a university president must be committed to the institution’s mission and identity and must use them as a springboard for decision making, an effective president must also be aware of the local, national, and global changes that might require agility and institutional change. Being able to make sense of and interpret nonroutine events will challenge leaders to make moral and value judgments. Such choices may be a departure from the usual playbook and will require a president to act outside of or beyond the institutional rules that he or she has known them to be. Ethical decision making, or *praxis*, is a
balanced approach to engaging in “conscious reflective intentional action” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 111) guided by purpose, intention, morals, values, as well as facts.

Transformational change occurs when the leader can motivate his or her followers to advanced levels of motivation and morality, often emphasizing socio-cultural values like liberty, justice, and equality (Birnbaum, 1992). Transactional leadership often entails maintaining the status quo, while transformational leadership requires a revolutionary change that tends to have an enduring quality. For Birnbaum, attending to both—order and evolution—is a balance of skill that effective leaders strive to attain.

Since the assessment of effective leadership varies from institution to institution and so much of what makes for an effective leader is unmeasurable and nuanced, it is difficult to make conclusions about what aspects of leadership cause institutional outcomes. Nonetheless, there are useful methods to identify what contributions university leaders make to an institution and how these contributions make a difference. The first method is based on evaluations of experts, which sometimes are subjective and intuitive judgments. The second involves peer appraisals based on leaders’ reputations. The third method depends on leaders’ self-assessments (Birnbaum, 1992).

Conflict Values Theory

The way in which leaders navigate through complex problems can be described in the framework of values conflict or conflict values theory. The complexities of values conflict can often be addressed by an increased cognitive and behavioral complexity (Dennison, Hooijberg, & Quinn, 1995), where complex situations require complex responses (Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, & St. Clair, 2010), allowing a leader the capacity
to respond and react to paradox and the tensions in their environments (Lavine, 2014).

Values conflict can arise from a variety of circumstances, from advocating a general cultural values position to a specific position grounded in a particular context (Kouzakova, Ellemers, Harinck & Scheepers, 2012). Values conflicts can heighten when personal values or moral standards are involved (Harinck & Druckman, 2017). Unlike conflicts of interests, which usually can be resolved by negotiations, conflicts of values usually involve notions of justice, which revolve around how their beliefs involve others. As a consequence, values conflicts have the potential of leading to friction, and they tend to be non-negotiable (Kouzakova et al., 2012).

“Value implies a code or a standard which has some persistence through time, or, more broadly put, which organizes a system of action. Value, conveniently and in accordance with received usage, places things, acts, ways of behaving, goals of action on the approval-disapproval continuum” (Kluckhohn, 1962). A value is a desired preference that is not without moral reasoning or aesthetic judgment. Values move the actor toward action commitments and can often develop patterns of behavior. For an organization, this pattern and themes of values can create an institutional culture (Kluckhohn, 1962).

Leaders who embrace nuance and inconsistency, and who are able to “work toward tensions and the anxieties they provoke in search of insightful interconnections” (Lewis, 2000, p. 774), can foster creative solutions beneficial to an organization. The competing values framework (CVF) presupposes that there is a dynamic tension inherent and necessary to drive the effectiveness of an organization. The CVF addresses the tensions, contradictions, and paradoxes inherent in organizations and their leaders (Quinn
& Cameron, 1983) and two dimensions that enumerate these competing values and tensions. One dimension (vertical axis) highlights a continuum between flexibility and control while the other dimension (horizontal axis) highlights a continuum between internal processes and external stakeholders. The fact that these continuums run on two axes reflects that organizations require both stability and change at the same time—these states are not mutually exclusive (Quinn et al., 2010). The benefit of using a CVF is that it offers the possibility to reframe “underlying polar opposites, such as flexibility and control,” so that leaders and institutions can behave on a “nuanced continuum” (Lavine, 2014, p. 200).

Similar to competing values theory, paradox theory describes how leaders address paradoxical decisions through acceptance, confrontation, and transcendence (Lewis, 2000). Acceptance allows a leader to acknowledge the roots of paradoxical tension, which can be a powerful proactive strategy. Confrontation, through reflection and critique, strives to mitigate paradoxical tensions. Finally, transcendence allows for greater possibilities and complementary possibilities that have not been fully realized. Adding to the paradox theory was Smith & Lewis’s (2012) contribution of concepts acceptance, differentiation, and integration. Differentiation identifies the value and distinction of both paradoxical sides of the given tension. Integration cuts through the tension, ultimately arriving at “synergy or a learning stance based on trust, openness, and cultural sensitivity” (Lavine, 2014). Exploration involves managing paradox by “exploring rather than suppressing tensions” (Lavine, 2014). This expanded view opens
up possibilities for navigating through tensions that no longer rely on binary factors or suppositions.

Understanding the ways in which colleges and universities demonstrate an ethos of civic and democratic purpose can serve the academy well in renewing a spirit of collective interests more broadly and intentionally. For those who seek with great earnest a link between political engagement and citizenry, the answer to the perennial problem is not to limit students’ exposure to political participation, but to extenuate it. Moreover, higher education institutions can be models of such political activities in the way in which they elevate discourse, contribute to scholarship, and change public policy.

**Summary**

For many institutions, civic engagement has included community engagement that involves little attention paid to democratic or political involvement; isolated efforts that do not create a culture or an ecosystem of civic engagement; or episodic and transient reactions to national events. The problem with these kinds of civic engagement models is the temporal nature and almost unpredictable effects that they might have on a community. Higher education institutions and their leaders have the opportunity to emphasize political participation. During times when society is in need of repair and restoration, institutions can respond with action lest we become a nation of “sideline citizens,” apathetic to the very fundamental responsibilities we bear as an electorate and the responsibilities we bear to one another.
CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Since this study explored the ways in which Jesuit institutions responded to DACA, and specifically how leadership at these institutions affected these responses, the study was necessarily qualitative and the research questions open-ended in order to provide descriptive results. The following questions were considered when investigating this phenomenon:

- What are the ways in which Jesuit institutions and their leaders have responded to DACA?
- How did these leaders leverage their mission in order to navigate through this complex, divisive, and value-laden terrain?

My approach required an intimate investigation of the ways in which leaders navigated through difficult decisions and conflicts of values stirred by politically charged issues. Organizational, cultural, personal, and political dimensions were explored to understand the complexities involved in each university’s response to DACA. How the Jesuit mission informed these decisions was also explored in the study, another reason to employ a qualitative approach to describing how institutions responded to DACA.

Because of the multifaceted nature of the study, which uncovered the behaviors and motivations of individuals, juxtaposed against a rich Jesuit tradition, I used thick description that facilitated a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Described by Geertz (1973) and Ryle (1971), thick description is “a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he [the researcher] must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). This approach allowed
me to generate themes across all cases, which allowed me to react and interpret the study’s findings with an appreciation for the larger and deeper context. What Geertz cautions against, however, is the failure to acknowledge the interpretive nature of meaning rendered from the data. Data does not exist in isolation, since the researcher attributes meaning to the data based on the researcher’s self-reflection (Geertz, 1973). I also explored the extent to which the identity and mission of the institution contributes to an ethos of engagement.

An application of two theoretical frameworks guided the study. Since a political issue like DACA has been divisive throughout the nation, as well as on college campuses, I presumed that leaders would have faced tensions and conflicts in decision making. Therefore, conflict values theory provided a lens through which the study’s results were analyzed. Similarly, since an institutional commitment to such a controversial issue would beg the question of how leadership made a difference to an institutional commitment to DACA, the study also investigated the effects of higher education presidential leadership. Therefore, Birnbaum’s work and his contribution of interpretive and instructional levers to leadership applied to the research questions. Yet, I was open to the possibility that leaders did not face conflicts or that leadership was inconsequential in how institutions navigated through difficult sociopolitical terrain.

I carried out the research using a multicase study approach in order to facilitate an analysis of several cases and to understand the nuances that they had in common and those that made them distinct. Multicase studies can be best treated as a quintain in order to make sense of the differences among a set of cases that categorically share common
characteristics (Stake, 2006). Exploring how leaders at Jesuit institutions collectively, as well as independently, addressed difficult political issues offered a unique perspective to higher education’s role in political participation. Jesuit education embodies a rich history of social justice, mission work, and in more recent years, service-learning. What is less known and researched is how Jesuit institutions focus on political efforts shown in political activity performed by the leaders of these institutions. Particularly during divisive political environments, understanding how leaders at Jesuit institutions reconcile the intersection of Jesuit mission, personal values, and the political climate of our country, is an important phenomenon to uncover.

I gathered data from two cases primarily by conducting in-person interviews, which were recorded, transcribed, and coded and conducted intracase and cross-case analyses. I analyzed the transcripts of the interviews thematically with iterative post-coding of relevant interview responses. After I coded the interviews, I analyzed archival data thematically.

**Sampling Strategy**

Selected schools for the study were based on the following characteristics: (a) geographic location, (b) non-clerical presidents, (c) endowment per full-time equivalent student, and (d) preliminary data collected from pilot study. Table 1 illustrates the sample selection. I identified the institutions for the sample based on the following characteristics: (a) public presidential responses to DACA; (b) institutional efforts that relate to support and resources for undocumented students (i.e., undocumented student organizations, altered admissions and financial aid processes to include DACA students,
centers, and institutes devoted to undocumented student advocacy); (c) faculty scholarship devoted to immigration studies (d) partnerships with local and federal political leaders to change immigration policy; and (e) publicly quick, pro-political, and substantive presidential responses to DACA.

Due to the known ways in which these schools have responded to dynamic political issues, I identified the following institutions for the study: Loyola University Chicago and Georgetown University. These institutions were disparate in the tenure of presidents, endowment, and geographic location, yet similar in the degree to which mission informed leaders’ decision making and the level of student and faculty advocacy and engagement with immigration rights and issues.

Table 1

*Sample Selection of Jesuit Universities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>President’s Date of Appointment</th>
<th>Geographic Location</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Endowment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loyola University Chicago</td>
<td>May 23, 2016</td>
<td>Midwest Chicago, IL</td>
<td>16,673</td>
<td>$750 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown University</td>
<td>July 1, 2001</td>
<td>Northeast Washington, DC</td>
<td>19,005</td>
<td>$1.6 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Access and Data Collection**

The Dean of the Haub School of Business, Dr. Joseph DiAngelo, and former and current presidents at Saint Joseph’s University, Dr. Tim Lannon, SJ, and Dr. Mark Reed,
provided introductions to some participants at each institution. Conversations with these leaders led to access to additional key participants, including presidents and chief academic officers and provosts at the institutions of the sample. Additionally, conversations with the former and current president of The Association for Jesuit Colleges & Universities (AJCU), Rev. Charles Currie, SJ, and Rev. Michael Sheeran, SJ, also provided data for the study, as well as helped to facilitate access to leaders.

I gained additional access to key participants and presidents through introductions by the office of the president and federal relations vice presidents at both institutions. Through the use of interviews, field notes, and archival data, I collected data from testimonial and observational sources. I worked with the Office of the President at Loyola University Chicago to secure site visits on two of its campuses and interviews with the president, vice president of federal relations, and members of the board of trustees. I contacted other participants directly to secure interviews with them. Table 2 lists all participants from Loyola University Chicago.
Table 2

*Interview Participants from Loyola University Chicago*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Method &amp; Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>In-person; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former President</td>
<td>Telephone; 60 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of the Board of Trustees</td>
<td>In-person; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of the Board of Trustees</td>
<td>Telephone; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Provost</td>
<td>In-person; 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President for Government Affairs</td>
<td>In-person; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>In-person; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Faculty Members</td>
<td>In-person or telephone; 60 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former and Current Academic Deans</td>
<td>Telephone; 30-60 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Student Body President</td>
<td>Skype; 120 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Life Administrator</td>
<td>Telephone; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These participants provided names of additional individuals who would offer insights into the institutional responses to DACA. In order to gather a full scope of data, this *snowball sampling* (Creswell, 2013) provided additional information that otherwise might have been missed.

I worked through the Office of the President at Georgetown University in order to secure interviews with the president. I contacted all other participants directly to secure interviews with them. Table 3 lists of all participants from Georgetown University.
Table 3

*Interview Participants from Georgetown University*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Method &amp; Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Telephone; 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two members of Board of Trustees</td>
<td>Telephone; 30 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former and Current Vice Presidents of Federal Relations</td>
<td>In-person and by telephone; 60 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Administrators</td>
<td>In-person, telephone, and Skype; 60 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Life Administrators</td>
<td>Telephone; 60 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Administrators</td>
<td>In-person; 30-60 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Faculty members</td>
<td>Telephone; 60 minutes each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I conducted in-person interviews at both universities with presidents, administrators, and trustees in their offices or in private conference rooms. All participants signed consent forms approved through the University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board. Participants gave their oral consent to be quoted with attribution after reviewing transcripts of their quotes to approve. Other participants were not cited by name. Participants were not provided with transcripts of interviews or with the researcher’s analysis of the cases. All but two participants gave consent to be recorded and allowed me to take notes of the interviews.

I also reviewed the following archival data of each school in order to supplement and triangulate data from interviews:

- the university mission statement;
- internal presidential statements related to undocumented student support and advocacy;
- letters sent to members of Congress in support of the DREAM Act;
- signed amicus briefs;
- websites of undocumented students;
- articles in student newspapers and alumni news related to undocumented student support or advocacy;
- articles in local and national news related to undocumented student support or advocacy;
- presidential speeches, including inaugural addresses;
- opinion pieces or public calls to action made by presidents or other academic leaders;
- archival materials on the AJCU website;
- written agreements between the university and the AJCU articulating position of undocumented students; and
- white papers and reports out immigration student rights written by faculty.

In addition to conducting case-specific interviews, I conducted six in-person or telephonic interviews with individuals who were engaged with Jesuit higher education or immigration policy. These participants are listed in Table 4.

Table 4

*Interview Participants Engaged with Jesuit Higher Education and Immigration Policy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Method &amp; Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current President of AJCU</td>
<td>In-person; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former President of AJCU</td>
<td>In-person; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffer of United States Senator</td>
<td>Telephone; 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Lobbyist of AJCU</td>
<td>In-person: 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJCU Administrator</td>
<td>In-person; 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague of Board of Trustees</td>
<td>Telephone; 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These participants provided important insights into the collective influence of the AJCU, of which both Loyola University and Georgetown University are members. The national and international influence of the former and current president of AJCU offered a rich context to the subject matter and a historical frame of reference for the study.
All interviews followed semi-structured protocols in order to maintain consistency while allowing for dynamic and spontaneous responses of participants (Appendices A-E). In-person, telephone, and Skype interviews were recorded with one or two digital devices, with the consent of the participant. Interviews were transcribed by Temi digital software and were manually coded. All interview data were stored on both a Saint Joseph’s University server in a password-protected account and on a personal computer in a password-protected account. For manual coding purposes, hard copies of interview transcripts were made and kept in locked files. Handwritten descriptive notes, impressions, emerging questions, and concerns and issues noted during interviews were also kept in locked files.

While a pilot study conducted six months before the dissertation data was collected helped inform the site selections for the study, none of the data collected from the pilot study was included in the dissertation.

**Data Analysis**

In order to understand how leaders at Jesuit institutions responded to a politically charged issue, I gathered empirical evidence through interviews, as well as archival data. Anticipating potential emergent themes in the study, I analyzed the data using specific codes that would address the following: (a) leaders’ sense of their roles with respect to political terrain, (b) how key stakeholders influenced decision making, (c) the degree to which symbolic leadership and tactical leadership intersected, (d) the degree to which Jesuit mission played a role in decision making, (e) how leaders navigated through conflict, and (f) how Jesuit mission played a role in political engagement. I established
codes, listed in Appendix F, which I used to analyze the data. I applied additional codes during the process of data analysis as more themes emerged. As preset codes were deemed insufficient, I used additional codes that addressed interpretive and instrumental levers of leadership, drawing from Birnbaum.

I chose to analyze archival materials after I conducted interviews so as not to be influenced and to maximize my objectivity. After the interviews, certain findings from the university materials helped to reinforce conclusions that I discovered during the interviews.

While the interview protocols were fairly consistent among all respondents, I adopted a customized replication approach to ensure flexibility. While questions were uniform, I followed up with individualized probing questions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The respondents were given the opportunity to review interview transcripts for accuracy and give their consent for direct quotes for the written case study. One participant requested to see the interview protocol ahead of the interview and two respondents did not want to be recorded but agreed to my taking notes.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, I addressed the five categories that Maxwell (1992) considers necessary when approaching qualitative research: descriptive validity, interpretive validity, theoretical validity, generalizability, and evaluative validity. Since all but two live interviews were recorded and transcribed, descriptive validity or the accuracy of the data was addressed. Moreover, I followed up with participants about any data that was unclear. Respondents had the ability to read transcripts and correct any errors of fact or strike statements from the record to ensure
accuracy of the interviews. In order to ensure trustworthiness, I confirmed data from several sources, through member checking and triangulation. I established trust, rapport, and transparency so that the participant felt comfortable to challenge aspects of the interview that may not have been captured accurately or that did not effectively represent the participant’s point of view.

I engaged in numerous discussions with “critical friends,” who, through dialogic inquiry (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 202), challenged biases, and assumptions through all stages of the research. Maintaining a healthy level of objectivity was especially important for this study, since a political dimension was involved. Because there were potentially sensitive, value-laden, and triggering aspects of the study, it was critical that my biases were “checked at the door,” that interview protocols were objective, and that tone and nonverbal communication set a stage for openness and nonjudgment. Moreover, I was open to constructive criticism from professional colleagues and challenging conversations with faculty that helped me to stay astute and self-reflective (hooks, 1994).

Earning the trust of the audience was grounded in part on my commitment to the topic. As an administrator who has worked at a Jesuit university for 17 years, 10 of which were as associate dean of a business school, I have a perspective into the implicit and explicit ways in which a leader brings about an ethos to a school. I am deeply interested in how leaders effect change, inspire creativity, and address sociocultural and political issues that affect a community. I am curious about how leaders do this effectively, in a way that is enduring and not episodic, and in a way that reflects and reinvigorates institutional mission and identity.
As a lone researcher, I used interrater reliability (Barbour, 2001) as an additional assurance of validity. The ability of an objective reader to confirm a researcher’s data can attest to the study’s trustworthiness. Triangulation of multiple data sources also increased credibility of the research findings. Allowing participants to review and respond to draft cases was a method of member checking that also involved triangulation. For this study, comparisons of the data between interviews and archival data were made in order to provide a deeper analysis.

**Limitations**

Since this research was limited by a double case study method, the results of the study are not generalizable to a larger population, nor do they prove causality. The results, however, do illustrate the specific experiences of these universities and indicate emergent themes that would be relevant for other sociopolitical circumstances and in other higher education settings.

Due to the challenges of scheduling and proximity, I conducted some interviews by phone or by Skype. I was also limited to a few site visits by virtue of the pace of the study. Establishing rapport was more difficult with telephonic and Skype interviews. Knowing that they were being video recorded, participants may have felt more guarded during Skype interviews.
A community is only as strong as how much it stands up for its most vulnerable members.
—Chris Murphy, Vice President for Government Relations and Community Engagement, Georgetown University

History and Context

Georgetown University, the oldest Catholic Jesuit University in the country, was founded in 1789 in the heart of the nation’s capital. Bishop John Carroll established the school at its current location by the Potomac River, soon after the American Revolution. A school erected for the education of youth, the school and its location would reflect the missionary work of Jesuit colleges in Europe, which were also located in urban sites. Not intended to serve Catholics exclusively, Georgetown enrolled Protestant and Jewish students, European immigrants, Napoleonic War refugees, and students from the Caribbean.

Refugees and missionaries from Europe had been an important part of Georgetown’s faculty and student body since its earliest years. The institution reaped the greatest benefit of the European exodus in the 1840s, which contributed to the intellectual life and reputation of Georgetown a decade later. This influx of students and scholars allowed Georgetown to compete with the best universities in Europe (Curran, 1993). The presence of foreign faculty led to a strengthening of core subjects and a creation of new ones. The Civil War was an important and consequential time for Georgetown. Positioned on the border of a southern state, the school lost many of its students and
alumni, some of whom either went home or served in the Confederate forces. The university was a healing and resting point for the Union Army as it also had Confederate sympathizers in its faculty, many of whom were Jesuit. As a result of the war, Georgetown lost many of its southern soldiers and its traditional base of support of the Deep South. A plunge in enrollment forced the college to look to other populations to recruit, including Protestants and Jews, who together accounted for over half of the student body. Equally significant was the appointment of Patrick Francis Healy, SJ, the first African American president of a predominantly White university. Considered to be the “second founder” of Georgetown, Healy led the transition from college to university (Curran, 1993). Under Healy’s leadership, Georgetown broadened its curriculum to include required courses in the sciences and created professional schools of medicine and law. Bearing his name, Healy Hall is the most archetypical and majestic building on campus and serves as home to the president’s office and other administrative offices.

**Current Context**

Georgetown enrolled 7,463 undergraduate and 11,542 graduate students in 2016. Of the undergraduate population, more women (56%) than men (44%) were enrolled. Forty-seven percent of all undergraduates self-identify as an ethnic minority, 14% of whom identify as nonresident. A Yellow Ribbon institution, Georgetown enrolled approximately 130 undergraduate student veterans and 595 graduate student veterans in 2016 (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.-a). Upholding an acceptance rate of 17% and ranked 20th in the *U.S. News and World Report’s 2017 Best National Universities*, Georgetown is a highly selective institution (Trunko, 2017).
Committed to the liberal arts and public policy, Georgetown presents academic offerings from its nine colleges, including McCourt School of Public Policy, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, School of Medicine, and the McDonough School of Business. Consistent with its historical commitment to social justice, Georgetown is home to several centers and initiatives, such as the Center for Social Justice (CSJ), the Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor (KI), and the Center for Multicultural Equity & Access.

Despite a difficult global market, Georgetown’s endowment of $1.48 billion has nonetheless performed well in recent years, enabling the university to fund major projects, as well as institutional and financial aid needs (Trunko, 2017). As one of only 26 universities in the country that are a need-blind, full-need school, Georgetown admits students on the basis of talent and ability, irrespective of their financial aid need; it ensures through scholarships, loans, and other forms of financial assistance that each accepted undergraduate has the financial capacity to enroll. Forty-two percent of undergraduate students receive grants or scholarship aid, and 41% receive institutional grants or scholarships.

A premier academic and research institution, Georgetown is classified as a Doctoral University: Highest Research Activity by Carnegie Classification. Given its history, geographic proximity to the nation’s capital, and mission, Georgetown attracts students from over 140 countries and is highly engaged in public and civil service and foreign affairs work and research. The university’s mission statement evokes the Jesuit tenet “men and women for others” in support of those most in need; according to its
mission statement, Georgetown “educates women and men to be reflective lifelong learners, to be responsible and active participants in civic life and to live generously in service to others” (Georgetown, n.d.-a).

Georgetown has not been immune to controversy. It has directly addressed significant sociopolitical issues of our time, some of which have been quite divisive. In response to these issues, the institution has undertaken significant initiatives that have been a testament to Georgetown’s progressive positioning, especially among Jesuit and Catholic institutions. The establishment of the first LGBTQ center of its kind for a Catholic university in 2008 was perhaps one of the more consequential social rights actions Georgetown took in recent years. The Free Speech Project consists of a nonpartisan and independent group of faculty, which has assessed the condition of free speech in America in higher education, in civil society, and in government, in the hopes of sustaining First Amendment values in divisive times (Georgetown, n.d.-b). Like several other elite higher education institutions in America, Georgetown has publicly recognized its ties to slavery and the slave trade (the school’s existence was made possible by a slave sale in 1838, organized by Georgetown’s early presidents, both of whom were Jesuit priests), and it has made efforts for reconciliation (Swarns, 2016).

Unique to Georgetown University is the fact that the institution has no congressional delegation and no state senators with whom to work. Situated in neither a red state nor a blue state, the university does not experience the political pulls that others do. Said one study participant, “There are presidents that are from other kinds of political environments, and they have real-world constraints they have to deal with on the issue of
DACA.” Nonetheless, Georgetown depends on the many graduates of this university, especially from the law school and School of Foreign Services, who serve as members of Congress on both sides of the political aisle to help push policy.

Emergence of DACA

DACA emerged as an issue at Georgetown during the early years of the Obama administration. At this time, Georgetown’s immigration-related efforts were focused on supporting its Dreamers, estimated to be fewer than 10 students. In the wake of the 2016 general election, a time of crisis and uncertainty for many higher education institutions that enrolled DACA students, the university’s attention to DACA kicked into high gear. President John DeGioia took an immediate moral position in support of DACA. DeGioia’s will and conviction unleashed the passions, talents, and energies of key individuals and groups at the university, including through some important grassroots efforts of its students. Guided by a moral imperative and informed by the Jesuit tradition, leaders at Georgetown achieved great progress on behalf of DACA students. This commitment was also demonstrated in very public ways in attempts to shift federal policy.

Prior to DACA, which was established in 2012 by the Obama administration, students brought into the United States without documentation as children were referred to as “undocumented.” After the introduction of the DREAM Act by Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Richard Durbin (D-IL) in 2001, undocumented individuals, who primarily were students who are involved in the DREAM Act movement, were referred to as “Dreamers.” This term was used by persons within the movement who wanted to
distance themselves from negative connotations of terms like “undocumented,”
“immigrant,” or “non-U.S. citizen.”

The first known Dreamer to have been admitted to Georgetown applied in 2006,
when he revealed his status during an interview with an alumnus. In order to have
provided full tuition benefits to this student, the university categorized him as an
international student, which became the “under-the-radar protocol for undocumented
students,” said one administrator. A variety of funding streams were reallocated so that
these students could access exclusively institutional grants since they were ineligible for
state or federal loans.

At the time, Georgetown had not been public about its admittance of
undocumented students. DACA did not yet exist, and higher education was new to
serving undocumented students. Yet the country had confronted the issue of education
rights to immigrant children before. In 1982, the Supreme Court ruled in Plyler vs. Doe
that a group of Texas immigrants were entitled a K-12 education and that they would not
be penalized for the “crimes of their family” (Hutchinson, 1982).

Georgetown’s president at the time was John J. DeGioia (known as “Jack” by all
study participants), the university’s 48th president and first lay (i.e., nonclerical) person
to hold the position. An alumnus of Georgetown, a member of its administration since
age 25, and its president for 18 years (2001–present), Jack DeGioia has been a
consequential figure for Georgetown’s history and for higher education writ large.

Having earned a BA in English from Georgetown’s College of Arts and Sciences, and a
PhD in philosophy from Georgetown’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, DeGioia is
a scholar and teacher of ethics and human rights; he has spent his entire career understanding and shining a spotlight on social justice issues (Georgetown University, n.d.-c).

In a statement, “Reflections on Citizenship and a Just Society” sent to the Georgetown community on December 10, 2014, responding to grand jury decisions following the deaths of unarmed black men at the hands of police officers in Ferguson, MO, and Staten Island, NY, DeGioia urged the community to engage in civil discourse and to commit to responsible participation in a just society:

A just society requires that its members accept responsibilities for one another; that we are prepared to take care of one another; that we are prepared to sacrifice for one another. To accept the responsibilities that come with membership—with citizenship—requires trust: trust in the ideas and institution that enable us to make our faith come alive; trust in one another and ourselves to balance individual interests within this larger civic context.

Citizenship—participation in a just society—then, is predicated on more than the privileges and rights bestowed through membership in a particular political order. It assumes a commitment to a common shared project—a civic project that entails a sense of belonging to something bigger than any one of us: the idea that together it is possible to build a commonweal.н.

Here, while safely confronting our doubts and fears, our frustrations and anger, we can, together, embrace the work of restoring the fraying fabric of this country (DeGioia, 2014).

Named a “Brave Thinker” by The Atlantic in 2012 and presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Academia by the Sons of Italy, as well as the “Catholic in the Public Square Award” by Commonweal in 2012, DeGioia has been recognized for his public achievements and faith commitment. In the 1980s, as dean of student affairs, DeGioia spent two months a year in South Africa working with the Progressive Forces for Change. Not only is he deeply involved in social justice endeavors
but he holds positions of leadership in higher education organizations. Most recently, he led workshops for the Knight Foundation on speech expression for presidents and general counsels of colleges and universities. He serves as the immediate past chair of the board of directors of the American Council on Education (ACE), chair of the board of directors of the Forum for the Future of Higher Education, and member of the board of directors of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. DeGioia has also served on the board of directors of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) and is the founding member of the Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration (Georgetown, n.d.-c).

As Georgetown’s longest-serving president, DeGioia has confronted a host of controversial sociopolitical issues during his tenure at Georgetown. He led the establishment of an LGBTQ center on campus, an unprecedented move for a Jesuit Catholic institution, requiring a seven-year process and the backing of the Jesuit community. DeGioia has been vocal about free speech and race relations and has recently taught the course, “Human Rights: A Culture in Crisis.” Seeking to improve opportunities for underserved neighborhoods in Washington, DC, DeGioia has supported social justice initiatives and has enhanced the university’s relationship with political and corporate leaders in Washington. Because of his years as president, he was a respected spokesperson.

By the late 2000s, as the university learned that it had been admitting more undocumented students, both the student body and the president generated advocacy around immigration issues. Even before DACA existed, one event marked the beginning
stages of Georgetown’s position on undocumented rights. Before the Senate Judiciary Committee, DeGioia testified in support of the DREAM Act. Since the Georgetown student in question and was already protected by a private immigration bill, DeGioia was able to share the student’s story. “This enabled us to put a human face to what this was all about,” said Scott Fleming, then-associate vice president of federal relations.

For President DeGioia, DACA was neither a partisan nor even a political issue, but a moral one. A member of a new generation of lay presidents of Jesuit universities, DeGioia was able to learn from his Jesuit predecessors and credits his formation as a leader to the Jesuit tradition. A Georgetown trustee noted:

He’s looked upon on [as a leader in] areas that have to do with ethical kinds of issues and...[is considered] a national moral voice. Jack has a very, very strong sense of moral leadership, not just for Georgetown but among higher education presidents.

Unambivalent about what direction to take, DeGioia nevertheless consulted regularly with his government relations team and chief of staff, Joe Ferrara. Weighing the potential conflicts of taking a position on DACA, DeGioia and his staff felt confident that whatever the consequence, the institution could justify where it stood. Strategic about what issues he will address, DeGioia is aware of his boundaries, and how he will respectfully and carefully take a particular position on behalf of the welfare of students. DeGioia’s team also considered the potential of alienating alumni and donors, yet these possibilities did not deter the administration from moving forward.

Georgetown’s initial efforts to respond to DACA were practical actions that would directly address the needs of a vulnerable population. Known to attend many student events, DeGioia has been characterized by a Georgetown trustee as one who is
“omnipresent,” who “knows who the students are;” and who views his role as a kind of service of “ministry.” DeGioia has a strong sense of the life of the student. As one participant suggested, it was DeGioia’s own experience at Georgetown as an undergraduate that led him to direct his attention toward students. As one administrator noted, “He hasn't left since he started when he was 18. He focuses on the undergraduates a lot—he is a very dedicated Hoya to the undergrads.”

Protecting students and giving them an environment “free of constraint and fear” were motivators for DeGioia and his leadership team to address the specific needs within its own community. Said Chris Murphy, vice president for government relations and community engagement:

We have living, breathing students who we interact with all the time and we’re called on to care for them. As President DeGioia would say, “They are members of our community.” He frequently and intentionally uses the word “community” when talking about people associate with Georgetown. “Our community, the Georgetown community…” And so my sense is that he feels this imperative to take care of members of our community. It’s like our family.

**Student Support and Advocacy**

By 2006, the financial aid office started to award scholarships to undocumented students, not categorized as international students but as domestic students. Yet, highly aware of potential criticism from alumni and exposure by the media, the admissions office still was not public about accepting and fully funding undocumented students. Yet despite Georgetown’s hesitation to announce its acceptance of undocumented students publicly, the president’s office was open about its support of immigration rights to the internal community during this period. From 2009–2019, statements of institutional support for the DREAM Act and comprehensive immigration reform also laid out
Georgetown’s commitment to support and affirm undocumented students and described its efforts to influence key leaders in Congress and in the AJCU community.

In a letter to Sen. Durbin on April 6, 2009, DeGioia offered his gratitude for Durbin’s introduction of the DREAM Act, along with Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN) (DeGioia, 2009). “This legislation acknowledges that these young people had no choice about their legal status having come to the United States.” The letter continues, recalling a *Washington Post Magazine* cover story of Georgetown transfer student Juan Gomez, who came to the United States with his brother and parents from Colombia at the age of two. DeGioia states that, under the DREAM Act, Juan and others like him would be ensured protection from deportation.

Georgetown has had a long history of responding to controversial sociopolitical issues that many faith-based institutions would avoid, including LGBTQ rights. Georgetown’s LGBTQ Resource Center, for example, was founded in 2008 as a result of both strong student activism and the support of a president who legitimized student demands for a more supportive environment for the LGBTQ community. On October 24, 2007, DeGioia held an historic town hall meeting to respond to student concerns relating to the *Out for Change* campaign. DeGioia addressed the tensions between Catholic Church doctrine and advocacy for policies and practices that counter Catholic teaching:

> The character of our heritage supports the call to deepen the services and support we provide to LGBTQ students. We can and must advocate for respect, inclusion, understanding, safety, mentoring, dignity, growth and equal opportunity. We can and must advocate for freedom from prejudice, exclusion, discrimination, and homophobia (DeGioia, 2007).
Georgetown’s commitments to the LGBTQ community have been compared to its commitments to undocumented students. Three prominent centers and initiatives began to focus their objectives and efforts toward immigration advocacy in the early 2000s. The Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor (KI), which was founded in 2009 as a result of Georgetown students’ advocacy for workers’ rights, partners with local organizations in the Washington, DC, area to address housing, tenant rights, racial justice, and immigrant justice issues. KI’s student-run program, the Immigration and Labor Project (ILP), collaborates with organizations in Washington to address the needs of working and low-income immigrants. Reflective of the population it serves, KI’s director is a Temporary Protected Status (TPS) recipient. The majority of students who have participated have been passionate about issues related to immigration, having had DACA status themselves or having been otherwise affected by immigrant issues, either personally or through family members. Through their engagement in this program, they were able to see firsthand how federal public policy decisions affect residents of local communities. After graduation, many of these students have continued to be engaged in immigration justice work in the communities from which they came. At the institutional level, the university has provided considerable resources for campus workers who are TPS recipients. Overall, “the administration and the students are aligned on pushing and supporting students and workers who are affected by immigration issues,” noted one KI administrator.

Another example of Georgetown’s commitment to immigration issues was the expansion to immigrants of the Community Scholars Program (CSP), a five-week
intensive summer enrichment program for incoming Georgetown students under the auspices of the Center for Multicultural Equity and Access. The center was established as a result of the 1968 riots in Washington, DC, when rioters argued that Georgetown was a university on the hill to which a perceived few had access. The events of that time inspired a new commitment to enroll more students of color, focusing on Black students. In 2010, the program was opened to first-generation, multicultural, and undocumented students. The program provides unique academic advising, including personal development coaching, meetings with deans, and skills-based workshops that highlight the “hidden curriculum” of often-unspoken keys to college success, which may be unknown to first-generation and financially disadvantaged students. A Georgetown administrator described the program further:

We talk about the hidden curriculum; we talk about imposter syndrome; we talk about what it means to be in a university where, again, there's just a tremendous amount of privilege and you are in classes with individuals who historically have had a lot of privilege either financially, or socially.

The program is also a conduit to university services like financial aid, the disability services office, and the office of academic resources, “giving our students the confidence and agency to be more visible,” noted the executive director of the Center for Multicultural Equity & Access.

The director of the CSP reported directly to the academic dean, who also led the task force on undocumented students. The individual, who unofficially provided advising to undocumented students was formerly undocumented and was charged with overseeing the CSP.
Many undocumented students who went through the CSP were more prepared to begin the academic year. As one administrator noted:

This program really is what gives students the tools to understand their value, their worth…These are students who got into this university on a quarter [of] the resources [of the average Georgetown student] because they have intellectual skills and they had the intellectual acumen to be inquisitive. Many of these students were the ones who had mentors at the secondary level that allowed them to even dream of a place like Georgetown.

Georgetown students have enjoyed the ability to engage in activism and scholarship in social justice issues under the direction of The Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching & Research (CSJ). Since its founding 2001, the student body at Georgetown have been actively engaged in social justice work and activism. A hub for student engagement, social justice work, and community-based engagement, the CSJ supports students who have social justice and activist commitments. Helping to organize protests, rallies, immersion trip experiences, including Arizona–Mexico border trips, letter-writing campaigns, and speaker events, the CSJ has involved as many as 1,500 undergraduate and graduate students and 50 faculty and staff participants each semester.

In recent years, CSJ’s research activity and advocacy have been focused on immigration issues and have promoted “community-based research, teaching and service by collaborating with diverse partners and communities” (Georgetown, n.d.-d). An adjunct faculty member and then-executive director of the CSJ spearheaded a project that followed the trajectory of undocumented immigrants in Washington, DC, who were able to acquire driver’s licenses. Georgetown student researchers assisted the faculty member with the project, many of whom continued immigration research and advocacy after
graduation. Commending the university’s support of her research, the faculty member noted:

Georgetown was amazing. They created opportunities for me to give briefings to city council. We were able to get legislation passed that amended the whole process for how undocumented immigrants got their licenses, which didn’t require them to wait two years for it. And students were part of that. They have gone [on] to do amazing things.

To help ensure that real or perceived barriers to active participation in university activities were eliminated, the CSJ’s executive director was vigilant about using university messaging that made all students feel welcome. The CSJ also sought to ensure equal opportunity for securing paid work for student workers. The university held approximately 300 federal work-study positions for which DACA students were not eligible to apply. The CSJ created an award for undocumented students who engaged in service and social justice work.

The CSJ also supports 40 student organizations, including Hoyas for Immigrant Rights, which engages in immigration rights and DACA advocacy work and UndocuHoyas, an undocumented-student support organization. UndocuHoyas was created to provide a community space for fellowship and resources for undocumented students. By 2015, the organization became more mobilized and vocal about additional resources and support the university could provide. “The students ran a really tactical campaign. And it was this group that quite literally started moving the needle along,” said one administrator. Targeting their efforts toward the vice president of student affairs and president’s offices, students advocated for the university to change the language on the admissions application to remove barriers for undocumented students wishing to attend
Georgetown— for example, the requirement to submit parents’ social security numbers. Not fully having understood the process by which to apply for DACA status, undocumented students expressed a need for Georgetown’s support to help them through the process. “With Jesuit universities, students really hold Jesuits’ feet to the fire….The mission of social justice is really ingrained in them and so they’re really pushing the boundaries,” said a faculty member.

Actions that Georgetown took to remove barriers for undocumented students involved strategic relationships with national immigration rights and advocacy organizations. A formal partnership with Catholic Charities made it possible for students to receive free legal counsel and provided support to complete their DACA applications and renewals.

In partnership with United We Dream, a prominent national organization for immigration rights advocacy, Hoyas for Immigrant Rights and UndocuHoyas sponsored a photo campaign supporting undocumented individuals on November 12, 2015. Approximately 100 students and 65 staff and faculty, including President DeGioia, participated by holding signs that read sentiments of support, such as “My name is…..I am an Unafraid Ally who Works with and Supports Undocumented Students and Families.” The event was cosponsored by the college dean’s office, the Center for Social Justice, the Center for Multicultural Equity & Access, and the Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, among other departments and organizations. At the time, the university estimated that 20 DACA students enrolled as a result of this campaign.
By 2012, with increased awareness of the resource and support needs of undocumented students, the university began to put a structure in place that provided resources and support to undocumented students. The establishment of the “Undocumented Student Task Force,” spearheaded by an academic dean, moved actionable results forward. Members of the task force included academic deans, individuals from the financial aid office, admissions, campus ministry, and undocumented and documented students. The group created a comprehensive and centralized website, “Undocumented Student Resources” and garnered student input that led to a memorandum of understanding with Catholic Charities, which provided pro bono legal support. The genesis of the group was organic, yet it was formally accepted by academic and administrative leaders, including the president. It was around this time when the university would go public about the internal policies and procedures for DACA students.

By 2016, Georgetown made its positions public on DACA by creating a comprehensive website that highlighted all of the services and resources for undocumented students. The website was a central platform from which services for students with DACA status were promoted and executed. Going public made it possible for the admissions office to freely accept DACA students without concern of resistance from alumni or other stakeholders. Being publicly out in front about Georgetown’s admissions policies demonstrated a formal alignment with the university’s mission, which went hand in hand with the president’s more formal commitment. Said one admissions officer, “By going public, you can confidently say these things as opposed to
sitting quietly [about them] on the side.” Prominently located on the university’s home page, the Undocumented Student Services site is a comprehensive demonstration of institutional support, illustrating financial aid options, campus and community resources, student initiatives, legal aid, frequently asked questions, and admissions policies.

There were no tensions or backlash from the internal community when the university went public on its position on DACA. Said one study participant, “For the average student, it’s not part of their reality. It could also be a function of ‘this is what the university does.’” The university, however, did face a growing tension aroused by the campaign rhetoric of Donald Trump in 2016, who committed to rescinding DACA if voted into office.

The 2016 Election

Immediately after Donald Trump was elected president on November 8, 2016, the intensity of Georgetown’s political engagement and internal efforts in support of DACA students increased dramatically. The day after the election, President DeGioia’s chief of staff, Joe Ferrara, and government relations staff met and organized weekly meetings with colleagues, administrators, and, at times, undocumented and documented students. This ad hoc working group was designed to make sure the university was doing everything internally for their undocumented students. Said Scott Fleming, vice president of federal relations:

It has caused real, real concern among our students and not only students who are Dreamers, but students who know those Dreamers and…don’t want to see their friends at risk. When…President [Trump] announced he was going to terminate the program, we did a round of letters to our alumni members of Congress saying, please help us. This is bad policy.
There was an elevated sensitivity after the election about what DACA would mean for higher education. Given Trump’s campaign rhetoric, administrators at Georgetown had fully anticipated, that, if he were to be elected, the institution would have to address many issues head-on and intensely. “One of those more prominent issues was DACA. There was a heightened sense of anxiety from our students who were Dreamers. These issues were definitely on our radar screen” noted Chris Murphy, vice president for government relations and community engagement. Once Trump was inaugurated and he put into effect the travel ban and DACA rescission, “we shifted into a different gear,” said Ferrara.

Three days after the election, as tensions heightened for the nation and for academic institutions, DeGioia released a statement to the campus community called “Reflections on This Moment in Our Nation” DeGioia (2016) offered how institutions of higher education, specifically Jesuit and Catholic institutions and, finally, Georgetown, could play a role in healing a community and a country in turmoil:

These are the resources of the Academy—our intellectual engagement through discovery and dialogue, and the construction, critique, and sharing of knowledge. These are the resources of our heritage as a Catholic and Jesuit institution, and of the many religious and spiritual traditions that we embrace at our university. And these are the resources of a community—of our Georgetown community—shaped by diversity, a care for one another, and an unwavering commitment to human dignity and the common good.

Drawing from Georgetown’s intellectual capacity, human capital, and mission focus, DeGioia invited the community to channel its resources “into engagement with the challenges in our nation” (DeGioia, 2016). While this message evoked sentiments of inclusion and an open heart, it also evoked a responsibility that the academic community
bore as it sought to promote a more just society. From April 2009–July 2018, DeGioia released 23 statements, signed amicus briefs, wrote op-eds, and sent letters to Congress—all related to supporting the DREAM Act, immigration reform, and the DACA program.

Student members of the undocumented student task force demanded that the university take a strong position and create a new administrative role that would be fully dedicated to serving the needs of undocumented students. Arelis Palacios, who at the time had been working within the Office of Global Education, agreed also to dedicate time as an advisor for undocumented students, essentially assuming one and a half jobs for almost a year and a half. Working with senior administration, Palacios helped to establish, with the assistance of external consultants, a long-term institutional strategy to serving the needs of undocumented students, which included partnering with key leaders in advocacy work and in the local nonprofit and government sectors. It would not be long before the university hired Palacios full-time as the associate director of undocumented student services at the Center for Multicultural Equity & Access, a new position devoted to undocumented-student support.

One of the sources of anxiety for the students and tensions for the university was a mistrust of university authority. For students who were DACA-eligible but did not file for DACA, there was a sense of comfort in being unknown to the government. Yet, without DACA status, they would have no level of protection. While the university could not make decisions for the students about applying for DACA status or not, it engaged with Catholic Charities to provide pro bono legal support to help students navigate the process. Noted Murphy, “I think at first the students were very understandably just scared.
and they didn’t trust anyone in power, maybe including us.” Palacios met with the students individually and with administration to find ways to establish a level of trust and security for the students.

While the university was transparent with students about how it would support and protect them, it was just as clear about what measures it would not take, like proclaiming to be a sanctuary campus. For the administration, taking this position would put the institution and students at an unnecessary risk, as it would target the campus for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) actions. Functionally, taking this position would be only symbolic and would not offer any more protection for undocumented students since, in the end, the university would not be able to defy the law. On December 2, 2016, 40 to 50 members of the Sanctuary Campus Movement gathered in Red Square before participating in a “Solidarity Walk” to deliver a petition to President DeGioia. The petition called on DeGioia and university leadership to refuse to release information regarding student religion, race, or ethnicity without a subpoena; to provide free legal service for immigration-related matters; to create a full-time position of undocumented student coordinator (which still was part-time at that point); and to not cooperate with ICE and the Department of Homeland Security. The petition also extended the definition of a sanctuary campus to include all marginalized groups, not only undocumented students (Maher, 2016).

Sympathetic to students’ fears as a result of the presidential campaign, Georgetown administration addressed many of the student’s concerns. Said Joe Ferrara, chief of staff to DeGioia, “Given some of the rhetoric in the campaign, we think there are
very legitimate concerns and anxieties, so we’ve been trying to work with students and administrators to address that.” At the same time, he took a pragmatic position that, while it would be open to addressing specific demands, it would do so “to the fullest extent permitted by the law.” In an effort to articulate the justification for this position and to renew trust and understanding, administrators met with students on a weekly basis.

DeGioia himself met with students regularly to listen to their concerns and address them to the extent possible. Equally as important to him was his very public approach to his position. DeGioia positioned Georgetown as an institutional leader in supporting DACA, coauthoring a positioning statement and inviting AJCU presidents to sign. Chris Murphy, vice president of government relations and community engagement, described DeGioia’s commitment to the issue:

“Our President was incredibly engaged on the issue. My sense is that he felt Georgetown was in a position to play an important role in the conversation. And he encouraged us to use everything we’ve got on it. We were willing to be one of the louder voices.

DeGioia’s steadfast authority set things in motion for his direct team and for others at the institution. Murphy acknowledged that while other sociopolitical issues like tax reform or gun control involve less clarity of a moral position, immigration reform, even with its nuances, was an issue that the institution could confidently address.

DeGioia had no ambivalence about what position to be on for DACA which freed university administrators to take creative risks. Murphy continued:

When President DeGioia communicated to the university’s leadership, “Guys, we’re all in on this issue,” each of us felt comfortable going to work to figure out what we could do to contribute to the overall effort. For example, the vice president of student affairs hired an undocumented student advisor, the vice president of federal relations did a number of things. Our team that focuses on
local issues figured out how to work with the local government on a number of related issues. So that was really empowering.

Georgetown also quickly connected with its Catholic, higher education, and political partners to an effort spearheaded by Scott Fleming, then-associate vice president of federal relations and close confidant to DeGioia. In spring 2017, the university engaged with organizations like AJCU and the American Council on Education (of which DeGioia completed his term as chair), as well as with key individuals in Washington who had vast experience on both the Republican and Democratic sides of Capitol Hill. As a nonprofit, Georgetown is careful not to take partisan positions.

President DeGioia hosted an all-day brainstorming session that included his staff, along with representatives from Catholic Charities, Carnegie Corporation, Capitol Hill, and various legal firms, to start to build a comprehensive approach to support undocumented students and to influence public policy. As a result of the session, the university aligned with external organizations that provided tactical support to undocumented students and a better understanding of law and policy. Catholic Charities eventually provided pro bono legal counsel regarding the DACA order, and a different firm provided support for international students concerning travel ban issues.

In an effort to raise awareness and to comfort and respond to the concerns of the Georgetown community, DeGioia and his staff participated in numerous town halls in 2016–2017, DeGioia sent several communications to reaffirm the university’s mission, bring the community together, and show empathy and support for DACA students. Because of DeGioia’s long service to the University and his consistent messaging, he inspires confidence in the Georgetown community. His longevity (and the wisdom that
came with it), respect of the Georgetown and Washington community, and his alignment with the Catholic and Jesuit tradition, all informed DeGioia’s clarity to act.

In an email to the internal Georgetown community November 29, 2016, after the institution had endured ethnic bias-related incidents, DeGioia affirmed the university’s support for all members of its community, writing:

As we approach the conclusion of our fall semester, I wish to take a moment to reaffirm a key aspect of our university’s mission: to educate our students to live generously in service to others. Our mission is animated by our Catholic and Jesuit tradition—a tradition that affirms the inherent dignity of each of us, asking us to love and respect every person and come together in solidarity with all those marginalized or in need. (DeGioia, 2016)

In the email, DeGioia invoked Pope Francis’s apostolic letter *Misericordia et misera*, “call[ing] each of us—as members of a global community—to ‘promote a culture of mercy…in which no one looks at another with indifference or turns away from the suffering of our brothers and sisters.’” DeGioia’s email goes on to list aspirations for the community, pledging to protect undocumented students “to the fullest extent of the law:”

To continue to engage in constructive dialogue; to hold each other to the very highest standards of civility and respect; to continue to support all of our students, faculty, and staff members and stand against discrimination based on race, national origin…and other protected characteristics; and to continue to support the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA).

The message concludes with a renewed shared commitment:

As we prepare for the new year ahead, I wish to encourage each of us to recommit ourselves to supporting one another—to working together to do all we can to ensure that our community is a place of deep care for each person, especially those who feel most vulnerable. In this moment, we remain dedicated to harnessing the resources of our university to pursue and promote the common good—a good we can create together [and] that we cannot achieve alone.
On December 13, 2017, the faculty senate aligned with the institution’s position on the DACA program by unanimously approving the following resolution: “The Georgetown University Faculty Senate commends and supports President DeGioia’s call for passage of the Dream Act of 2017, and for all the institutional support the University is providing to undocumented students” (Georgetown, n.d.-e)

DeGioia also spent a great deal of time communicating with external constituencies, including meeting with members of Congress and their staffs. DeGioia facilitated conversations with public and private higher education institutions in an effort to garner support for immigration legislation. On one occasion, DeGioia moderated a panel discussion with three area college presidents, DeRionne Pollard, president of Montgomery College; Angel Cabrera, president of George Mason University; and Scott Ralls, president of Northern Virginia Community College. Among the issues discussed were the contributions of undocumented students and how colleges and universities could ensure a safe and thriving environment for DACA students. DeGioia remarked, “We have a role to play as colleges and universities in seeking to advocate for the safety of our students.” Said Cabrera, an immigrant from Spain, “This whole issue of DACA is not just an issue of justice—if we don’t find a solution we are hurting our own interests” (Cabrera, DeGioia, Pollard & Ralls, 2017).

These leaders, who represented public, private, two- and four-year institutions in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, DC, also called on Congress in October 2017 to pass the DREAM Act (Cabrera, DeGioia, Pollard & Ralls, 2017). Members of Georgetown’s campus ministry, including the university’s Muslim imam and rabbi, spoke
at a press conference on immigration on Capitol Hill, and the administration signed amicus briefs on various court cases related to immigration rights. Members of the Georgetown community spoke to members of the judicial and legislative branches. Yet, it was a challenge to engage with members of the executive branch since many federal positions had been left vacant.

Georgetown’s responses to DACA were on both an internal and an external track. Internally, the institution did what it could to support the community, through providing legal assistance, offering student support services, and sending letters to parents. On the external track, representatives of Georgetown engaged in public policy efforts on Capitol Hill and participated in events. And depending on the ebbs and flows of the political hour, the institution engaged in various judicial actions. During possible intervention points, such as midterm elections or future votes, DeGioia’s staff attempted to influence politicians’ leanings.

Georgetown enjoyed the support of Richard Durbin, the senior senator representing Illinois, a double-alumnus of Georgetown, and lead sponsor of the DREAM Act. Sen. Durbin, having spoken on campus several times about DACA, invited a group of Dreamers to meet with him in his office after he gave a talk on the Senate floor. While some of the students had not been public about their status and knew the personal risk it presented for them to attend, “they felt at a very scary time that there was somebody fighting for them,” said one administrator.

In December 2010 when the DREAM Act was passed in the House and during a lame duck session in the Senate, Georgetown lobbied intensely to get the bill passed. A
day or two before the vote, President DeGioia did a radio commentary on WAMU, Washington, DC’s public radio station, affirming his support of the DREAM Act. In January 2017, when the new Congress had been sworn in, DeGioia and the vice president of federal relations contacted alumni members of Congress to cosponsor the bipartisan BRIDGE Act, or Bar Removal of Individuals Who Dream and Grow Our Economy, which Senators Durbin and Graham introduced. At any sign of political movement, Georgetown exploited every opportunity to interact with congressional leaders.

Georgetown has 28 alumni who currently serve in the 116th Congress (7 senators and 21 representatives), many of whom are strong proponents of immigration rights. As the nation’s capital, Washington has one non-voting delegate to the House of Representatives and no U.S. Senators; therefore, Georgetown relies heavily on its alumni who are members of Congress to speak on its behalf. Said Scott Fleming, former associate vice president of federal relations:

Most of them, maybe not all, but most of them are certainly receptive to hearing what their alma mater thinks about these issues. I always tell people on campus they represent somebody else. We have had the good fortune of many of them certainly being open to hearing our perspectives and why we think things are important.

Fleming, who has had a coterminous tenure with President DeGioia, had a clear sense of key influencers with whom to work. He had nurtured relationships with alumni in Congress and alumni on the Hill staff, covering a bipartisan spectrum. Fleming created ample opportunities for congressional members to come to campus, from being guest lecturers to attending special university functions. Georgetown, too, was an intellectual
resource for some members of Congress, as faculty had extended expertise on various legislative matters.

One of the issues that Georgetown wrestled with was how to use its political clout effectively to stimulate legislative change. It was evident that there would be limits to Georgetown’s ability to have any significant political influence so long as Trump would be in office. As one Georgetown administrator put it:

Quite frankly, the idea of hired lobbyists convincing the Trump Administration to shift gears and support serious legislation didn’t seem promising. Given the politics behind the administration’s position on this, it strikes me that the White House has been more interested in the issue than a solution.

Beyond exploiting its political networks, Georgetown used its social clout within its academic networks to influence college and university presidents across the country. As former chair of ACE and a board member of AJCU, DeGioia was highly influential among his peers and colleagues. He sent personal letters to presidents, particularly in consequential states, requesting that they contact their representatives and senators and support DACA legislation.

Georgetown had a very close relationship with the AJCU, also headquartered in Washington. The government relations staff at both institutions connected almost daily and strategized on issues that affected higher education, including how to best appeal to politicians to enact policy change. AJCU’s Vice President for Federal Relations Cindy Littlefield served as a professional negotiator before the U.S. Department of Education on behalf of the 28 U.S. Jesuit colleges and universities and led the lobbying arm of the network on issues pertaining to appropriations, budget, taxes, and immigration. Because of the rapport between Fleming and Littlefield and the institutions’ common location in
Washington, DC, Georgetown and AJCU shared a mutual tenacity for political engagement. As a hub of resources, AJCU shared Georgetown’s approaches to the immigration and DACA issues with the other schools.

Yet, there are limits to how collaborative some institutions might be, depending on where the institution is located and what their political delegation’s leanings are on a particular issue. While some Jesuit institutions can be leaders in advocating for DACA, leaders at other Jesuit institutions may take another position or stay neutral. The potential of going against the political fray of an alumni base was a reality that some university leaders were not willing to confront. Noted one trustee:

We know for a fact that in several states in the South or institutions that are in a red state, [Jesuit colleges and universities] [need] to be really careful. They have to be careful even in terms of talking about issues that might be a major concern of the day.

Despite being at the epicenter of national politics, and its history of having had cooperative relationships with politicians and past administrations of the executive branch, Georgetown could not have been more disconnected from the movement that brought Trump to power. Participants revealed the challenge in working with the current administration and the difficulty in pushing policy decisions. Said one Georgetown administrator:

We are frustrated. There’s an old saying, something like, in a battle of wits, make sure your opponent is armed. If you try to debate a four-year-old, the four-year-old’s not going to look stupid, you are. And so part of it is…some of the irrationality that we now see in our politics. No amount of planning, no amount of good strategy. You’re dealing with just some insanity. We can’t beat ourselves up too badly here.
On February 4, 2019, Georgetown once again called on Congress to pass
permanent protections of undocumented students. DeGioia, along with more than 400
university presidents who comprise the Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and
Immigration, sent letters to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), House Minority Leader
Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), and Senate
Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), urging permanent protection of DACA and
TPS recipients. The letter from Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and
Immigration (2019) states:

The high anxiety and uncertainty on our campuses continue as many of our
Dreamer students, alumni, and community members, along with those in TPS, fear for their futures and families….We have come together because we are
committed to supporting undocumented, immigrant, and international students;
and are deeply concerned about how changes in our nation’s immigration policies
and practices impact our students and campuses and the communities and states
we serve….We urge you to end the plight of the 700,000 current DACA
recipients and 300,000 TPS recipients, and the suffering of their families and
loved ones….As higher education leaders, we are prepared to work with you to
ensure U.S. immigration policies are informed by our experiences and convictions
so that our nation’s security may be provided for, and our heritage as a nation of
immigrants is respected and protected.

Without a doubt, Georgetown’s reputation, location, and presidential leadership
were factors in how intensely and how publicly Georgetown took a position on DACA.
Insofar as controversial sociopolitical matters affected the well-being of the academic
community, Georgetown welcomed the opportunity to confront these issues head-on, and
it was up to the president to lead that effort and to assume this responsibility on behalf of
those whom he served. And for as long as DACA would remain an unresolved political
issue, it is clear that Georgetown would continue their level of political engagement. Said
one Georgetown trustee:
It’s very important for us to be involved in those dicey legislative matters….Clearly the role of the president is such that the impact of an individual like himself as the leader of the oldest Jesuit Catholic college in the United States has a true impact on those who will listen. Secondly, it’s part of the moral responsibility of any educational leader to step out and advocate on behalf of students, faculty, staff, whatever the situation might be. So some of those decisions he probably would not consider risky, but rather a moral responsibility as a leader.

That moral imperative for the leadership at Georgetown extended beyond its immediate community to the larger society. Taking care of the needs of the community would be a metaphor for caring for the well-being of society. With respect to immigration, the more welcoming a campus, the stronger the institution, stronger a society. Noted one Georgetown administrator:

I feel like we’re having this debate in our country right now, and at the simplest level, I would put it this way—are we going to be an open society or are we going to be a closed society? Are we going to open in all of its manifestations, or are we going to close? Are we going to build walls? Are we going to create adversaries? Are we going to shut other people out however we define who the other is? I think we have a very strong principle…that I think is part of the Georgetown sort of culture, that when in doubt, you go the open way.

Jesuit Mission

Fundamental to Georgetown’s culture is the deep Jesuit tradition that informs its mission. Tenets of social justice, educating the whole person, and walking with the stranger are intertwined with the moral dimensions of DACA. Pope Francis set a tone for immigration as a nonpartisan issue, which created a space for Catholic colleges and universities, including Jesuit institutions to transcend political controversy. Some faith-based higher education institutions believed that they were more at liberty to discuss issues of morality and values than were their secular counterparts, and Georgetown was one of those institutions. Noted a Georgetown administrator, “To be explicit about faith, I
think, does provide kind of a powerful platform. I think that definitely is a source of strength and that’s been part of our engagement.” As a member of a network of 28 other Jesuit schools, Georgetown is not unique. What does set it apart from the others, said one participant, is how advocacy is “in our DNA and it comes from the top and across the campus. The messaging is widespread.”

Partnering with its Catholic networks, Georgetown has been strategic in nurturing relationships with religious leaders. Georgetown hosted Cardinal Joseph Tobin, an advocate of the rights and dignity of immigrants; began an initiative with John Carr, Director of Initiative on Catholic Social Thought in Public Life; and worked with alumna Sister Norma Pimentel, director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley. One administrator described the Jesuit culture of engagement and acceptance:

The Jesuits have always been a global institution. And they’ve always been about engaging the frontiers about moving across the global community in a spirit of compassion, in a spirit of cultural acceptance. Part of that Jesuit thing is that I’m not going to come in here and try to change you. You are who you are. I’m here to engage with you as you are. I take you as you are. I don’t try to mold you into something I think you should be.

Yet there is a response to DACA that goes beyond animating one’s Jesuit, Catholic faith tradition. Georgetown has used the platform of immigration as a way to enable members of the community to explore their own faith. The university employs one imam and two rabbis, one of whom hosted an immersion trip that focused on the Jewish response to immigration, migration, and social justice. Noted the executive director of Georgetown’s Center for Social Justice Research, “I think Georgetown is very much about how we want our students and our staff and our faculty to deepen their faith roots in any faith that they have.” Other study participants noted that while the Jesuit tradition
sees the immigrant experience through an ecclesiastical lens, it is not the only tradition that interprets DACA that way.

A public display of advocacy among the Georgetown community was demonstrated through participation in United We Dream campaigns, where members of the community showed their support for immigration rights by holding signs that read, “I stand for…” and “I’m an ally with…” The task force promoted these activities, and “the number of professors and students that would be a part of that campaign grew exponentially,” said one member of the task force. President DeGioia himself also participated, as one photo on social media revealed him standing with a student holding one of the signs.

Being an institutional authority on the subject also contributed to how public the institution would express its position on DACA. For those instances where stakeholders may have had an intellectual and moral understanding of DACA, Georgetown administrators made the issue personal to inspire an emotional passion to the issue. When District of Columbia Attorney General Karl Racine visited campus, he was the lead attorney general on DACA. Murphy said:

I hoped to make it personal for Karl. So I emailed him and I said, will you come and sit down around the table over pizza and hear our students and listen to their stories? So he came and brought his attorneys working on the issue because he wanted them to get charged. That was my goal. I wanted him to meet some real live Dreamers so when he was out talking about DACA he wasn’t saying this is about some theoretical student. This is for Louis, who I met at Georgetown University. He is amazing and we want students like Louis in this country.

Administrators coordinated with his staff to take photos with Dreamers, a photo which Racine and his staff tweeted and retweeted. Unafraid of being out in front of an issue,
Georgetown welcomed the spotlight. Reporting on DACA student stories in the school’s newspaper and in the alumni magazine also shed light on the university’s commitment. Yet, as one administrator admitted, “Presumably, if it [had been] a tricky issue, we might not have done it.”

Another public demonstration of Georgetown’s “pro-immigration” position came when the university honored immigration advocate Abel Nuñez in January 2017 on Martin Luther King Jr. Day with the Legacy of the Dream Award. Nuñez led the Central American Resource Network, an organization that provided services to immigrants. Since historically the award had been given to an African American civil rights leader, the administration consulted with African American members of the selection committee to ensure that awarding a non-African American with the award was deemed credible. Admittedly, one participant said that since immigration was a politically “hot” issue during the presidential campaign, the university was “being a little cheeky” and wanted to “be out there on immigration.”

With 28 Georgetown alumni as members in Congress, Georgetown was able to operate on both the federal and local levels and was able to strategically advocate on DACA based on what was in the best interests of students. Being effective also meant that the administration would discern how powerful its voice would be and when it would be used. “It requires a little bit more tailored approach to that problem,” said an administrator who works in local politics. How the university approached an issue was as important as the issue itself, how vocal and outward public statements would be proportionate to the issue and institution, was part of the administration’s calculus.
Being public on its pro-immigration stance came with its own set of risks and tensions for the institution. While participants did not report on any DACA students having been detained or deported (one student’s family was deported reported one participant), there remained a real sense of insecurity for the futures of DACA students. Secret internet groups were established so that if ICE came to campus, undocumented students would have an immediate way to alert others. Administrators met with students to discuss what protocol would be followed if ICE came and asked for their records. Without a court order, the institution would not have to provide any information; with a court order, the university would be powerless to protect the identities of DACA students.

Once the university made a decision to be out in front publicly, it was clear that there were few limits on how far the leadership would go, within the law’s constraints. Said the executive director of the Center for Social Justice:

I feel like there’s no one else at a private, elite institution who has been more vocal. On government-related advocacy issues, our president’s office and associate vice president of federal relations are not just going to come out on anything. They come out on things related to higher education and Catholic social teaching. They know that’s where they stand. They know that’s where they can have the greatest effect. It’s awesome to see the leadership as being quite strong on this.

There was no evidence of resistance to Georgetown’s immigration-related positions by the board of trustees or from current students, faculty, or staff. The university engaged actively with current students, through letter writing campaigns to members of Congress. The associate vice president of federal relations sent an email to students encouraging them to call or write to members of key congressional districts. Only one student responded with a complaint. Knowing that alumni cover an ideological
spectrum, Georgetown does not ask alumni to actively take political action on an issue, and no doubt there are some alumni who do not agree with how President DeGioia has responded to this issue, as some have expressed in letters and emails.

The source of frustration and tension for Georgetown administrators had less to do with complaints and resistance from alumni or donors. Georgetown’s political influence on immigration at the level of national politics was impotent, a point of frustration deeply felt by study participants. President DeGioia made dozens of calls to Republican members of Congress, several of whom are alumni, parents, and friends. But while these members of Congress principally supported DeGioia’s efforts and even the issues themselves, politically they would not be able to sign a piece of legislation because of other parts of the bill that would be attached to a DACA resolution bill. One administrator explained the difficulties:

> In some more normal political time, perhaps we could have gotten more traction. But these are not normal political times. Now, that doesn’t mean we throw up our hands and say we’re not going to get this done. There’s no way we will give up. And it’s been something Jack has been focused on for his whole presidency. It’s definitely been a challenge and a source of frustration with regard to the insane politics.

The university is fine-tuning everything that it can to support DACA students and to provide the best experience for them. To the very last detail, administrators are exploring ways in which DACA students could participate in a study-abroad-like experience at a domestic location within the United States. Since DACA students were ineligible to apply for passports, travel within the country might be a substitute for international experience.
While leadership at Georgetown still has an eye toward achieving a real solution to DACA and immigration rights, and also toward being an agent in this effort, individuals continue to promote immigration awareness and advocacy internally and locally. In local politics the university is also actively engaged with immigration issues. *Access to Justice* is a law that was created in some states that allocates taxes toward grants to fund immigration legal defense. Georgetown’s staff worked to create a sister bill to it called *Access to Justice for Immigrants* which opened access to grants for people whose residences were outside of Washington, DC. Georgetown students testified before a hearing and advocated for the language to be changed, which allowed DACA students to be eligible for the grants.

The academy has opportunities to affect public policy decisions, in addition to supporting and educating its students. Particularly for an institution like Georgetown, where its proximity to Washington and its network of legislative alumni help it to address sociopolitical issues, leaders possess a sense of profound responsibility to enact change. Said one administrator:

I think this [DACA] is something that universities do need to push forward. I think many universities and colleges do need to take a stand, and being here in DC, I think it would be vital for Georgetown to take a lead in this fight.
CHAPTER 5 – LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Is this something that is very important to this campus, to our history, important to our community and part of our charism, and can we move this conversation forward and help impact public policy, as well as civil discourse, as well as minds and hearts?

—President Jo Ann Rooney, Loyola University Chicago

History and Context

Founded in 1870 by Fr. Arnold Damen, SJ, Saint Ignatius College was renamed Loyola University in 1909. Historically a commuter school, Loyola University Chicago has long served the working class immigrant population of Chicago. Home to four distinct campuses—the downtown Water Tower Campus, the Lakeshore Campus in Rogers Park, Health Sciences Campus in Maywood, and one in Rome, Italy—Loyola serves over 11,000 undergraduate students and 6,000 graduate students.

The campus in Rogers Park is well connected to the community. It provides employment and services to the community, including community engagement with Rogers Park and Edgewater city councils, the “Walk to Work Program” sponsored by the president’s office, and housing loans to faculty and staff to encourage employees to reside in the community. Nursing students have provided health services at St. Ignatius Church, and students have volunteered at a number of schools, shelters, centers, and hospitals in the community. The university’s chapel, Madonna della Strada, is a prominent façade on the Lakeshore Campus. It is an extension of campus ministry in the community and a place of worship and service for a diverse congregation.

As a point of pride, study participants noted Loyola’s history of serving immigrant communities, as well as first-generation college students. In November 2013,
Loyola’s Joan and Bill Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage launched the first in a series of conferences that addressed the role that Catholicism played in sustaining ethnic identities of immigrant communities who arrived in Chicago in the 1900s. As the largest undergraduate institution in Chicago and one of the largest Jesuit Catholic institutions in the country, Loyola has continued this commitment to immigrants to the present day, providing educational opportunities to ethnically diverse, first-generation college, and middle-to-lower income students.

Loyola’s commitment to serving a diverse student population is evident. More than a third of Loyola University students are first-generation college students. In 2016, 26% of undergraduate students received Pell Grants and 98% received some kind of financial aid (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.-b). A Yellow Ribbon institution, Loyola enrolled approximately 200 veterans in 2016. For the undergraduate population, women outnumber men 68% to 34%, and 45% of all undergraduates self-identify as an ethnic minority (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.-b).

Characterized as a Doctoral University with High Research Activity by Carnegie Classification, and ranked a top national university by U.S. News & World Report, Loyola is among a select number of universities recognized for community service and engagement by the Carnegie Foundation and the Corporation for National and Community Services.

The university is home to 13 schools, colleges, and institutes, including Arrupe College of Loyola University Chicago, College of Arts and Sciences, School of Communication, School of Education, Quinlan School of Business, School of
Engineering, Institute of Environmental Sustainability, and Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing. Programs at the graduate level include offerings in the School of Education, School of Law, Institute of Pastoral Studies, School of Social Work, College of Arts and Sciences, Stritch School of Medicine, School of Communication, and School of Continuing and Professional Studies.

Messaging and imagery throughout the university indicate the institution’s focus on students and community. The slogan “Advocacy. Care. Support.” lines the website and brochures in the Office of the Dean of Students. In the Stritch School of Medicine, a powerful display of the abandoned belongings of immigrants crossing borders—empty water bottles, bibles, papers, and children’s shoes—blends art and the tragedies of immigration. A painting named Jesus of Arrupe College is displayed in the lobby of the Arrupe College of Loyola, a two-year college which predominantly serves first-generation, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged students. The painting depicts a gender- and ethnically diverse group of seven students with a Latino Jesus as a central figure, surrounded by a golden halo. Some of the figures have their eyes open, including Jesus, while others’ eyes are closed, as if to suggest the tensions between the private and public life and “the duality of our natures,” notes the artist, Janet McKenzie. In the book, Come to Believe: How the Jesuits are Reinventing Education (Again), by Arrupe College Dean and Executive Director Stephen Katsouros (2017), Jesus, along with others, has open palms, an “invitational gesture meant to convey welcome to the viewer and to Arrupe College, and education,” (p. 171) continues McKenzie. “The

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essence of our work,” Katsouros writes, is “a labor of love, complicated, sincerely from the hearts, where students feel welcomed and affirmed” (p. 172).

A steward of its Jesuit Catholic tradition, Loyola is defined by its mission: “We are Chicago’s Jesuit, Catholic University: a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice, and faith” (Loyola, n.d.-a) Appointed by Pope Francis in 2014, Joseph Cupich is Cardinal of Chicago. The relationship between Loyola’s leadership and Cupich is strong and collegial. In 2017, Loyola President Jo Ann Rooney bestowed the Sword of Loyola, Loyola’s highest honor to Cardinal Cupich at the Stritch School of Medicine Awards Dinner, an event that celebrated a theme of “Living a Life in Service to Others.” The event raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for medical student scholarships.

With respect to its relationship to sociopolitical issues, Loyola has seen its fair share of student activism, particularly in the last fifteen years. Addressing sociopolitical issues involving race and sexual orientation, Loyola students have openly advocated for social justice and human rights issues that have occupied a national stage. DACA has been one of those issues in which Loyola has been intensely involved.

**Emergence of DACA**

DACA emerged as an issue at Loyola University Chicago as a result of political serendipity and the bold ideas of key leaders. As early as 2001, at the beginning of President Michael Garanzini SJ’s tenure at Loyola, awareness of undocumented students began to surface. This was around the time when the first iteration of the DREAM Act
was introduced by Senators Durbin and Hatch, on August 2, 2001. Loyola’s Vice President for Government Relations Phil Hale, remarks:

As the only Jesuit Catholic University in Illinois, and one with numerous undocumented students enrolled, we were fortunate that the senior senator from Illinois was the champion of the DREAM Act, and we worked closely with him and his office from the beginning.

Durbin is an alumnus of Georgetown, as was his chief of staff at the time of the act’s introduction. This natural congruence between Loyola’s mission and the Jesuit education of a sponsor of the DREAM Act set the stage for how the institution would respond to the issue.

In 2001, the DREAM Act was new to the nation and to higher education. Loyola, at the time, did not keep track of how many undocumented students it enrolled, but the number was estimated at less than 10. The university established a task force that would look into the issue and aggressively lobby for the DREAM Act, and it has continued to do so ever since. Harkening back to a 1982 Supreme Court, Hale likened DACA to *Plyler vs. Doe*, in which Justice Brennan argued for the majority that access to public education cannot be denied on the basis of citizenship and justice, and that it is a basic social-justice tenet that a minor child cannot be held responsible for the actions of their parents (Hutchinson, 1982). As Hale remarked, “It resonated with me very strongly, and it resonated with Loyola. I think generally it’s clearly touched our mission. So Durbin asked if we would support this. It was a no-brainer.”

During one of the initial meetings with Garanzini and Durbin, their shared immigrant story helped to establish a common understanding, as it also laid a foundation for the practical argument to support DACA. Garanzini explained how supporting
undocumented students was central to the immigrant experience, one that many at Loyola share:

One of the things that Durbin and I talked about was being the children of immigrants and being very middle class and going to school and how we could afford it when we were undergraduates in 1969 and 1970. But now there’s no way people can afford to go to school without some kind of financial help. Since he [Durbin] was the lead senator, it was very important that Loyola take an ownership role in this issue with the AJCU. You had the AJCU, you had the student government, and a school that wanted to show, we’re going to put out doctors from this group. We were producing real health for the country. So it really was an easy moral issue and it was an easy practical, citizenship issue. It’s kind of what universities do, a place like Loyola, which brags about the fact that we have almost a third of our students who are first-generation students in a city like Chicago, which means we’re not talking about Central Americans [only]. We’re talking about Polish, Lithuanians, Vietnamese. We’re talking about all kinds of first-generation students.

**Stritch School of Medicine Responds to DACA**

Loyola’s most public and consequential response to DACA started at Stritch School of Medicine in 2011. It is a story of individuals who, out of either a personal interest in immigration or a moral commitment to doing the right thing, made bold and courageous choices to give DACA medical students greater opportunity, support, and resources than the medical school or Loyola University had ever provided before. This is also a story of the tradition of a Jesuit institution founded on strong roots of serving immigrant populations in the heart of Chicago. “This institution was founded back when the signs ‘no Irish need apply’ were up. This was a place for those that nobody else wanted,” says a faculty member.

Medical ethics faculty member and Director of the Neiswanger Institute for Bioethics at Stritch School of Medicine, Mark Kuczewski, became gravely concerned when he learned that Stritch was losing potential medical students of undocumented
status but exceptional talent to elite Ivy League institutions whose stronger financial positions allowed them to grant full scholarships. Students with undocumented status were ineligible to apply for state or federal funding. Up until the Stritch loan program was implemented, the only way undocumented students could borrow for college, including the hefty price-tag of medical schooling, were from private loans. Kuczewski’s personal interest in immigration, which he speculated was due in part to his being a product of immigrants, was also grounded in a larger sociopolitical issue. “There’s a reason ‘separate but equal’ was deemed unconstitutional because it never really is equal, and so this is why I see this very strongly as a civil rights struggle. This is the new Jim Crow.” On his own accord, Kuczewski drafted a report, a passion project that came on the heels of a white paper funded by the Ford Foundation, involving Fairfield University, Loyola University Chicago, and Santa Clara University, all leading Jesuit institutions.

This collaborative work became a starting point for dialogue and awareness around undocumented student education and support, whose efforts from 2010–2013 resulted to the production of a white paper, “Immigrant Student National Position Paper” (also called The Fairfield Report), which highlighted the challenges confronting undocumented students and the need for Jesuit and Catholic universities to advocate for this population. One of the leads on the project was Assistant Professor of Pastoral Studies Michael Canaris, PhD, of Loyola University Chicago, who at the time of the study was an adjunct professor of religious studies at Fairfield University. President Michael Garanzini, SJ and then-President Jeffrey Von Arx, SJ of Fairfield (currently at Boston College) were leading figures in the project. When the paper was released to
Senate staffers, Garanzini and Von Arx met with congressional leaders who had authored significant immigration legislation, including Bob Menendez (D-NJ). Twenty-five of the 28 Jesuit presidents, along with 50 undergraduate students from across the country, appeared before a congressional committee.

Kuczewski’s project was a culmination of years of research and talking to colleagues ad nauseam about the topic. “I was obsessed about this and talking about immigration and boring the hell out of my colleagues with this,” Kuczewski said. Consequently, Kuczewski built such a strong reputation among Jesuit colleagues that when a professor at Loyola University Marymount learned about a very bright undocumented medical school candidate at Marymount who couldn’t afford to attend Stritch, Kuczewski was the first person he called.

Then-chair of Loyola Marymount’s mathematics department sent an email to Hale about a DACA Loyola Marymount student, Rosa Aramburo, who was interested in attending Stritch School of Medicine but did not have the financial means to enroll. Hale forwarded the email to a bioethicist who was working as President Garanzini’s mission leader, who then forwarded the email to Kuczewski in 2011. This connection between faculty members of Jesuit institutions that were beginning to explore expansion of educational opportunities for undocumented students had a positive outcome. Aramburo, a surgical resident, eventually enrolled at Stritch and was in the first graduating class that included DACA students (Connor, n.d.).

Having learned about Kuczewski’s personal interest in immigration advocacy, and the barriers to enrollment at Stritch for DACA students, Garanzini met with
Kuczewski to discuss the possibility of finding alternative funding for DACA medical students beyond the modest but inadequate institutional funding that had been available to them. Garanzini also distributed Kuczewski’s report to deans of other medical schools and asked them to report back on what they could do to enroll undocumented students.

Despite the possible negative reactions from internal and external Loyola constituents, Garanzini felt a conviction to move forward. As one participant noted, “That’s where some bravery [comes] from the top of Fr. Garanzini to say, ‘We’ll take the heat.’” Garanzini himself said:

Chicago is a place that knows the importance of immigrants. I knew there were people that were strong Republicans, like the board chair was a strong Republican. When those guys see the kids, when they see the students, and they hear the stories they realize I think most of America realizes this is a stupid problem. This is a problem that shouldn’t be a problem. The kids were born and raised here. In every way they are part of the culture. Send them back? Send them back to places they’d never been? To speak a language they’ve never spoken? Pulling them out of law school and medical school? This is really crazy, right? Just solve the problem. So I didn’t expect a strong reaction, a negative reaction from the board. I think there were people who would’ve just wished we had just sat on our hands and not done anything, but there was just too much momentum.

Knowing that Garanzini was interested in the issue helped Kuczewski navigate an arduous and bureaucratic process with academic and administrative leaders to identify the obstacles and to get through them. One of the initial tensions within the institution was over how it would treat a new population of vulnerable students. Remarked one faculty member, “Everybody’s got their plate full—and universities, particularly large ones, build systems for the average student. And you’re trying to build systems now for a few exceptional students, and that’s hard.” Kuczewski would need a team of institutional leaders, including his dean and a prominent trustee, to fulfill his objectives. In addition,
said one participant, “What you will find is while there was a visionary leader at the top in Fr. Garanzini,” there were others on the ground seeing the vision come to life.

It was equally important that the institution consider the possibility that vulnerable nonimmigrant populations would be resistant to the support of DACA on the basis of philosophical and financial considerations. While Loyola did not experience this first-hand, leaders of the African American community could have been reticent to support DACA due to the systemic barriers to access and affordability to postsecondary education for African Americans. Noted Phil Hale, “I’ve heard other schools and groups comment that there are not enough resources to help African Americans, and ‘we should fix that problem first.’ I’m not aware of that experience here at Loyola, however.”

Moreover, Fr. Steve Katsouros articulated how vulnerable groups often feel like they have to work harder to prove one’s worth, bridging the African American experience with that of DACA. Said Fr. Katsouros:

I think just as in the Black community African American men talked about how they feel the pressure of having to be twice as good, it’s similar for the undocumented. “Now I’ve got to be twice as good because I’m undocumented.”

During one quarterly board of trustees meeting, which was held on the medical school’s campus, the dean at the time addressed the board with his concern that Stritch was losing top medical students to other institutions, including Ivy League institutions that could afford to offer them full scholarships. One member, Bill Brandt, chief executive officer of Illinois Financial Authority (IFA), an appointee of the governor, designed a way to offer no-interest loans to DACA medical students under the arrangement that they would deliver care to underserved communities in Illinois for three
years after residency. “It was a bold attempt to find financing for these kids,” said Garanzini.

In his second term serving on the board, Brandt, a politically experienced and astute college friend of Garanzini for over 50 years, took an aggressive and fearless approach to garnering political support for the loan program. “So you know you don’t get anywhere in the political world unless you’re willing to break some glass,” he said. “If you break some glass, you’ll acquire a certain reputation, then you’ll have some issues, but you’ll get things done.” Politically connected and savvy, Brandt contacted numerous individuals, from members of the Illinois Medical Society to the Illinois Registration Department to the governor and Sen. Durbin, requesting that medical licenses be granted to DACA students, which he was able to achieve.

While having the support of the president was invaluable, it was the close and collaborative relationship between Stritch’s newly appointed dean, Dr. Linda Brubaker and Kuczewski and Brandt that made it possible to design and execute the loan program. “Linda was fearless and was ready to try it,” said Brandt. After acquiring a unanimous vote from the IFA board, Brandt approached the governor to ask for his support of the loan program for DACA medical students, acknowledging the political risk involved for him: “Look, I’m going to do something here. You owe me so much for running all your campaigns over the years, [Brandt joked]. Functionally you can’t say no to me. I’m putting you in harm’s way.” The governor replied, “For once in my life, the harm you’re putting me in is worth it.”
The right combination of bravery, institutional support, and political capital enabled Garanzini to support an unorthodox and risky arrangement to fund DACA medical students. The tenacious efforts of Brandt and Brubaker turned what could have been an impossible situation into one of significant possibilities. Brandt applauded the courage of Brubaker and Garanzini:

In the case of Brubaker and Garanzini, that’s very much the Jesuit mission—they took the cutting edge and they knew the risks and, God love them, they did it. They expected me to deal with the other political risks on the government side and on the media side. No matter how you slice it, it represents embracing the future and embracing what should be.

The relationship between Brandt and Garanzini was pivotal in seeing the plan come to fruition. As one participant remarked of Garanzini, “His heart was in this and he was putting weight in this.” Another participant spoke of his administrative talent, “The simple fact of the matter is that Garanzini is one of the best administrators in the world, and he saved Loyola from all kinds of stuff.” Michael Canaris said of Garanzini, “He was…tireless and sort of visionary in imagining how this could be an issue that motivates and drives large elements of our community.”

The most consequential risk of the institution taking a public position on admitting DACA students was the real threat of deportation of students and possibly of their families. In May 2018, the medical school graduated its first class of 10 DACA students (two of whom received full scholarships at Yale and Johns Hopkins). It has been necessary to obfuscate student identities to protect them. The interim provost said:

The party line is we don’t know who the students are. If anybody decided—and God knows what could happen in this country—[if] somebody show[ed] up on our doorstep to ask for us to identify our students, we technically don’t have a list.
You don’t have numbers. You don’t. I do know of some bad situations where one student was deported, and I think a father of a student was deported.

The second risk was the possibility that these students could default on their loans due to their inability to secure jobs. Loyola, as the loan lender, would essentially be responsible for paying back those loans. With a big-picture perspective on how funding these students would prove beneficial, Garanzini felt confident in his decision despite the potential risks:

I had tremendous support inside Loyola. When the medical school wanted to become an example of what should happen—finding money, deliberately educating these kids, showing what they could become—[demonstrating] that they were critical for the supply of talent for the country, I had Mark Kuczewski and Linda on my side and the student government president was also very interested in this. We had faculty and administrators and then when Bill Brandt came forward as a trustee…this was a no-brainer to seal the deal. The other thing was that we had a senator who became most important for promoting this—he was a good friend. I had been visiting with Sen. Durbin for eight, nine years, and we said, you know, this is a critical issue which we think…needs a champion.

No doubt, the fact that DACA is a human rights issue lent itself to both a personal and pragmatic case to support it. Study participants pointed out that DACA students represented a wide spectrum mirroring many immigrant experiences. Fulfilling students’ potential, as well as the needs of the state and nation, was an overarching motivation for Loyola leaders. The range of ethnicities and the potential economic and vocational contributions of DACA students resonated for former trustee Bill Brandt:

It was a rainbow of immigrants—it was Mexico, Pakistan, China, South Americans, Central Americans….The fact of the matter is, when presented with the chance to make the world a better place and do something for kids’ futures and do something for your state....We desperately need doctors in a lot of these locales. I drive around Chicago, for example, in the south side...[and see] African American kids playing dice on the street. Perhaps one is a genius to cure cancer. We’ll never know because we never gave them a chance. So I’m committed to
getting the most I can out of these kids. If you don’t give them the education, how do you expect the future to be rosy?

Jesuit principles and values played a role in decision making, particularly the role of igniting change at the organization. As one faculty member noted:

I think this is a story of change. It’s a combination of the institution and the soil that’s either hospitable or not hospitable—and then we have individuals. It’s not just an institution, it’s not just individuals, it’s the combination of both that have to hook up.

The personal and human element—the fact that DACA has a direct impact on the lives of students—creates a tangible and a theoretical motivation behind decision making.

As one administrator said:

We are talking about human beings and their families that are caught up in it. I think early on when the rhetoric was just going on and on about, “well they’re here illegally.” The students we are talking about were brought here. And it’s easier for people to be critical when they’ve never met a DACA student or a DACA person. But when you actually know these individuals...

Garanzini himself shared a similar thought:

I think that’s why this was an important issue for us because it’s something that was relatable. This was something that so many of our alumni could find a piece of and could relate to and can relate to their families about.

This moral imperative was a common sentiment among many participants as they acknowledged that “the courage in our convictions comes from being in such a deeply rooted tradition,” said a faculty member. Being a part of a rich Jesuit tradition, one marked by great acts of bravery, exemplified by the martyrs of El Salvador, also provides, as one participant described it, a “fearlessness” by which one can act boldly.

On September 23, 2013, Garanzini issued a joint statement, “An Urgent Call for Immigration Reform,” with then-president of Marquette University, Scott Pilarz, SJ. The
statement evoked Saint Ignatius of Loyola, who believed that “colleges should be located near the heart of the cities, where they’d draw from sizable student populations and contribute to civic life.” The internal statement affirmed Loyola’s and Marquette’s commitments to serving urban immigrants, who have made significant contributions to society and to the nation’s economy.

While Stritch was not the first medical school to admit DACA students, it does purport to be the first to openly welcome them. The former Stritch dean recalled the final decision to not categorize DACA students as “international students” as had been the practice of other schools at that time:

It was very intentional on our part that [DACA students] are welcome here. We’re not [going to] just put you into some sort of new category like “international student.” You’re not an international student. And so we made no bones. We had it very clear what the status was. They were in the shadows forever. We didn’t want them to be in the shadows during that time.

Stritch was the first medical school in the country that offered no-interest loans to DACA students, who otherwise could not apply for federal or state loans under their status. What’s more, Stritch welcomed DACA students openly “through the front door.”

A faculty member described the directions the dean at the time gave for recreating the website. “Make sure it says ‘welcome’ at the top…[we’re] not just going to tolerate them; we’re going to welcome people who get in.” The faculty member continued, “It was pretty uplifting.”

The dean had been newly appointed at the time and was immediately committed to finding a way to financially support DACA students. The signal of welcoming students was seen as not only a symbolic gesture of Stritch but also as one that complemented the
very practical opportunities to which the institution would commit. Garanzini’s commitment enabled the dean to act with determination. While approval of the board, was not a necessary step in initiating the loan program, it would be the prerogative of the medical school to make this decision on its own. Recalled the dean:

[The loan program] was just the right thing to do and at a place like Loyola where it was a hundred percent in alignment with this initiative, then where else [what other school] could you do it? So it was kind of straightforward.

While it was the extraordinary interest and devotion of one faculty member that generated initial conversations about how the medical school could respond, it was the leadership of Stritch’s dean that enabled a course of action to take place. The dean and the faculty member had open lines of communication where brainstorming ideas, including ones involving some risk, were welcomed. After a meeting with the board of trustees, the dean noted, “It wasn’t like big angst—should we do this or not? We make decisions all the time that don’t work out well. In a leadership role, you can’t be afraid of that.”

While Stritch opened up more opportunity for undocumented students to apply and matriculate, this increased access did not come without operational risks for the university and personal and professional risks for the students. Since Loyola University Chicago would be the lender of the loans, there was concern about what legal and financial liability the institution would have to bear if a DACA medical student were to default. The administration, including the Stritch dean, university council, financial affairs, and Loyola’s president would deliberate and consider the tensions between what was determined to be ethically and morally sound and what would be financially
responsible. One participant described a response to this internal tension as an “ongoing effort to maintain and support the program against those who are not necessarily driven by their ethical and moral principles [but] more on their job to protect the university.”

This tension was exacerbated by the practical concerns that DACA students would be unable to fulfill their residency requirements were they to be deported.

One way this concern was mitigated was through the lobbying efforts of Dean Brubaker, through her membership of the Council of Deans of the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC). On a regular basis, she brought information and awareness of the Stritch model to the attention of 147 medical school deans with the hope that other medical schools, as well as dental schools, would adopt the same model. Regulatory barriers were also alleviated through persistent deliberations with the AAMC. Another outstanding concern was whether or not students would even be in a position to legally practice medicine in the United States and fulfill the dream they had pursued.

Administrators at Stritch worked diligently with hospital program directors to ensure that DACA students would be treated like everyone else and that residency matching opportunities would be afforded to them as they would be to non-DACA, documented students. It was July 2014 when the first class of undocumented medical students were enrolled. Since they graduated in May 2018, all but one Stritch DACA student has been matched. The six who were recipients of the loan program were permitted to train anywhere for their residency, but they must return to Illinois afterwards and work in an underserved area for four years.
For an institution like Loyola, playing an active role in social justice issues was described as “second nature” by the board chair, due to the ethnic and religious diversity of its student population—“it’s in the air and water here,” he continued. Characterizing the board as “left of center, tending to be more liberal,” the board chair has seen those more conservative members take positions on issues that tend to be associated with a liberal position. It came to no one’s surprise when the board supported Stritch’s loan initiative. Reflecting on an op-ed a trustee wrote about the importance of access to education and the need for expansion of public funding, the board chair noted:

If you read it, you would say this isn’t a conservative right-wing Republican that wrote this. And he sent it out to a bunch of us electronically. It was very appropriate, very timely, and it was really gratifying.

The medical school’s opening up doors to DACA students was unprecedented. No other medical school in the country had taken intentional actions to accept these students and provide a practical way for them to pay for medical school up until Loyola’s action. This action also informed the broader dialogue about undocumented students at the university, setting a precedent for other important decisions that followed. Part of Loyola’s calculus in opening access to DACA students was determining how public the institution would go with the loan program, and when the news would eventually hit nationally, how the institution would defend its position against naysayers. Members of the Loyola community wrestled with a cost-benefit analysis since the potential for DACA students to pay off their loans was unknown, and the potential benefits of supporting a documented student versus an undocumented were open to opinion. As one administrator articulated:
Some Stritch students are appreciative of Loyola for doing this for DACA students. But there are other students that haven’t gotten a dime from Loyola for scholarships. They’re leaving with $300,000 in debt as well. Now the difference is that they will be able to practice, and they will be able to pay down their debt.

Criticisms ensued from external constituents after the publication of the Loyola’s alumni magazine featuring a cover story of a DACA Stritch student. Letters to the incumbent dean of Stritch expressed a sense of inequity and hinted at American ethnocentrism. One administrator reported a criticism from an alumnus: “Isn’t it a priority for the institution to support Americans before it supports people who are here illegally? I am not proud that I am going to stop donating to the school.” To counter any myths of preferential treatment, Stritch’s dean assured the alumnus that DACA students were accepted on the same merits and qualifications as non-DACA students. The dean also addressed the financial disadvantage that DACA students were in due to their inability to secure traditional student loans, which required a special arrangement that would benefit the student and underserved communities in the state of Illinois.

Rumors that DACA students were receiving preferential treatment started to proliferate and the dean received a handful of letters from self-proclaimed “strong Catholics” who opposed the loan initiative. One member of the medical school’s own admissions committee questioned whether or not DACA applicants knew English, which they of course did. The dean responded to each concern to correct misinformation and expressed her desire to “move forward without a lot of side diversion.” However, new admissions practices—including a more holistic review process that goes beyond good grades and test scores to include a purposeful inquiry into a candidate’s personal experiences—opened potential scrutiny of DACA student acceptances. In 2017, Stritch
saw a 30% increase in applications, from the previous year. Insofar as this increase has facilitated a new pipeline of DACA students, the dean of Stritch feels hopeful that bearing the growing pains has served not only to fulfill an ethical and moral obligation in providing opportunity to talented students, but also to respond to a cultural shift in changing demographics. Since 2014, Stritch has enrolled about one third of all DACA medical students in the country, with a total of 41 students as of 2018.

Even months before enrolling its first DACA medical students, Stritch hit the national media. Fox News covered the story on July 23, 2013, and highlighted Stritch’s new policy as a way to admit the “best and the brightest” (Fox News, 2013). On December 10, 2014, Rachel Maddow, on news outlet MSNBC reported about nationwide protests of medical students against police misconduct, including those at Loyola Chicago, participating in “White Coats 4 Black Lives” (MSNBC, 2014). Chris Hayes tweeted on March 20, 2018, “Something I learned today: Loyola University Chicago’s Stritch School of Medicine has 32 DACA recipients who are studying to become physicians. It’s about 40% (they say) of all DACA recipient med students in the country” (Hayes, 2018).

Senior leadership at Loyola has been generally favorable toward the publicity received for DACA students. Leaders valued such publicity as important to advocating for a legislative solution for students at risk, yet leaders at Loyola were “generally supportive and occasionally nervous” when it came to students being used for partisan purposes, noted Kuczewski. Maintaining bipartisanship was difficult, as the two political
parties had become polarized on the issue. Yet, maintaining political objectivity was not the goal, explained Kuczewski:

Most of us at the level below them [top administration] tend to keep pointing out that the ship has more or less sailed already and that we need to keep advocating for legislation and not worry too much about whether we get parodied as partisans.

Reflecting back on how she faced these tensions, the former dean noted, “I would just say that I am sure—that even to this day—there are people within the university who wish I never started this. And there are people who are so glad I did.” Moreover, looking back as a non-Catholic on her interpretation of Jesuit principles, the former dean noted:

Without a doubt, it didn’t have to be Jesuit, but the Jesuits have hundreds of years of history. And they have often been on the unpopular side of things and then proven to be on the right side. This is just going to be another example of this.

Doing this work to protect the stranger or immigrant is a universal truth. As one participant said, “There’s really no consideration that we talk about with these young people that isn’t applicable universally.” While many participants agreed that Loyola’s response to DACA aligns neatly with Jesuit principles, history, and tradition, the practical matter of ensuring student achievement is a priority beyond the alignment with the Jesuit mission. Said the interim provost:

I think [DACA] is our wheelhouse as a subset of a huge number of vulnerable students that we should worry about. We have a lot of students—many who are not DACA students—who are vulnerable for different reasons, [in] different ways. So, I mean, I think it does make sense for Jesuit universities to do this work. [However], I worry that we never lose sight of the fact of being sure we can help these students be successful.

Asked how higher education plays a role in responding to sociopolitical issues, study participants asserted that Catholic Jesuit institutions do bear a greater burden and
sense of responsibility than nonreligious institutions do. As the center of intellectual progress, the academy serves a practical role in contributing to research and social services. Yet the moral and ethical compass by which leaders of Jesuit Catholic institutions are guided excludes a political approach. As President Rooney put it:

I do believe we have an obligation, particularly when it comes to social justice and human rights issues, to speak out. By virtue of not only being an academic institution but as a Jesuit Catholic institution, we’re continually being called on to go where others don’t go—to stand up affirmatively for the poor and the underserved and to, if you will, go to the frontier. I think it’s at the very heart of our mission now. We are obligated to be thoughtful but take some very strong stances based on our kind of moral, ethical and…religious need to fulfill those obligations. It is necessary to be thoughtful about those things that really go to the heart of our mission and then approach it from a nonpolitical perspective, but one based…very much [on] human rights, human dignity, social justice, and serving the poor, the underserved, and the oppressed.

The doctrinal relevance between DACA and a commitment to immigrants is central to Jesuit history, given the fact the Jesuits have a global presence and immigrated to the United States from Europe. Aspects of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s sought to understand the economic, psychological, and spiritual needs of migrants in order to assist them through pastoral work. Michael Canaris, assistant professor of pastoral studies at Loyola Chicago, discussed the genesis of the Jesuit order in the United States:

There were large numbers of immigrant Jesuit communities that were coming from Europe. So when you look at the history of Jesuit education in this country, it’s shot through with a commitment to immigrants because it’s basically the reason for its existence in many cases—immigrants teaching immigrants or children of immigrants, very often the first in their families to attend higher education. So it’s as if part of the Jesuit network DNA is to care about this issue. Taking immigration seriously is…deeply reflective of who we are as a people. From a theological or ecclesiological angle, that really ties in with the whole Second Vatican Council and the development of the vision of the church and “the people on the way,” the pilgrim people. Pope Francis has really highlighted that.
So there’s a real theological emphasis and a theological validity to a Jesuit institution caring about this issue beyond simply the standard kind of go-to phrases like the “common good” or something. They're helpful sometimes, but there’s a more profound ecclesiological and theological connection.

There is a benefit to welcoming the stranger and opening our arms. Noted Arrupe College’s dean and executive director, Fr. Steve Katsouros:

My God, talk about being on the right side of history…it’s biblical. The Hebrew scriptures—the widow, the orphan, and the alien. That’s where God stands and that’s where we’re supposed to be. And with the Christian scriptures, it’s the same thing. Jesus stands with the marginalized. The road to Emmaus. Good things happen when you welcome the stranger and learn from the stranger. God shows up. That’s this story. So hospitality is a biblical virtue.

The financial aid model for DACA students at Stritch School of Medicine is another example of living out the mission at Loyola. Not only did the aid enable undocumented students to attend medical school with no-interest loans, but after residency, these students would work in underserved communities. Participants noted that the model is consistent with Loyola University Chicago’s history of serving immigrant communities and consistent with Jesuit principles.

Student Support and Advocacy

The Office of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs (OSDMA) approached needs of DACA students from an “asset-based approach” as opposed to a deficit approach. As one student life administrator noted, “Taking the strengths-based approach…flip[s] the narrative, looking at how to celebrate all the critical assets behind undocumented students; they’re much savvier about how to survive and thrive in the world [than other students] because they have to be.” This perspective helped administrators to frame a narrative that empowered DACA students to self-advocate,
either internally at Loyola and/or externally to members of Congress. Participants noted that many students continued to pursue immigration-related advocacy work after graduation, after having felt empowered by the work they did in college.

Support for the undocumented undergraduate student population was a new focus for OSDMA. Historically, this department had served the needs of first-generation students and students of color. When President Obama signed the executive order to establish DACA on June 15, 2012, the 30th anniversary of Plyler v. Doe, the announcement propelled the OSDMA to expand its focus to include the needs of undocumented students. Although the DACA student population known to Loyola had been less than 10 students at the time, the national discourse and moral imperative paved the way for a shift in focus.

By fall 2012, several initiatives were either offered through or conceived by the OSDMA. Most notable were Share the DREAM ally trainings, which were modeled after trainings offered by United We Dream, a national advocacy organization, and were available to all students, faculty, and staff. The training was offered two or three times every academic semester, attracting 15-30 individuals per session, primarily administration and faculty from all disciplines and a mix of undergraduate and graduate students. To date, more than 550 participants have completed the training. Upon completion of the training, participants receive placards and pins adorned with an image of a butterfly, a symbol of migration.

By spring of 2014, a support and resource group for undocumented students, Undocumented and Proud (UP), was formally established. With so much uncertainty
about the DACA program and their futures, undocumented students have found in this
group a safe place to be with others with likeminded concerns, to speak freely, and find
community. The group has also provided a forum in which undocumented students have
shed light on ways in which the institution can be more proactive in meeting their needs.
Open to undocumented Loyola undergraduates, graduates, and Arrupe College students,
UP convenes at both the Lake Shore and Water Tower campuses. Students discuss and
seek support there from the administration regarding issues such as employment,
financial aid, and scholarship opportunities. One faculty member believes that UP
answers a previously unmet need:

    For those that are graduating and wanting to go to medical school, law school,
    maybe the workforce, they were really wondering why Loyola isn’t helping them
to meet with legal services to go to through the DACA renewal process or not
helping them to plan ahead for careers.

    The DREAMer Committee was formed to promote “research, education,
advocacy, and service that is informed by the lives and experience of undocumented
students seeking higher education” (Loyola, n.d.-b). Co-chaired by faculty members of
Stritch School of Medicine and the School of Law, this committee is composed of
multidisciplinary faculty, administrators, and students and charged with developing
equitable policies and practices to expand educational opportunities for undocumented
students. The committee assessed Loyola’s progress toward meeting the needs of
undocumented student and made recommendations where there were gaps. Three of the
faculty members were national intellectual leaders in immigrant studies. Another faculty
member in the Institute of Pastoral Studies noted there was a search for new faculty in
liberation and political theologies, which examines and identifies the connection between
migration and ecclesiastical teachings. One faculty member described the commitment among faculty to scholarship in immigration studies:

We have tremendous faculty that are committed to this across disciplines. My work on immigration again is either through the university DREAMer Committee, proud campus-wide efforts, or in terms of my own teaching and research. I teach a class on theology and migration. We are hiring right now for a position that we’re calling liberation and political theologies. I’m certainly student-centered in my advocacy work and my solidarity with undocumented population. But for me it’s coming at a university-wide level, not at a departmental level.

Loyola’s DREAMer Committee was an extraordinary example of an institutional commitment and coordination of constituents across various departments of the university. From student workers to academic deans to the university president, these members assessed the institution’s efforts in meeting the needs of undocumented students. In addition to promoting programming, advocacy, and service to undocumented students, the committee was responsible for developing practices and policies adopted by departments throughout the university. As a result of the committee’s efforts, the university established a comprehensive undocumented student resources webpage, which was a centralized location for individuals to access undocumented student resources, including admissions and financial aid.

While the university provided practical resources that helped students secure private loans and receive private scholarships, sometimes administrators had to help undocumented students grapple with an unbearably heavy financial burden. A student life administrator described some of these difficult moments:

They got to campus, they’ve deposited, but now that they’ve got the tuition bill, they’re freaking out about “how am I going to afford this?” They realize that there was just no way to make it work. So they had to transfer out. And so it’s
heartbreaking. And at the same time, I don’t have, in good conscience, the ability to say “just make it work—you should try because this is a great institution.”

While DACA has inspired institutional advocacy, it has also unearthed change agents—both documented and undocumented—among the students the institution has formed. As controversial and at times as risky as it has been for DACA students to self-advocate, they have been surrounded by Loyola’s rich tradition of forming future leaders. Vice President for Government Affairs Phil Hale points to the distinction between social justice and social leadership:

I don’t think that the Jesuits have the lock on social justice. I see a lot of other faith-based organizations that are just as engaged as we are, if not more so in certain ways. I think, though, that the Society of Jesus has a centuries-old tradition of engaging with the community [and] educating leaders. That’s how the Society really got started in its educational mission, by educating future leaders. Now, that was the aristocracy of the time, but that’s a tradition that the order clearly still embraces. So I would argue that is maybe what distinguishes the Jesuits from other faith-based institutions more so than the mission itself.

One of the more extraordinary demonstrations of student advocacy occurred when Flavio Bravo, during his sophomore year as student body president, initiated the Magis Scholarship project (magis translated from Latin to mean “the more for the greater glory of God” or “the restless desire for greater things”), a scholarship that would be awarded to DACA students. A political science major, Bravo had grown up in Arizona and was familiar with Arizona immigration politics. He had been involved in political movements and took a deep interest in immigration and human rights issues. Having learned that Loyola had been admitting DACA students but could not fully fund them, Bravo wanted to design a way to provide full scholarships for DACA undergraduate students. Up until this point, Loyola had been awarding institutional funding to DACA students, a practice that was not shared publicly. And while some benefactors did restrict their donations to
DACA student scholarships, that alone could not adequately support the numbers of students for four years of schooling. Adapting a model from the University of San Francisco, another Jesuit institution, Bravo proposed that $2.50 be added to every undergraduate student’s fees. With approximately 20,000 undergraduate students, the scholarship would provide either partial or full funding to a set number of DACA undergraduate students. Up until this point, Loyola had been awarding institutional funding to DACA students, a practice that was not shared publicly.

Even with President Garanzini’s support, Bravo faced significant hurdles as he sought support for the Magis Scholarship initiative. During a year of navigating the bureaucracy to reach a vote on the initiative by the student body, he organized open forums, presentations with the board of trustees, countless meetings with the head of student life, and conversations with Garanzini. Backlash in the student paper and social media included what Bravo called “horrible, horrible comments. It was hard to read and we just had to keep moving forward.” Bravo added:

I think some of the ugliest comments and some of the real polarization around the issue [came out]. We said, “What if we are actually bringing out the worst in our community with comments like ‘Why should we tax ourselves for illegals, tuition is already expensive?’”

Scholarship support of DACA students became a philosophical issue of worth and a pragmatic calculus of potential contribution to society. Said Bravo, “It was a question of what are their prospects for the job market afterwards? And I had to remember to tell people that nobody’s asking about the job prospects of the majority. It’s not about your potential.”
After a year of hard work by Bravo and upheaval over the issue on campus, the undergraduate student body approved the initiative, 60% to 40%. The Magis initiative established a new pipeline of undocumented students, causing the university to establish new practices to protect a growing number of students. By Bravo’s senior year, fall 2015, full tuition Magis Scholarships were awarded to five qualifying DACA undergraduate students.

The Arrupe College’s Response to DACA

One of Loyola’s signature programs, Arrupe College was founded in November 2014 to provide economically disadvantaged students a two-year associate’s degree. Because there was precedent of fully funding DACA students at Stritch, Katsouros was able to garner the support of his advisory board to fundraise for DACA student scholarships. The board’s blessing was a necessary hurdle to overcome in order to receive the first donation from a charitable trust that would fund four DACA Arrupe students.

This set intense fundraising efforts in motion, where Katsouros contacted Don Graham, former owner of The Washington Post, and founder of Dream.us, a philanthropic organization that supports undocumented students. Katsouros negotiated scholarships to qualified undocumented students with through Dream.us. Those undocumented students who come to Arrupe through a Noble Charter School in Chicago received funding from the Pritzker Access Fund. Katsouros was also able to garner funding from private donors and was able to fully fund 35 undocumented Arrupe students that second year in 2015.

The institution’s response to DACA intensified in the wake of the 2016 election
once Donald Trump was elected president. Trump had campaigned on a platform to rescind DACA, causing great insecurity for Dreamers and inspiring action of those who wanted to affirm their protection. The threat of deportation to students and families after Donald Trump’s election prompted the university’s boldest actions on behalf of Arrupe students. In 2017, the first Arrupe College student was called by ICE. An Arrupe board member and member of a prominent political family intervened and contacted an immigration attorney who was able to help, averting deportation of the student. The university also worked with Sen. Durbin’s staff at similar times of crises. When a student and her family were detained, the vice president for government relations and the dean and executive director of Arrupe College immediately contacted Durbin’s office to seek counsel. Said one participant:

The Trump election was really a sort of “BC” and “AD” experience. Our social worker was working around the clock after that because there was a lot of uncertainty. One student was called up by ICE to appear with her papers. She doesn’t have any. She was accompanied to her appointment at ICE by Arrupe’s dean, a Jesuit priest, and a lawyer that the dean had found for her. The student had earned a 4.0 and a Jack Kent Cooke scholarship, which she could have used to enroll at Georgetown, but she’s afraid to travel now. So she’s at Loyola on a full ride there. It worked out for her. Another [Arrupe] student we begged not to go to Mexico. He said he needed to travel in order “to fix his papers.” He was detained.

**President Rooney’s Leadership**

In the face of potential controversy, President Rooney led with steadfast confidence in calculating how the institution would respond to DACA and the way in which she would lead this effort. As Loyola’s 24th first lay (nonclerical) and first female President, Dr. Jo Ann Rooney inherited a legacy of responding to sociopolitical issues,
including DACA. A lawyer by trade and former principal deputy in the U.S. Department of Defense under the Obama administration, Rooney was poised for strategic leadership.

Conscientious about how she would uphold the institution’s tradition and mission, Rooney was thoughtful about setting a tone and establishing a voice that was authentic and consistent with Loyola’s culture. Within her first year of tenure, Rooney appointed a Jesuit as a member as her chief of staff, a symbolic and practical step in preserving a strong Jesuit identity. Aware of the profound nature of being the first lay and female president, Rooney considered the consequences of her decisions and ultimately was motivated by the desire to elevate discourse, enhance understanding, and make inroads on an issue.

The day after Trump was elected, Rooney put out a statement to the internal Loyola community. Remembering this moment, Phil Hale, vice president for government affairs noted, “She certainly has not been shy about being public both internally and externally on this issue. She knows she inherited a leadership position and she seemed very comfortable stepping into that role.” Having learned that many students were anxious and uneasy about what their status would be, Rooney met with documented and undocumented students from Arrupe College to assure them that the university would take stronger steps to provide them with resources and support.

Rooney’s positions on sociopolitical issues tend to be grounded in a desire to make a substantive contribution beyond rhetorical positions. For example, she refused to proclaim Loyola a sanctuary campus because it was “more symbolic than anything” and the term lacked a clear definition or “affirmative action.” While Rooney has engaged in
symbolic means to signal her position on DACA, such as adding her name to public statements, these actions would be insufficient absent the substantive choices she also has made that have impacted DACA students. With an eye toward moving discourse and policy forward, Rooney was clear about using her authority where it would have an enduring impact:

There are so many issues, and presidents now are pressed on responding to everything, to make a comment on everything—and I don’t. I really don’t. I think it goes back to: “Is this something that is very important to this campus, to our history, important to our community and part of our charism, and can we move this conversation forward and help impact public policy, as well as civil discourse, as well as minds and hearts?” I’m not going to do something just because it seems symbolic. Eventually the people will become tone deaf to it. And that’s just not the roles we should be in. Choose wisely and be ready that if you’re going to go…go all in.

In her “Statement on the Rescission of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program” sent to Loyola’s internal community, Rooney expressed the institution’s support and advocacy for DACA students and the university’s “work with local, state, and federal partners to find a legislative solution.” Referencing meetings with Senators Richard Durbin and Tammy Duckworth and congressional leaders of both political parties, Rooney continued to report on the numerous public statements she signed on behalf of the university with the AJCU, ACE, and the Illinois Business Immigration Coalition, remarking “that by working together with our higher education partners and coalitions, we can strategically leverage our resources and maximize our efforts on behalf of students.”

Despite her steadfast disposition, Rooney had a keen understanding about the
potential risks involved in publicly supporting DACA and strategically made steps to mitigate them, including leveraging relationships with key political and clerical leaders. She knew that key stakeholders could be upset and built that into her calculus in considering potential risk scenarios. The president’s office received complaints and “vitriolic” letters and emails from “alumni who just don’t get it and who are the least engaged with the university at any level,” noted an administrator. Acknowledging the potential for difficult scenarios like ICE arriving on campus, Rooney was prepared for such possibilities and hardly seemed fazed by them. A pragmatist, she was confident that, whatever the conflict, she would have the resources and support, not to mention temperament, to overcome it.

Rooney assumed her role as president with great authority and responsibility. Tempered by a practical stance, Rooney does not react or “knee-jerk-react to things,” said one participant. After the Pennsylvania attorney general’s findings came out on the sexual abuse allegations in the church in that state, Rooney did not make a public statement on the topic but did speak to the Loyola community in a more intimate setting about her empathy with the victims and of the university’s intolerance of victimization. Said the board of trustees chair, “I think that shows discipline and a practical orientation.”

Rooney has based relationships with her colleagues and board on trust and common purpose. She relies on the talents and expertise of her colleagues and the counsel of her board and board chair, and she holds them accountable and responsible. Noted the board of trustees chair, “This gets into a leadership style—authenticity, accountability. These were all things that Jo Ann offered. I always start with trust.
Without trust you get nothing. We sure have trust. You can do amazing things.”

Choosing to live in possibility and not out of fear of consequence, Rooney had a clear sense of how to align the desires of the community with an unmet vision of the future. By educating DACA students, she believed that Loyola could be a model to other institutions:

I think there is also that balance of when you are at an institution that is the size we are and you do have a bit of a megaphone. I think you do have to be very thoughtful about your calculus and where you want to use it. But you also can’t be afraid to use it. The Jesuits talk about discernment and to take the time and give it the space. Sometimes you don’t have that much time or space and you better discern some of this ahead of time of just generally what your position is. Again, this one was important to this community. But I also thought that we would be in a position to at least be a stimulus for civil discourse. Because we would demonstrate firsthand how our students were actually very successful here and how they were going to parlay their education for good for the greater citizenry. And that’s a good platform to stand on—we’re going to support and stand next to our students and our policies here. Not every issue fits that kind of pattern or fits that ability to truly start to change and impact the civil discourse.

It was in September 2017, on the heels of DACA being rescinded by President Trump, and legislation was expected to pass. Garnering the approval from President Rooney and members of the DREAMer Committee, Vice President for Government Affairs Phil Hale initiated a major letter-writing campaign inviting documented and undocumented students to write to their members of Congress encouraging them to discourage the rescission of DACA. Over 7,200 letters were generated, and Hale hand-delivered each letter in one day to the Washington, DC offices of Congressional members.

Around this time, the concerns of Stritch students were also heightened, as administrators warned these students that they might not match for residency because of
the uncertainty of their status and future. Thanks to the efforts of the Stritch dean and her network, however, the opposite happened. One faculty member noted, “We believe that the rescission actually attracted the attention of all these program directors. One of the problems with DACA was a lot of people didn’t know what it was and everybody suddenly knew what it was.” The rescission created sympathy as well as awareness among program directors. All but one student was able to match for residency.

When the medical school went public with the new loan program, student advocacy within Stritch blossomed. Loyola and Stritch students advocated for DACA in Washington and in Chicago. Grassroots efforts of organized Dreamers led to public advocacy in Washington as well as more locally in Chicago. “That was real empowerment. They are their constituents; they’re their own spokespeople,” said a Loyola administrator. Though there was great uncertainty for the students, as well as for the institution, the ability to mobilize the students for civic participation around DACA was seen as one of the more positive contributions the institution could make. Phil Hale, vice president for government relations, commented:

> I feel very strongly that as a Jesuit Catholic institution, we talk about social justice, but the examples we give our students are limited to immersion programs and service projects, all of which are great, but we don’t talk enough about how to be a person for others, that public service can be and should be the highest form of being a person for others. So as an officer of the university, I have that obligation and frankly, it inspires me, and the kids inspire me. It’s nice when the right thing to do is also the smart thing to do. The right thing to do is to engage our students in advocacy and at least expose them to the possibility that they can be a person for others through government and politics.

Yet, the institution had concerns about unintended consequences of student activism in 2016–2017 and how the inclination of DACA students to self-advocate could
put them in harm’s way. Some participants expressed concerns about showcasing DACA students and felt that some students felt exploited. This tension between protecting Dreamers from harm and giving them a platform to advocate was a concern for administrators particularly those in student life, diversity and multicultural affairs, and the president’s office. Yet, said one administrator, “I think on one hand they’re [DACA students] more savvy and strategic more than any of us because they have to be.” When Sen. Durbin invited students to attend President Trump’s address to a joint session of Congress and to also meet with members of Congress, there was a lot of concern about how ICE would handle the situation if DACA students were permitted to fly to Washington. The confusion and rhetoric that proliferated from the Trump administration gave administrators at Loyola every reason to believe that anything was possible, including deportation. DACA students who were invigorated by engaging in this kind of advocacy also feared the possibilities of being stopped by immigration police

After having consulted with Sen. Durbin’s office, Loyola administrators were armed with ways to mitigate the risk, yet there were never guarantees that students would be fully protected. One administrator described the steps they took to help ensure student safety during the event:

We did several things. Again, our go-to person is Durbin. His staffer who’s local and…works with immigration from Homeland Security and ICE all the time. We met with the students to make sure that they were fully aware of what the risks were and also to be sure that they didn’t have as much as a traffic ticket. They were crystal clean. We also reached out to several immigration attorneys that we knew. We decided to be careful. So I flew out with the two students, and I made sure that they had cell numbers for a person they designated as somebody to call in an emergency, Durbin’s [immigration] office. But it was all rooted in a real concern. The first, second, third, and fourth care and considerations are the student.
Beyond student safety, another important concern for the university is the fact that it is currently the loan lender. While Loyola would not be obligated to repay the loan if a student were to default due to their DACA revoked status or deportation, there is still a fiduciary obligation for the university to at least make an attempt to collect. Committed to preserving the loan program for DACA students, the current Stritch dean is exploring third-party vendors to be loan-guarantors in order to eliminate the university’s liability. He also acknowledges the need to continue ongoing efforts to protect and support DACA students because “once these students are mine, it is my job to see them through.” So tensions remain about how the program will be orchestrated and whether the institution will be liable to pay off a student’s debt if they defaulted. The institutional risk remains significant for the medical school. As the interim provost put it:

In a position like mine, you want to do the right thing for students. [Entering the program is] saddling them with $300,000 in debt. And depending on what happens, if they can’t get residencies, they’re not going to pay back that debt anytime soon. And so I do struggle with that a lot. If these students can’t pay back their loan, even though we have no responsibility, would we really let all these students default, and would we really stand back and just watch that happen? And could we, from a reputational perspective, just let it happen? And that’s the dilemma.

As one faculty member put it, “The bureaucracy of a university will never come to like this because every year we’re scurrying and scampering to try to make this happen again because of the money.” More fundamentally, it is the role of administrative entities like university council and finance to ensure that fiduciary interests of the university are not compromised. The tensions between university interests and those who are personally working on behalf of students were articulated among participants. One faculty member
articulated the challenge of navigating through the bureaucracy with a steadfast eye on the end goal:

People in bureaucracy don’t want to fix it. They want the system to function the way the system functions, and it means that the people who have the mission aspect of this behind them are pushing on those people constantly, getting pushed back constantly. And it’s helped. It takes everybody, everybody’s energy. And you do that year after year after year.

As the political spotlight on DACA seems to have waned, Rooney has been frustrated about the inability to create a sense of exigency around the issue. Institutionally, Loyola has made significant strides to support and protect DACA students, but the greatest barrier to further progress resides in immigration policy decisions of the federal government and the university’s inability to work with the Trump administration effectively. While university leadership has leveraged its relationship with Sen. Durbin effectively, this political capital has been insufficient to penetrate an erratic news cycle and, as some participants viewed, a manufactured national crisis, let alone to gain traction for a permanent resolution. Said Rooney:

I am very frustrated that we have not been able to help [maintain] a sense of urgency and a way [around] a policy which our students and young people—not just our students, but young people who are in the status—do not have a predictable future. It’s literally turned the lives of thousands of young people and families into this constant turmoil day in and day out of not knowing what the status of the law is and what their status is here. They can’t plan for their futures. To put people through this from a basic human rights standpoint is indefensible. It’s not on the front page anymore. So our frustration is that we can’t keep the pressure on because there always seems to be this creative crisis or something that makes this just one among the noise. That for us is really disturbing because we have young people day in and day out who live this reality.

Study participants discussed how the role of higher education and in its relationship with its community is seen as a participatory one for the betterment of
society. In the way that the academy shapes future citizenry, a Jesuit university, in particular, demands engagement beyond the confines of the classroom. In the words of the chair of the board of trustees:

A university as an ivory tower that is isolated from the rest of the world is antithetical to the whole notion of a Jesuit education and immersion in the world and understanding your place in the world and your responsibilities that go with that. Whether it’s immigration, whether it’s poverty, whether it’s access to education, whether it’s access to healthcare, whether it’s crime, whatever the social issue may be, we’d like to think that most of the Jesuit institutions facilitate engagement….It’s clearly different and it’s more than just words. It’s a call to action.

Conscientious about not appearing partisan, participants interpreted DACA as a public policy and human rights issue, less than a political one. In the words of President Rooney:

So at this point, I want to see it as apolitical, as a human rights issue. The realities are that when you get to public policy changes, there needs to be certain political parts at play to be able to work through and to get the legislation necessary. I think there’s support on both sides of the aisle, but it’s how it gets packaged with everything else. We are supposed to also engage in civil discourse, which means we must be about making sure there’s an opportunity here for people that have differing views to be both heard and to have pathways forward. DACA on this campus was a little more close to home, and we didn’t have a lot of people that didn’t support that, but there are other things that we have to be very purposeful in making sure that we don’t pick one particular political side of our agenda. Basic fundamental human rights, social justice, defense of the poor—those are apolitical. They can fit both sides of the aisle.

**Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities and its Position on DACA**

The power and influence of the affinity group of the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities is best exemplified by the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) network. Since the beginning of his tenure in 2013, AJCU President Michael Sheeran, SJ, has seen an uptick in the way in which AJCU has taken positions on political
matters of our time. The organization has taken positions on key issues affecting higher education including the Affordable Health Care Act, tax reform, and DACA. DACA is an issue that has called on a moral obligation which harkens back to the founding of the Jesuit order.

When it comes to taking positions on sociopolitical issues, Sheeran is committed to advocating on behalf of higher education, particularly on behalf of students. With respect to DACA, Sheeran believes, even for institutions whose DACA student population is not high, that all 28 schools have a stake in the issue and that they will want to “protect these youngsters.” Arriving at consensus among the 28 institutions for Sheeran was not the ultimate objective concerning the support of DACA, so long as the executive committee could agree on the position. The relationships between AJCU presidents and politicians were indications of the Jesuit network’s influence. A former AJCU president identified Loyola among the leaders of AJCU institutions on the DACA issue:

Georgetown’s president is a real leader in the AJCU. Jack DeGioia is one of the most loyal pro-Jesuit, pro-mission of the presidents. And...because Durbin was a graduate of Georgetown it was easy for Jack to be on board with this, and Jack equally thought it was an important issue. But I would say, among the presidents, the chief presidents were Jeff Von Arx [and] Jack DeGioia. I think Loyola played an important role. Then [the University of San Francisco] was also a big player. And because Pelosi was a very good friend of Steve Privett, president of USF, we had the House on our side and we had the Senate in terms of the Democrats on our side—leveraging the Jesuit connection.

Sensitive to institutional culture, the students whom a school will serve, and other stakeholders to whom schools are beholden, Sheeran had not requested a school to take a stake on a position, including DACA, that the institution did not fully support. “You
don’t require a consensus of the 28 to give you the blessing to proceed.” Before putting out a statement of any kind and, especially for those of a controversial nature like DACA, Sheeran consults with the executive committee of the AJCU, which is composed of seven presidents of the member schools. Having their blessing on any given issue gives him the political capital to take a position on it.

Sheeran noted that his authority seemed to have more limits than that of his predecessor, who announced that the Jesuit schools would have to accept students from Loyola University New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. “He would sometimes take an initiative that really made sense to him…and because he was so respected, he tended to get away with it.” The strength and power of the 28 is palpable as is the strength of the Jesuit network. In January 2013 and November 2016, Sheeran released two statements on DACA. The first, “Statement of AJCU Presidents on Undocumented Students,” included the signatures of 25 of the 28 presidents, and the second, included 27 of 28. The one issued in 2013 established the network’s position of full support for undocumented students and emphasized how Catholic Social Teaching “is clear in its insistence that every human person deserves dignity and the opportunity to better one’s state in life.” As “morally committed environments,” it continued, Jesuit higher education institutions seek justice, fairness, and political involvement, and a “preferential option for those whom society has marginalized” (Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, 2013).

A tangible attribute distinct for many Jesuit institutions across the country are their geographic proximities to urban cities and historical commitments to fulfill the
needs of local communities in their midst. This commitment to vulnerable populations for both institutions was demonstrated by their strong community engagement work and the scholarship and intellectual interests of their faculty. The historical context of schools fulfilling the needs of vulnerable communities found in urban areas is consistent with immigration rights support and advocacy, noted Garanzini:

It [AJCU] is an extraordinary coalition that includes…influencers like Georgetown, but also I think just as—if not more importantly—institutions that are really important to the cities and communities in which they are situated. St. Joseph’s University interacts with Philadelphia in a unique way. Loyola has this relationship with this city [Chicago] that’s unique. The influence that we have in the local community in some great cities like Philadelphia, San Francisco, New York….Most of these communities have undocumented folks.

In a seminal moment of his career as AJCU’s president as he addressed Jesuit members of Congress, on October 25, 2017, Sheeran—inspired his audience’s civically-educated sensibilities as well as their obligations—urged each Jesuit alumnus serving on the 115th United States Congress to pass the bipartisan DREAM Act: “We taught you about responsible citizenship. Republican or Democrat, that sense of civic responsibility is an underlying part of why you are in Congress today” (Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, 2017).
CHAPTER 6 – ANALYSIS OF THE CASES

**The Effects of Leadership**

The events at Georgetown and Loyola—and the response of their presidents—shed light on how leaders can navigate contentious political terrain. What the two cases underscore is that leaders can best do this by balancing instrumental (or tactical) approaches with interpretive (symbolic) approaches, especially in light of their shared Jesuit mission. Both approaches are crucial for moving the institution productively forward.

At both schools, each of the leaders demonstrated instrumental and interpretive approaches to leadership. While external networking with the academic and political community served as both an instrumental and interpretive lever of leadership for DeGioia and Garanzini, external networking was primarily an instrumental lever of leadership for Rooney, who sought to gain answers, resolve problems, and garner advice and support from external networks. Table 5 illustrates how each president’s actions were predominantly levers of instrumental or interpretive leadership, or a blend of the two.
Table 5

*Presidential Leaders and Levers of Leadership*

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**Instrumental Levers of Leadership**

Allocating Resources

**John DeGioia.** DeGioia made decisions that had a direct impact on undocumented students at Georgetown University which were by their very nature technical and operational. As an *instrumental* approach, DeGioia supported new policy decisions, such as provisional financial aid policies, that would help create opportunities for undocumented students. In order to create a broader scope of services, DeGioia sanctioned a new focus on undocumented students through existing entities like the Kalmanovitz Initiative and the Center for Social Justice. The community-based research
that was born out of the Center for Social Justice and the work coordinated by the Kalmanovitz Initiative were important projects that advanced academic scholarship on immigration.

Approving resources that would establish new programs and initiatives or enhance existing ones was a means to establish internal support and provide for the tangible needs of undocumented students. Funding a new full-time undocumented student advisor, establishing a comprehensive website, enhancing the foci of centers and institutes, and supporting faculty research were instrumental initiatives that had a direct impact on the educational experiences of undocumented students.

Most prominent of DeGioia’s acts of instrumental leadership occurred in the wake of the 2016 election. As students became more active and mobilized and their concerns more vocal, DeGioia responded in action by approving a new position of coordinator of undocumented services. As uncertainty and fear among students heightened, tangible actions were required as a response to elevated student concerns and the very practical consequences of the Trump administration’s policies. As a result, DeGioia authorized a comprehensive undocumented student website and a formal relationship with Catholic Charities that led to pro bono legal support. In order to provide supportive and safe spaces and a vehicle for advocacy, DeGioia sanctioned the work of Hoyas for Immigrant Rights and UndocuHoyas, efforts led by the Center for Social Justice, Teaching & Service, the Center for Multicultural Equity & Access, the Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, the Georgetown Scholarship Program, and Campus Ministry—all of which helped to promote awareness, educational opportunities, and
resources for DACA students. These actions institutionalized DACA-related efforts in a centralized way so that the needs of DACA students would be responded to consistently across departments throughout the institution.

Michael Garanzini. Among the tactical ways in which Fr. Michael Garanzini executed an institutional commitment to DACA at Loyola University Chicago were sanctioning resources to create a full scholarship to one DACA undergraduate student; approving Stritch’s policy to fund DACA medical students; approving the Magis Scholarship; developing a comprehensive website for undocumented student resources; and allocating resources for Share the Dream Ally trainings and the DREAMer Committee.

Providing DACA medical students with a feasible way to acquire loans was a practical way for Loyola to have recruited highly qualified students, increased the applicant pool, and helped to serve underserved communities of Illinois. The Magis Scholarship provided institutional funding to DACA undergraduate students who may not have otherwise been able to attend Loyola.

Jo Ann Rooney. By the time Rooney stepped into the role of president at Loyola in May 2016, DACA-related efforts were well established. Rooney continued to support policy decisions by allocating resources toward initiatives like the Magis Scholarship, the Stritch School of Medicine’s change in admissions policy, Share the Dream Ally trainings, the DREAMer Committee, and other services for undocumented students.

Approving initiatives like the letter-writing campaign and sending students to Washington, DC, to advocate for DACA legislation were student-related tactical
contributions that were important to Rooney. Academically, she sanctioned faculty appointments and research focused on immigration.

Discussion

All three presidents made decisions that instrumentally fulfilled a larger vision to support, resource, and enhance educational opportunities for DACA students. The comprehensive breadth of services and resources they supported demonstrated an institutional commitment to DACA. This level of support tactically and comprehensively addressed DACA students’ needs in many aspects of their lives—from academic, to advocacy, to student development. Symbolically, too, such instrumental measures helped to create a culture of awareness and advocacy that spread across colleges, offices, and departments.

While DeGioia was motivated by a moral imperative, Garanzini and Rooney seemed to focus on the practical implications of their position on DACA. Garanzini focused on preserving the futures of talented students, while Rooney emphasized elevating a larger discourse and promoting a future citizenry.

Interpretive and Instrumental

Exercising Authority

John DeGioia. Exercising both instrumental and interpretive approaches, DeGioia supported initiatives on campus that would demonstrate a cultural commitment to undocumented student education, advocacy, and support, while also serving the very practical needs of this population. DeGioia had created a team of highly capable
individuals in whom he had implicit trust, and his reliance on them released a deluge of ideas in the face of threats to Georgetown’s DACA students. As one administrator remarked:

What Jack’s charge did was a really wonderful thing for the team working on it because it unshackled us in the sense that it was like, okay, everyone around the table, what are you going to do to further this goal?

Relying on others was demonstrative of DeGioia’s ability to surrender authority as it also indicated how embedded the values were in the university culture.

DeGioia was able to generate consensus around an issue for his community, and as a result, activated participation of individuals throughout the campus to join in his efforts. One administrator organized United We Dream campaigns on campus, and DeGioia’s participation was a symbolic gesture of his support of community interests. Several faculty members developed courses on immigration and justice and invited members of the community to participate. Finally, the faculty senate unanimously supported DeGioia’s moral positioning on DACA and his efforts in seeking a political resolution on the matter.

**Michael Garanzini.** Garanzini’s reliance on the passions, talents, and expertise of Bravo, Brubaker, Kuczewski, and Brandt were illustrative of Garanzini’s “bravery” in supporting ideas that transformed the institution. Garanzini’s support of key individuals who conceived significant initiatives were instrumental in making Loyola a model institution for expanding opportunities for DACA students. The loan plan at Stritch and the Magis Scholarship were the two seminal initiatives that opened opportunities for DACA students as they also created a reputation for Loyola as “DACA friendly.” His
championing of the white paper collaborative, by sending it to Jesuit presidents and colleagues, and Kuczewski’s project that followed were instrumental to Garanzini’s commitment to the DACA program.

A trusting and collaborative relationship with Garanzini permitted administrators, faculty, students, and board members to execute bold ideas and spearhead significant initiatives, several of which were launched within a decade of his tenure. At the same time, it was these individuals, from board member to student, who approached Garanzini with unprecedented ideas they so passionately wanted to explore. Garanzini created a culture and environment in which such ideas could be generated and had confidence in them to see through the important projects they conceived.

On a very practical level, these initiatives not only served Loyola by providing new opportunities for DACA students, but they also served society. As the Stritch School of Medicine and Arrupe College were able to accept highly qualified students, the school became a supply of talent for Loyola, and, after they graduated, for the communities in which they would work. The Magis Scholarship provided the financial means for DACA students to attend the university, which fulfilled Loyola’s mission of serving underserved populations. Symbolically, relying on key individuals within Loyola to execute these initiatives signaled to the University that leaders were responsive to the needs and concerns of the community by implementing new initiatives and creative ideas.

**Jo Ann Rooney.** In the wake of the 2016 election, Rooney depended heavily on Phil Hale, the vice president for government affairs, who had served under Garanzini, and who understood well the political climate of Illinois and Loyola’s culture. She exercised
her authority to accomplish tactical decisions that were important to the community, decisions that elevated discourse and aimed to positively impact public policy. The way in which Rooney used her authority symbolically communicated to Loyola that under her leadership, she would continue the initiatives that began during the tenure of her predecessor. Because she was new to the institution, she relied on her staff and cabinet members and also encouraged their greater autonomy and self-sufficiency.

Rooney’s level of authority was demonstrated by her ability to respond to a situational moment and proactively address substantive concerns of her students and community. Described as someone who easily stepped into a leadership role, Rooney was thoughtful and resolute in her decisions.

Discussion

The success of presidential authority for DeGioia and Garanzini was less about what each president did and more about the strength of the relationships between them and those with whom they worked. For DeGioia and Garanzini, unleashing the competencies of others was critical to establishing new initiatives at Georgetown and Loyola. DeGioia delegated DACA-related matters to his long-standing vice president of federal relations and chief of staff, fully trusting them to make decisions on his behalf. Garanzini was fully dependent on Stritch’s deans and faculty to execute a complex loan program. The expertise and political capital of Loyola’s board chair was pivotal in making the loan program possible. By virtue of being a new president, Rooney also relied on her team, and she shifted a culture which had relied on more oversight towards one that engendered more autonomy and self-sufficiency. Rooney developed a strong and
trusted relationship with her board chair, which was helpful to establish credibility, as well as to accomplish goals.

**External Networking**

*John DeGioia.* DeGioia relied on external networking to garner external political support and influence public policy, which gained DeGioia legitimacy internally at Georgetown and externally as well. DeGioia’s letters to congressional leaders, meetings with members of Congress (along with DACA students), and meetings and letters to leaders of the Jesuit and higher education community served a very practical purpose of convincing elected officials to take action to attempt to change policy. These strategies symbolically helped to elevate the university’s constituent confidence as well. These tactics also positioned Georgetown as an authoritative actor in public policy advocacy. As a vocal proponent of the DREAM Act and influencer among higher education organizations, DeGioia used his social and political capital to effect legislative decisions.

Partnering with other AJCU and Catholic university presidents was a symbolic and tactical approach to promote political change. As the founding member of the Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration, DeGioia created a coalition of Catholic college and university presidents and also leveraged Georgetown’s Catholic identity when he contacted only Catholic members of Congress, urging a resolution of the DREAM Act.

DeGioia and his team contacted politicians from both sides of the aisle to influence immigration policy, with a heavy reliance on Georgetown congressional alumni. Particularly during the DREAM Act vote and at other pivotal legislative
moments, he relied on a close relationship with Sen. Durbin in order to promote legislative change.

**Michael Garanzini.** A signatory of a letter from the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (2013) that was sent to every Catholic member of the House of Representatives urging the passage of immigration reform, Garanzini used the coalition of Catholic academics as a vehicle for advancing his agenda. As the statement read:

> Catholic teaching values the human dignity and worth of all immigrants, regardless of legal status. We remind you that no human being made in the image of God is illegal…. We are part of an immigrant church in an immigrant nation…. The United States is a nation of laws. It is also a nation built by immigrants. Our faith tradition rejects false choices between freedom and responsibility, individual rights and collective obligations.

The joint Loyola-Marquette University op-ed piece supporting the DREAM Act was a symbolic and tactical indication not only that Garanzini was comfortable in going public on the issue but also that he would use the strength of the Jesuit network to make his case. Similarly, while Garanzini was the primary architect of the white paper produced by Fairfield, Loyola, and Santa Clara, it would be another symbolic indicator of his ability to leverage the Jesuit network.

Garanzini’s friendship with Sen. Durbin was mutually beneficial. Durbin helped Garanzini champion the loan project at Stritch, and Garanzini advocated for the DREAM Act.

**Jo Ann Rooney.** Rooney sought policy change by collaborating with local, state, and federal partners. Relationships with key legislative leaders on immigration, including Illinois’ Senators Richard Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, were consequential in garnering political support and assistance for DACA students and their families. Working
with higher education organizations like the AJCU, ACE, the AACU, Pomona College (Pomona College, n.d.-a), and the Illinois Business Coalition, Rooney leveraged collective resources to maximize efforts on behalf of students.

Rooney also relied on the counsel of Cardinal Cupich. This relationship was also a source of support from the religious community. After the 2016 election, Rooney and her staff relied heavily on Chicago mayor, Rahm Emanuel, and on Sen. Durbin for counsel on immigration concerns; for emergent matters, Rooney called on Durbin and his staff for support.

**Discussion**

DeGioia and his immediate team leveraged external networks heavily and with considerable success. An extraordinary partnership and unique synergy between the federal relations and government staff of Georgetown and the AJCU enabled DeGioia and Georgetown leaders to meet weekly, if not daily, on the Hill to discuss ongoing lobbying efforts. His regional and national reputation gave DeGioia access to and respect from virtually everyone, including the president of the United States.

Both Rooney and Garanzini networked with external constituents more at the local and state levels. Garanzini understood the political climate of the state of Illinois and he leveraged relationships with politically influential board members to get the Stritch loan program passed. His immediate support of the DREAM Act legislation, along with a friendship with Durbin, helped Garanzini establish a solid and mutually beneficial partnership. While Rooney did not have as long-standing a rapport with state
political leaders as Garanzini, her background in public service was highly effective in garnering political support, and she worked closely with both U.S. senators from Illinois.

**Interpretive Levers of Leadership**

**Mission**

**John DeGioia.** By his own account, DeGioia’s actions on DACA were grounded by a moral imperative, and he drew on the collective values of the Georgetown community. The moral case for DACA resonated with internal and external constituents, and leveraging Jesuit principles gave DeGioia a foundation to take a philosophical position on the issue. In asserting that supporting DACA involved a moral imperative, DeGioia framed his vision as one that would advance Georgetown’s place in society by moving the institution toward a more elevated moral standing.

In speeches, letters, and position statements, religious undertones and language reflecting Georgetown’s values were apparent throughout. DeGioia frequently used terms like “community,” “solidarity,” and “service to others” in his role of convener. In calling for a better society, DeGioia used language that resonated with the institution and with the Jesuit tradition and included himself in his exhortations. In a statement shortly after the 2016 election, he wrote, “I have shared the responsibilities that come with our aspiration for a just society and the commitment we have to the common good.”

Pope Francis’s position on immigration gave leaders of Jesuit and Catholic institutions, including Georgetown, the latitude to interpret a 180-year-old tradition in a way that could support modern immigration rights. DeGioia embraced Georgetown’s Catholic identity and owed his conviction to protect DACA in part to Pope Francis’s
public stance on immigration. Drawing from the Catholic and Ignatian pedagogical framework, which espouses walking alongside the immigrant and the refugee and caring for the whole person, DeGioia used a platform that powerfully captured a faith tradition.

**Michael Garanzini.** Garanzini spoke of Loyola and Chicago’s history of serving immigrants as a way to garner constituent support. This mission was aligned with Jesuit values of protecting the stranger or immigrant, and he used this messaging to make the undeniable case for DACA. Not relying too heavily on mission rhetoric, Garanzini framed DACA as a problem to be solved and a “problem that shouldn’t be a problem.”

Loyola’s history of serving immigrant populations of Chicago was another symbolic tool that leveraged the Jesuit mission of serving urban immigrant communities, harkening back to the functional purpose of the founding of Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States. In this same vein, the arrangement that Stritch’s DACA students would work in underserved communities of Illinois is consistent with Jesuit values and Loyola’s culture of service.

Serving predominantly first-generation students, including DACA students, Arrupe College addressed critical issues facing higher education in the United States, including access and completion rates of postsecondary degrees for students from low-income families. As former President Garanzini reflected, “This [Arrupe] college is core to Loyola’s mission of providing such access and our commitment to building a more just world,” symbolically linking the immigrant story with a doctrinal imperative.

Rhetorically, Garanzini used language that made connections between Loyola’s history of serving immigrants and the necessity to support the DACA program. Asserting
that supporting the program “was no problem at all” and that it “was a problem that shouldn’t be a problem” was a rhetorical framing that suggested that Loyola was immune to scrutiny such that such criticism would not temper their position on DACA.

**Jo Ann Rooney.** As Loyola’s first lay president, Rooney was conscientious about upholding the Jesuit tradition, symbolically signaling how mission informed her decision making. Hiring a Jesuit as her chief of staff fulfilled a symbolic purpose in illustrating a commitment to preserving a strong Jesuit identity for Loyola and openness to a Jesuit perspective in her daily work and decision making. Viewed by participants as “more Jesuit than the Jesuits,” Rooney used rhetoric in speeches and public statements that revealed an alignment with mission, an interpretive lever of leadership that helped to build a community around core values.

In her “Statement on the Rescission of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival Program,” sent to the internal Loyola community on September 5, 2017, Rooney wrote:

As a Jesuit Catholic institution, Loyola University Chicago firmly believes in the dignity of each person and in the promotion of social justice….As we confront social injustices today and in the future, I ask that we do so in a way that advances our dialogue and understanding, with a core tenet of our Jesuit, Catholic faith in mind: dignity and respect for all.

Leveraging the Jesuit and Catholic faith tradition set a tone and foundation for the support of all individuals, including undocumented students.

Rooney’s invoking of Jesuit ideals was grounded in the pragmatic component of social justice and advocacy. In her “2018–2019 Academic Year Welcome” to the Loyola community, Rooney invoked the work of Fr. Arturo Sosa, superior general of the Jesuits, when he addressed the International Association of Jesuit Universities (IAJU). She stated:
He also challenged all of us to go to places that are not easy to reach and that others have avoided. For faculty and staff at Loyola, that means we must continue to extend and deepen our work and relationships, that we thoughtfully engage in civil discourse and dialogue to discern our calls to action….Together, we are educating students to challenge boundaries, work across social and political divides, and become engaged citizens of the world.

For Rooney, faith brought about an activation of purpose, and she actualized that purpose through facing uncharted territories. Religion and ethics played a significant role in fulfilling an obligation to serve those most vulnerable.

**Discussion**

Presidents framed mission through different rhetorical approaches. While DeGioia used language of a moral imperative and care for “community,” Rooney emphasized being on the “right side of history,” contributing to “discourse,” and informing a “future citizenry,” while Garanzini contended that DACA was something to “fix.” Rhetorically, for a lay president, it was important for DeGioia to invoke language of morality and take a philosophically more elevated position on the issue. Invoking morality may suggest that institutional action transcends the will of the individual, in this case, the president. Moreover, a moral imperative might imply that the institution took whatever means possible to support DACA students based on a moral higher ground, and in the case of Georgetown, it did just that—within the confines of the law.

For Garanzini, framing DACA as a “problem that shouldn’t be a problem” and a problem, that should just be “fixed,” was a pragmatic and instrumental approach. His connecting Loyola’s history of serving immigrant populations was an interpretive way (drawing from cultural norms and values) to solve a practical issue. For Rooney, also pragmatic in her approach, yet rhetorically consistent with Jesuit principles, was
motivated by the instrumental ways in which a position on DACA could “elevate discourse” and “promote a future citizenry.” Grounded by a faith tradition and ethical compass, Rooney’s stance on DACA was based on an obligation to advocate for human rights and to stand up for the underserved. Rooney used symbolic language that resonated with Loyola’s community while capturing a practical activation of inspiring purpose.

**Framing a Vision**

**John DeGioia.** A double alumnus of the institution and the longest standing president of the institution, DeGioia knew the Georgetown community intimately and had a deep commitment to the institution. Along with his longevity, his access to national and local public figures and governmental officials, and his professional achievements, DeGioia has been a well-known and well-respected global academic leader. All of these factors helped to build DeGioia’s legitimacy internally.

To the extent that interpretive leadership points to a larger vision, DeGioia excelled at that. Through symbolic measures, DeGioia garnered support of the internal community as he articulated a vision for the institution consistent with its culture and values. Particularly during a moment of national political uncertainty, and a disorienting one for many at Georgetown, DeGioia’s presentation of a clear vision to the community engendered confidence in his ability to make sense of ambiguity and make decisions in the face of controversy. His clear vision also presented the community with a future to which they could aspire.

The symbolic value of articulating a vision was the setting of a tone that mobilized the community in the pursuit of a better, more welcoming campus. In grand
and benevolent ways, DeGioia laid out this vision in many of his speeches, internal communications, and town halls. These actions conveyed his understanding of the emotional needs of the community, his ability to listen to the concerns of others, and his capacity to seek solutions consistent with the values of the organization. He often used language of the collective—“us” and “our”—to suggest that the entire community, himself included, would work together toward healing.

**Michael Garanzini.** Through speeches and op-eds, Garanzini articulated a future for Loyola that motivated members of the community to contribute more. Said one participant characterizing Garanzini, “He was one that was tireless and sort of visionary in imagining how this could be an issue that motivates and drives large elements of our community.” Key individuals knew of Garanzini’s clear and unwavering position which allowed them to conceive unprecedented initiatives and to see them through with the same level of commitment as their president had.

Viewed as a transformational figure for Loyola, Garanzini anchored his vision with the institution’s core ideology and history, offering the institution a sense of purpose. For Garanzini, supporting DACA was not only the right thing to do, but it would elevate the institution as a leader in this vein and a model institution that others could emulate.

**Jo Ann Rooney.** During a moment of national turbulence, and fear and uncertainty for Loyola University, Rooney addressed the challenges of the present and the hopes for the future. By supporting tangible actions, including engaging with political
leaders, Rooney offered hope and a sense of security to her community. Her vision for Loyola included a commitment to protect her students in support of the “common good.”

**Discussion**

As presidents who were in the roles when DACA emerged as an issue on their campuses, DeGioia and Garanzini had the luxury of being able to articulate a vision that set a tone and shaped the culture. Rooney, on the other hand, inherited the hopes that Garanzini had set forth, adopting her predecessor’s vision and refining it.

**Longevity and Personal History**

**John DeGioia.** From undergraduate student to university president, DeGioia has spent a remarkable 40 years as a member of the Georgetown community. This longevity led to an intimate understanding of the institution’s culture and an ability to effectively assess the needs of those whom he served, most critically the needs of students.

DeGioia’s extended tenure suggested his commitment to the institution, as well as the legitimacy and esteem that he had earned of his colleagues and community. Based on a multitude of decisions over DeGioia’s tenure, the Georgetown community had learned what to anticipate from their president and DeGioia knew what his community expected of him—a voice of confidence, of hope, and, in this case, of moral authority.

Although DeGioia delivered a vast number of communications to the Georgetown community to increase awareness of institutional policy and national events and to affirm Georgetown’s commitment to DACA, in the eyes of many participants they were not excessive. DeGioia felt that affirming the psychological and emotional needs of others,
particularly those most vulnerable, served a necessary pastoral role to heal a community in crisis.

Throughout all of his internal speeches, DeGioia made his position on DACA clear, while offering solace and comfort to the community. His unyielding commitment to DACA was described by participants as “in his soul” and “in his heart,” which spread broadly and into the “DNA” of the community, remarked others. A long tenure, his alignment with the community, and his omnipresence with students gave DeGioia credibility.

**Michael Garanzini.** Garanzini, described by participants as a transformational figure and an administrative talent, grew Loyola University and expanded opportunities there during his 14 years as president. His first year of tenure coincided with the introduction of the first DREAM Act in 2001, and Garanzini’s awareness and understanding of DACA grew alongside those of the country. Within his first year, Garanzini met with Sen. Durbin to discuss the DREAM Act and express his support of that piece of legislation. He used this meeting to point out their shared narrative as sons of immigrants. Drawing from his personal experience allied Garanzini with Durbin and with those undocumented students whom he was trying to support and who were at the center of such a national debate. Garanzini had also helped trustees to relate to the immigrant story by describing how the undocumented students at Loyola had come from various countries, that is to say, “just like the rest of us had.”

Garanzini’s tenure at Loyola gave him credibility with his constituents and the support he needed to allow for the tactical decisions he made to succeed. He needed the
backing of academic deans, key faculty, and trustees to fulfill his overarching objectives. His inroads in transforming Loyola in other ways helped him earn internal support for his DACA vision.

A long tenure also symbolically represented Garanzini’s understanding of Loyola’s history and culture, which gave individuals the confidence to see it through uncharted waters, as was the case with Stritch’s dean.

**Jo Ann Rooney.** As one who did not respond with “knee-jerk” reactions, Rooney was thoughtful about what a response to DACA would mean for Loyola and what it would mean for the larger discourse on immigration. Rooney was conscious that her position would contribute not only to meeting the needs of the Loyola community but also go beyond it. Her focus was primarily on the instrumental effects of her decisions, how they would “elevate discourse,” promote social justice, and contribute to the formation of the student citizen. Rooney was clear that her decisions would not be symbolic alone, but that they would have to have a clearly defined purpose—as when she decided against declaring Loyola as a sanctuary campus, for example.

Yet her tenure came at a time leading up to and soon after the election of Donald Trump, when there was heightened insecurity and fear among undocumented students, which required a response that would bring the community together and assure students that university leadership would respond to their concerns. In public addresses and as a signatory of join statements and letters, Rooney provided the symbolic gestures that would offer her community confidence in her ability to listen to their concerns and
respond to them. Rooney also provided instrumental assurances to students by meeting with them personally.

Rooney’s background in law, business, and public service informed her proclivity to weigh in officially on sociopolitical decisions only if they would promote action or a change in policy or discourse. After Trump’s election, she affirmed her commitment to the Loyola community to not only continue the foundation that her predecessor had established, but also to strengthen the institution’s role in DACA-related efforts. While Rooney’s rhetoric symbolically set a tone for the community that affirmed organizational culture, Rooney was more motivated by the instrumental effects that her decisions would have to support and advocate for her students.

Discussion

The longevity enjoyed by DeGioia and Garanzini enabled them to accumulate a body of work and constituent legitimacy, both of which helped to make their responses to DACA successful. For DeGioia, geographic location in the nation’s capital helped him gain access to key leaders and influencers, especially politicians. Because DeGioia was so well-known and respected by the outside community, there may have been something in the safety of celebrity that enabled him to make requests that a less-seasoned president could do. Conversely, DeGioia’s longevity made him an influencer himself in the higher education community.

Having inherited the legacy of a transformative leader, Rooney assumed her role with a reasonable awareness of culture and a measured sensibility toward decision making. Because she did not have the longevity of her predecessor, nor the political and
social capital that comes with a long tenure, Rooney had to build relationships from the ground up.

Summary

Loyola’s relationship with Georgetown is informal, marked more by interactions between individuals rather than more officially between the institutions themselves. The government relations staffs at both universities are directly connected with the political relations staff at AJCU and with Sen. Durbin and his staff. Though DACA-related efforts are not a regular subject of discussion, their outreach efforts on Capitol Hill have been coordinated by counterparts at the two schools. DACA-related efforts, when decisions to conduct outreach on Capitol Hill were made, coordination between the counterparts at both schools did take place. While the presidents at Loyola and Georgetown would touch base when they would see each other, they usually did not directly discuss public policy decisions as they relied on senior staff to keep them abreast of those efforts. One form of partnership between the schools was through the enrollment of Arrupe College graduates at Georgetown.

While the literature suggests that leaders use either interpretive or instrumental leadership approaches, more often than not the presidents at the two institutions used a blending of the two. The meaning that was derived from leaders’ actions had more to do with the context (i.e., leader’s tenure and longevity; morale among the community; the president’s social and political capital) than the action itself. Since tactical measures (allocating resources) can have symbolic meaning and interpretive measures (longevity, mission, vision) can be indicative of tactical decisions, it is difficult to distinguish acts of
leadership that are purely instrumental and those that are purely interpretive. The kind of leadership approach that served an instrumental purpose for one leader had served an interpretive purpose for another. Therefore, deriving meaning from leaders’ actions does not need to be defined by either an interpretive or an instrumental approach.

What marked the differences in leadership strategies of the two presidents was based on longevity, social and political capital, and the way in which mission was leveraged. DeGioia was a prominent figure at Georgetown University and in Washington DC. His history with the institution provided him with a deep understanding of the institution’s culture and the wisdom to envision a future to which the community could aspire. Garanzini, while not having had as long an institutional history as DeGioia, became a seasoned leader who was well-respected for having transitioned Loyola through significant growth. Both of these leaders established a clear position on DACA by symbolic rhetorical means that created a collective culture and tactical strategies that supported collective values. At Georgetown, DeGioia’s legitimacy within the academic and Washington, DC community, his body of work, and his being informed by Jesuit, Catholic principles, gave DeGioia the credibility that was required to inspire such transformational change.

The relationship between interpretive and instrumental levers of leadership was not mutually exclusive in Georgetown’s DeGioia, as one approach informed the other and vice versa. Symbolically, DeGioia elevated the community by affirming common values and purpose. Comprehensive tactical decisions distributed this responsibility to other members of the community who respected DeGioia’s technical competencies and
administrative authority. Georgetown’s unique location in Washington, DC (and its connections to political and civic leaders), its reputation as a premier institution, and its highly respected president who garnered external and internal legitimacy required symbolic and tactical leadership approaches to demonstrate a strong commitment to DACA.

Since Rooney was newer in the role and had adopted a culture established by her predecessor, the calculus in her decision making included how she would best sustain continuity while providing contributions in her own right. Rooney supported the rhetorical position of her predecessor and specific DACA-related initiatives that began before her tenure. A departure from Garanzini’s position would have indicated a neglect of cultural norms and put Rooney’s constituent confidence at risk. Therefore, Rooney was only able to make slight incremental adjustments and tactical decisions that did not radically alter the foundation that Garanzini had built.

Through interpretive public statements, petitions, and town halls, DeGioia, Garanzini, and Rooney, set a tone and paved the path by which others could mobilize and be agents of change. There were able to successfully unite and heal a community in distress, while using their authority necessary to enact steps that fulfilled an overarching objective.

Navigating Through Conflict

When leaders navigate through difficult political terrain, they must consider how to confront tensions and reconcile competing stakeholder values. The two cases illustrated how individuals handled foreseen and unforeseen conflicts to enable their
institutions to accomplish important objectives. Emerging themes about student advocacy and protection shed light on the paradoxes underlying approaches to confronting tensions.

Georgetown University. When Georgetown started to address undocumented student needs, the university was not alone among similar higher education institutions that had to serve a new population with great discretion. While Georgetown administrators would not deny accepting undocumented students, the university did not publicly make claims of such acceptance practices within or outside the Georgetown community. In order to mitigate conflict, leaders sought creative solutions, even if imperfect. By categorizing undocumented students as international students, the university found a discreet way to repurpose scholarship dollars. While leaders erred on the side of caution, they were flexible and found creative ways to meet the needs of students while avoiding potential internal conflict.

While the leadership of Georgetown was well aware of the possibility of alienating donors or alumni by taking such a public position on DACA, its president was not risk-averse nor fazed by being a target of scrutiny. Said one Georgetown trustee, “Once you get out there and make a public statement, you find yourself in rough and choppy waters. Every matter requires careful consideration.” Whatever negative sentiments DeGioia received from unengaged alumni or donors, they were considered inconsequential. DeGioia had found himself in choppy waters during past controversial initiatives that he had led (e.g., the founding of Georgetown’s LGBTQ Center) and was accustomed to confronting naysayers in order to ultimately reach his objective.
Due to his personal convictions, the desires of his students and community, and the reputation and legacy of his institution, DeGioia did not consider inaction on DACA an option. In the face of potential external scrutiny, he took a position of control, framing his position as unwavering and consistent.

**Loyola University Chicago.** The leadership at Loyola took a very proactive role in navigating through potential tensions as a result of its public position on DACA, particularly after the 2016 election. Rooney took practical measures to ensure that the university had a legal way to respond if immigration officers were to arrive on campus. Hale’s access as vice president for government relations to Sen. Durbin and his staff was indicative of the strong relationship between them as well as the university’s active pursuit of risk mitigation. The institution followed every protocol to ensure its capacity to defend and protect its undocumented students.

Internal tensions ensued between supporters of the Magis Scholarship and Stritch’s efforts, on the one hand, and some members of the administration, on the other. Participants reported a distinction between advocates of the program guided by moral and ethical principles and those opposed who were motivated by protecting the university’s interests. While these were not mutually exclusive, participants did point out a perception of two camps—visionaries and bureaucrats—who needed to work effectively together in the interest of the students and the school.

Those with concerns about the possibility of bearing the financial responsibility if Stritch DACA students could not pay back their loans were in direct conflict with those who wanted to help these students. The ability to look beyond these worst case scenarios
and focus on the possibility of a successful outcome suggests a transcending of conflict and emphasis on an unrealized vision. Similarly, administrators needed to dispel myths that Stritch’s DACA candidates were receiving preferential treatment after more had been accepted, in addition to the practicality of granting loans to medical students who potentially could default. Through the lens of competing values theory (CVF), these tensions led to “insightful interconnections” of seemingly competing objectives which led to creative results. Supporters illustrated the positive impacts on enhancing educational opportunities of DACA students: Stritch had the ability to compete with Ivy League medical schools who successfully recruited undocumented students, and Loyola would fulfill its history of serving those in need.

Another example of navigating through conflict was that of Flavio Bravo’s efforts to establish the Magis Scholarship. It required the student body president, in his sophomore year, to possess a great deal of persistence and resilience to fight through the peer resistance and the institutional bureaucracy. Bravo’s biggest challenge was defending to naysayers the utility of the scholarship for those whose futures were unpredictable (i.e., why fund a student who could get deported?). Bravo confronted this position directly by asserting that an assessment of potential is not part of the calculus in determining the allocation of scholarships to documented students. Therefore, potential should not be a consideration for granting scholarships to DACA students. What finally led to the success of the Magis Scholarship were the will of the student body and the consent of the administration—and Bravo’s persistence.
Georgetown and Loyola Universities. One of the more obvious contradictions for leaders at both Georgetown and Loyola is that by advocating and supporting undocumented students they drew attention to individuals who required protection and discretion. Particularly in Washington, DC, where ICE raids had increased in recent years, Georgetown was in a precarious position to be as vocal as it was on immigration rights.

Georgetown staff and the administration had been proactive in equipping students with protective tools, informing them about how to respond to an ICE agent or where to go in the event of a raid. Yet, both institutions had also facilitated photo shoots with DACA students and politicians, rallies, and other public events which put undocumented students at risk. In a letter to congressional leaders and to Sen. Durbin, DeGioia described a detailed description of a DACA student at Georgetown. This same student was featured in the cover story of *The Washington Post* (Vargas & Hendrix, 2017). Putting a face to the issue was a delicate decision for the university and for the undocumented students themselves, who, as many participants noted, acted out of “courage” and “self-advocacy.” Parallel to CVF, the concept of a paradox theory (Lewis, 2000) explains how leaders at Georgetown integrated values and transcended transitions in the name of justice and a moral standard. For Georgetown leaders, long-term gains outweighed any short-term consequence, even if it meant the deportation of one student.

The source of greatest tension at Georgetown and at Loyola, however, was not with students, faculty, or staff. It was not with donors or alumni. Rather, it came from external political forces—namely, fear-inducing White House rhetoric and the real threat
of action by immigration authorities. The conflict for DeGioia and his immediate circle was between the position that the university took in the face of threats posed and the fear aroused by external forces. What is more, although Georgetown had been able to work effectively with past administrations, working with the current White House was deemed fruitless, a dispiriting reality for DeGioia’s immediate team who were earnestly striving to pass legislation that would save DACA, an effort that was fruitless. As political divisiveness and threats to rescind DACA stirred by the White House did not let up, Georgetown and Loyola took steps to confront tensions by engaging with congressional leaders directly and continuously.

Discussion

Navigating through difficult political terrain laden with moral complexity requires creative solutions and persistence. Both universities addressed tensions directly and effectively when tensions were obvious, and the leaders at these institutions had the capacity to anticipate conflict when not. Complex circumstances called for complex solutions. Leaders at Georgetown and Loyola persisted in their overarching position on DACA, while they considered expanded possibilities for the campus community. This required presidents to use interpretive and instrumental levers of leadership, and depending on the context, the meaning derived from each lever was different. Therefore, a conceptual contribution to the literature suggests that the attribution of meaning on leadership approaches is not purely instrumental or purely interpretive in isolation. Context provide meaning to the action, and therefore, labeling a leadership approach as interpretive or instrumental may be irrelevant.
While I had anticipated that the political controversy around DACA would have tempered leaders’ actions, this was not the case at these two institutions because the motivation to support DACA was not a political issue but a human rights issue. Said a Loyola faculty member:

Immigration has defied a political system. Your politics doesn’t have to drive this. It’s good for people. It’s good for the economy. It’s good on so many levels. Equality of opportunity—that’s just an American issue. If you’ve got the big picture, you want it to be on the right side of history. Those institutions that are on the right side of history will reap a reward in their legacy going forward.

Presidents at both institutions explored, rather than avoided, tensions in order to fulfill a larger vision of supporting and welcoming DACA students in their communities. Attempts to suppress the needs, desires, and passions of students, faculty, and administration would have undermined constituent support, the reputation of the institutions and, most importantly, the good work that the community could have pursued. University leaders conducted town halls, met with students, administration and staff, held brainstorming sessions, and relied on the expertise of others allowed to explore collective interests.

Both Georgetown and Loyola encountered the paradoxical dilemma of engaging in advocacy work for vulnerable students, which involved putting a spotlight on some of them, while also having the responsibility of protecting and guarding them from harm. For both Georgetown and for Loyola, putting a face to DACA by using student stories and profiles and the students themselves to further drive the case, put a heavy burden and responsibility on leaders. Facilitating meetings on the Hill, including with Sen. Durbin, photo-ops, and other public events put the institution, DACA students, and possibly their
families at risk. Yet to add to the complexity, the students themselves wanted to engage openly and participate in the larger movement. There was a fine line between political exploitation and putting a face to DACA, which Georgetown and Loyola seemed to navigate gracefully.

This dichotomy between protection and self-advocacy was a tension that leaders resolved by viewing DACA students from an asset-based approach, where students were empowered to determine their own destinies. The ability for leaders to explore uncharted territory in allowed for new and unexpected possibilities, including DACA students’ public advocacy. As a result of transcending conflict, these students found their own agency and channeled their voice at the institution that taught them how to use it. Said a Georgetown administrator:

What I’ve tried to do is really just provide an added layer of nuance. We want to hold their humanity enhanced, but we also don’t want to treat them like they’re these really delicate flowers. Again there are legitimate things undocumented individuals can’t do, but education quite literally gives you the self-determination to think differently, to think more creatively, to think and explore possibilities…

As DACA-related efforts at the institutional level started to take shape, students became more mobilized on their campuses. Informed by paradox theory, a synergy with the university built on trust—elements that help to cut through tensions—students at Loyola and Georgetown were given the latitude and the platform to express their grievances and requests, and for some, in very public ways. Leaders, as a result, confronted students’ concerns with openness and an eye toward a resolution.

While not a focus of the study, one important nuance that emerged from the data was the potential of reinforcing a “model student” narrative—i.e., that Dreamers may be
highest achieving subset of immigrants. Said a Georgetown trustee, “Sometimes you need to put a face on the kinds of students that we’re talking about, individuals who are not just bright but also have promising futures ahead of them.” While it may be more palatable to some groups, for example, to support Dreamers “packaged as more achieving and so-called more deserving,” in the words of one participant, this narrative feeds a false narrative that only those most deserving should be protected. Participants grappled with the tension that came from framing a dichotomy between the very finest of DACA students—those who might become professional contributing members of society—and those who might not. In the end, individuals at both institutions acknowledged that, like any human rights justice issue, DACA advocacy is complex and that, as one participant compared immigration rights to civil rights, manufacturing a false dichotomy is problematic as it is immoral.
CHAPTER 7 – IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Implications for Leaders

These cases are models for how institutions can navigate through political controversy in the name of protecting students. The cases describe a moment when leaders responded to a politically divisive issue that directly affected their campus communities. The leaders’ fidelity to institutional mission significantly affected their inclination to change internal procedures and to attempt to effect public policy. While the study isolated the issue to DACA and at Jesuit institutions, the cases could have broader implications to other sociopolitical issues and in other higher education settings.

Themes that emerged from the study can inform higher education leaders as they respond to the political exigencies of our time:

- The art of symbolic and tactical levers of leadership;
- Fostering student advocacy and civic agency
- Willingness for risk-taking;
- Cultivating faculty engagement; and
- Political engagement

The Art of Interpretive and Instrumental Levers of Leadership

Conceptually, as both interpretive and instrumental approaches are distinct, they are interrelated; instrumental acts often have symbolic significance, while interpretive (or tactical) acts may motivate behavior. Since DACA was an issue that directly impacted members of the community and related to institutional mission, presidents relied both on symbolic and tactical dimensions of leadership to heal a campus and to accomplish objectives.
While individual tactical strategies (e.g., adding new staff positions, providing legal assistance and academic resources, and creating comprehensive websites) can resolve practical problems, as a collective, they can also help to transform culture through reinforced values and constituent support. Needless to say, behavior helps to create meaning, and so even instrumental acts are symbolically indicative of a larger philosophy. Conversely, without instrumental strategies, interpretive approaches could seem vacuous and meaningless. Symbolic methods alone eventually erode constituent confidence in leadership.

Institutional missions that are rich in tradition and values, like those espoused by the Jesuits, can help frame an institutional commitment toward political responsibility. For this study, mission no doubt was central in the leaders’ calculus in responding to DACA. Mission played a symbolic role in shaping rhetoric that reflected the value system of the institution, garnered constituent support, and motivated action. Devoting necessary resources functionally supports the tangible acts of leadership as it also symbolically demonstrates institutional commitment in supporting symbolic, interpretive language.

Being able to make sense of and interpret nonroutine events helps leaders make instrumental decisions to bolster pride, morale, confidence and assurance, and to implement creative initiatives. Instrumental leadership repairs inefficiencies, improves policies and procedures, and enhances centralized services, which can be especially important during times of uncertainty and distress.
Individuals make meaning of instrumental leadership through interpretive levers of leadership. When navigating contentious political terrain, presidents, by virtue of their positions, need to pull constituents together by articulating a higher purpose. Symbolic acts, such as reaffirming communal values and envisioning a positive shared future, rally constituent support and participation.

**Fostering Student Advocacy and Civic Agency**

A civically-minded conscientiousness in students can emerge as a result of an institution advocating on their behalf, where students themselves have an opportunity to discover their agency. By sanctioning student activism or even participating in it, a president symbolically shows solidarity with students (an interpretive act), and by facilitating student efforts, he or she shows instrumental leadership.

Specific to a Jesuit education is the notion of being “men and women for others,” a calling of purpose to make a difference in society. One Georgetown trustee commented:

> The primary thing about a Jesuit university…has to do with how will the education of students be used for the transformation of society. So the purpose of a Jesuit university is not simply for the careers of the individuals or for what their life experience will be, but also and significantly, who will they use it for, what difference will they make, who will they stand up for, what will their values be? So in one way or another, every Jesuit university has a sort of a purpose of educating leaders for a just world.

The academy has the responsibility to give students the capacity to understand the social and theoretical underpinnings of social justice, as well as the latitude and platform to put this intellectual work into action. Students should be able to use their agency to voice their academic and personal goals by participating in student groups, advocacy, and research, and by articulating concerns with university leaders, including the president.
Colleges and universities can also model civic advocacy so students can witness how social and political engagement can best be approached.

**Willingness for Risk-taking**

Unpredictable external political forces can contribute to uncertainty for university leaders. Ambiguous circumstances require leaders to respond adaptively, innovatively, and with a greater tolerance for failure and risk. One’s capacity to act with a sense of possibility, rather than out of fear, is essential to creative solution-making.

Disruptive political events often require leaders to respond swiftly to set a tone and establish authority, without the luxury of time and space to consider an array of alternatives. Risk tolerance can enable leaders to make decisions quickly and to think creatively. As complex situations call for complex solutions, leaders must make choices that may be a departure from what might seem typical, requiring leaders to act outside of or beyond the institutional rules or convention. In the face of matters unpredictable, leaders may not have the time or space to contemplate an array of alternatives and therefore must act swiftly even if the outcome is unforeseen. Risk tolerance can enable leaders to make decisions quickly and to think creatively. As uncharted territory invites new ideas, a leader’s openness to ambiguity can facilitate unrealized possibilities. Moreover, the history of the Jesuits includes a kind of rebellious spirit of advocacy.

**Cultivating Faculty Engagement**

Faculty and administrators who participated in this study encouraged higher education leaders to include community engagement in faculty review and promotion...
processes. In order to cultivate research, pedagogy, and practice in areas related to political responsibility, incentives for faculty scholarship must be provided.

Inherent in community engagement work is the collaboration between the academy and local, state, national, and global communities for the “mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity” (Campus Compact, n.d.-b). A significant movement in the practice of community engagement for higher education was inspired by the 2006 announcement of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement. This classification “affirms that an institution has institutionalized community engagement in its identity, culture, and commitments” (Campus Compact, n.d.-b). Such practices are also an integral part of an institution’s culture focused on curricular engagement, partnerships or outreach, or a combination of both.

An institutional investment in faculty community-based scholarship could lead to projects that could inform solutions to social and civic problems. As a result of working with faculty, students will have an increased awareness of social problems and a more informed understanding of political systems. Outreach projects can help to solve social justice issues, increase the college or university’s social and political influence in its surrounding communities, and elevate students’ consciousness about how intellectual endeavors can have powerful applications to addressing societal problems.

**Political Engagement**

Contemporary leaders must be knowledgeable about the past, informed about the present, and have the will to influence the future for the common good through political
engagement. Higher education leaders bear a responsibility to address the context in which students live. Denying the political dimension of an issue only weakens one’s consciousness to the larger forces that shape our world. As one administrator from Loyola noted:

An awareness of the political realities of an issue enables leaders to be astute and realistic about potential conflict, as well as opportunity. It’s dangerous when people don’t see these issues as being political. On [the] one hand, it’s healthy that you don’t see this as political because it’s so natural. But in reality they are political issues, and if you lose sight of the fact that they’re political issues, you’ve lessened your awareness to the concerns and sensitivities of all your constituents. In the real world there is a lot of debate. You always have to be self-aware and you have to reflect on this and be empathetic with others who clearly view it as a political issue in a very different position on those matters.

To protect the human rights of their students, the presidents of Georgetown and Loyola acknowledged inequalities, identified the needs of vulnerable students, allocated resources to support them, and worked towards positive political outcomes. Inherent in such actions includes acknowledging the inequalities of individuals who are vulnerable, allocating resources to support them, and effectively contribute to political outcomes. Ensuring the health of a pluralistic society demands that educators develop their political values and capacities toward achieving the common good.

**Implications for Future Research**

In order to effectively address politically charged issues relating to DACA, higher education leaders at Georgetown and Loyola Chicago have inspired a culture of advocacy, protection, and support to ensure that the potential of educational opportunities for DACA students can be realized.
The intention of this study was to illuminate how leaders of Jesuit universities navigated through difficult political terrain. The findings also shed light on the ways in which mission informed decision making and how leaders confronted internal and external tensions. The results of the study serve as a foundation for future research into how other types of higher education institutions with other missions navigate through controversial issues, or those who have not navigated through difficult political forces. Topics beyond the initial scope of this study could generate additional contributions to the body of literature on the phenomenon of institutional responses to controversial issues.

**Site Selection**

A qualitative study of institutions whose faith-based mission does not play a central role to confronting difficult political terrain would help leaders of private or public secular institutions understand the drivers of such responses. Research of secular institutions that have a strong commitment to community-based service, for example, such as some community colleges or land-grant institutions would help illuminate how non-faith-based missions can inspire responses to difficult political issues.

**Participant Group Sampling**

A qualitative study that investigates an institutional response to DACA solely from the vantage point of the student, to include documented and undocumented students, would offer student insight into perceptions of leadership and political responsibility. Since undocumented students are the subject of the very issue, this kind of study would be a powerful contribution to understanding leadership effectiveness and institutional
culture. Students’ points of view could either affirm or disaffirm the effectiveness of the institutions’ efforts made for undocumented students.

Methodology

A longitudinal study illustrating a comprehensive set of issues would help university leaders understand the interrelationship between symbolic and tactical actions over a period of time. This approach would allow the researcher to observe actions in real time and study how institutions and their leaders responded to several issues.

Issue Context

In order to evaluate how institutions navigate through difficult political terrains more broadly, an investigation of other sociopolitical issues would be useful. Leaders would better understand how context affects institutional responses and why some issues may or not be more palatable than others. For example, how one institution addresses gun legislation might differ from how another addresses race relations or LGBTQ rights and advocacy.

Theoretical Framework

Presidents are beholden to varying stakeholders including (a) trustees, who represent the public interest; (b) faculty, who represent the institution’s commitment to academic values; (c) administrators, who execute institutional processes and programs; (d) donors and alumni, who support the institution’s progress; and (e) students, who learn, grow, and develop on our campuses. Investigating leadership behavior from the lens of stakeholder theory would illuminate the degree to which leaders’ decisions are
influenced by key constituents. Presidents who satisfy one constituency may find it difficult to satisfy others. What criteria an effective leader uses to satisfy the needs of constituents will inform the intersection between the roles of individuals and their relationship with a particular issue. Depending on institutional characteristics (i.e., endowment, tenure of president, board composition, etc.), constituent support may or may not be a predominant factor in leadership motivation.

Conclusion

Political engagement is a powerful, consequential action that universities can and should take for the common good. Colleges and universities can inspire real and enduring solutions to the problems of society, and university presidents can be a critical source of such action. As models of civic participation, university leaders have a responsibility to confront real-world, real-time issues, and to respond to the concerns of society. Presidents are paramount to such progress because they are in a position to be models of moral progress, delegators of the values they profess, and champions for all of their students. In the face of political adversity, leaders must take stock in, represent, and live up to the mission to their capacity.

Effective presidents must be aware of the political realities that affect members of their community and reflect this awareness through political engagement. Encouraging political calls to action, engaging with political leaders, and taking clear policy positions are ways in which university leaders can reassure and inspire a community. Responding to the political exigencies of the day can elevate discourse, create alliances, and build community. It is a way to offer comfort, renewal, and hope. In forming a future citizenry,
educators must provide students a platform and their own microphone to contribute to the social progress of an institution.

In light of the political division and unrest that DACA has stirred in our country, leaders at Georgetown University and Loyola University Chicago transcended political controversy and embraced their responsibility with a moral clarity that emboldened their strategy to respond.
APPENDICES

Appendix A

Semi-structured Interview Protocol for Presidents

- What role do higher education institutions (HEIs) have in addressing national political issues?
- Is there a unique role for Jesuit colleges and universities, as faith-based institutions?
- Can you talk me through how you responded to significant national political events? Please pay particular attention on DACA.
  - With whom did you consult?
  - What were the considerations that you made in responding to DACA?
  - What public political positions had you made prior to DACA?
  - How was DACA a particular moment for your institution, as well as for HEIs in general?
  - What concerns did you express during this time?
  - What were the outcomes that you hoped would result from your DACA position?
  - What have been sources of frustration for matters unresolved with respect to this issue?
  - What role did relationships with external partners play in your calculus to act?
- In so far as the Jesuit mission is something that you leveraged during this time, can you describe that calculation?
- In what ways does or does not a faith-based institution differ from secular ones with respect to addressing issues of moral importance? Would you say that DACA is/was a moral issue?
Appendix B

Semi-structured Interview Protocol for Office of Federal Relations

- Can you talk me through how President X responded to significant national political events? Please pay particular attention on DACA.
- What were the considerations that President X made in responding to DACA?
- With whom did s/he consult?
- Did s/he consider political impact of making a public statement? To the donor base? To the academic community/alumni? To current students?
  - What impact did the public statement have on those constituents?
- Was the number of DACA students a consideration for his/her position? From what you know, how many DACA students do you serve?
- What role did you play before and after the AJCU position on DACA?
- Had President X taken public political positions prior to DACA? Do you think DACA was a particular moment for him/her, as well as for Higher Education Institutions in general?
- What concerns did President X express during this time?
- How would you describe the leadership style of President X?
- What his/her position on DACA symbolic/tactical or both? In what ways?
- What do you think President X had hoped would be the outcome of the DACA position?
- In so far as the Jesuit mission is something that president leveraged during this time, can you describe that calculation?
- How would you characterize your relationship with the president on external affairs?
- Can you describe your relationship with congressional leaders and state/local politicians? How do these relationships inform the issues that [name of institution] addresses?
- Can you describe a political issue that may have been high risk for the institution and how this was handled?
- To what extent did the board of trustees play an important role in addressing DACA?
- What resistance did you face internally/externally? How did you respond to these concerns?
- How have external relationships with higher education and the political community helped to accomplish desired outcomes?
Appendix C

Semi-structured Interview Protocol for AJCU Presidents

- What can you tell me about the role of Jesuit colleges and universities with respect to political participation?
- Do higher education institutions (HEIs) have a moral obligation to ensure civic liberties of students are protected?
- What shall be the role of HEI leaders with respect to navigating through difficult political terrain?
- What has been the role of the AJCU with respect to: 1) taking political positions and 2) political involvement?
- How has this role changed in the last 5-10 years?
- How has this role changed during the Trump administration?
- In what ways can ensuring civil liberties transcend political controversy felt by HEI leaders?
- What have been some of the challenges in soliciting cooperation/participation of AJCU schools?
- What do you suppose are the challenges for HEI presidents to take political positions on those that might be perceived as controversial?
- What are the potential risks for leaders?
- With respect to DACA, what were your hopes for an outcome among the AJCU institutions?
- What are the ways in which this role of the AJCU promotes/has promoted institutions to be more politically engaged?
- What is the role of secular HEIs with respect to political involvement? Is there is a difference between faith-based institutions and secular ones in this role?
- What are, if any, are the limits to political participation of AJCU schools?
- When national political events occur, what is the process for AJCU’s responses to these events?
- Can you describe the process of designing a comprehensive response to DACA?
- With whom did you consult? What were the mechanisms of communicating the message to AJCU schools and to the public?
- Were there any risks involved for AJCU to craft the statement on DACA and for soliciting all 28 schools to sign the document? When schools had not responded, were there efforts made to persuade them to sign? What was the nature of the concerns for those who either did not respond or were slow to respond?
Appendix D

Semi-structured Interview Protocol for AJCU Staff

- Can you describe the political arm of ACJU? Why is political involvement important for AJCU, symbolically and tactically?
- What were the potential political risks in taking a position on DACA? What are the political risks for Jesuit institutions? What were the considerations that AJCU schools made with respect to taking positions on DACA?
- Were you or others at AJCU in direct communication with presidents and/or administrators prior to DACA statement? What were the sentiments expressed? Was it important for AJCU to reach consensus among the schools?
- What were the characteristics about the institutions and the presidents of those institutions who supported statements on DACA?
- Please describe your working relationship with Georgetown University and Loyola University Chicago.
- To the extent that you can, describe how political capital of DeGioia and Rooney helps their ability to garner support for policy change?
- Have ACJU institutions heightened their political engagement in recent years?
- What issues have ACJU presidents responded to and how?
- Describe the collective power of the ACJU with respect to political influence? What kinds of actions has the group taken?
Appendix E

Semi-structured Interview Protocol for University Administrators and Faculty

- Please describe your role and specifically your role with respect to DACA?
- Can you describe the institutional response to DACA and how this commitment has been known and articulated?
- What can you tell me about the role of Jesuit colleges and universities with respect to political participation?
- Do higher education institutions (HEIs) have a moral obligation to ensure civic liberties of students are protected?
- What shall be the role of HEI leaders with respect to navigating through difficult political terrain?
- What do you suppose are the challenges for HEI presidents to take political positions internally? Externally?
- What are the potential risks for leaders in confronting controversial issues?
- Can you describe the process of designing a comprehensive response to DACA?
- What were the potential risks in taking a position on DACA?
- Had President X made public political positions prior to DACA? Do you think DACA was a particular moment for him/her? How did the community respond?
- How did President X create a culture of advocacy? Were these efforts sufficient? What issues are still unresolved?
- What are the opportunities for higher education leaders and administrators to be involved in sociopolitical matters most relevant to students?
- What can university leaders do to inspire administrators and faculty to participate in DACA-related activities?
Appendix F

Codes Used for Data Analysis

1. Jesuit Mission
2. Leadership
3. Political Engagement
4. Institutional DACA-related actions
5. Conflict
6. External Partners
7. Student-centered resources
8. Student Advocacy


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