

## **Washington State Need Grant for Undocumented Students**

### ASCBC Student Voice Academy Issue Paper 2012

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Every year high school students anticipate the day of attending college and not having to stress once they receive their financial assistance. For those students who are undocumented, this stress is ever present and sometimes magnified, because there is little to no financial assistance for their higher educational pursuits. An undocumented student is someone who was born in a foreign country and was brought to the U.S. at a very young age. Now as high school graduates many discover that they are defined as illegal and cannot receive financial assistance due to the fact they don't have a social security number. It should not be up to a number or a piece of paper to determine the future of a student. Instead, we should look at their effort, their love for the United States, and contributions to society. There is support from the many educational institutions around the state of Washington to approach legislators and draft a bill extending eligibility for the State Need Grant (SNG) to undocumented students.

Washington State is benefiting labor of undocumented workers in the agriculture industry. The apple industry alone earned 1.4 billion dollars in 2010 (The Value of Immigrants in Washington State Slide 2), but the children of the workers are not allowed to receive a portion of financial aid. By not supporting undocumented students to be eligible for the WA SNG, our economy will continue to struggle. In order to progress, we need to educate our youth. Education is the key in re-establishing stability, creativity, and productivity in our country. Many states like California, Oklahoma and Texas (Undocumented Students and Higher Education in Washington: Barriers and Opportunities Page 5) have already taken initiative to support this cause and are allowing undocumented students to receive funding for their post secondary education. Let's make Washington the first state up north to support this cause.

Not only will we be helping students of our state, but we will be helping the overall state of our economy by creating more job opportunities once these students graduate. Let's get Washington on board with supporting this cause too!

## Works Cited

- College Spark Washington. "Undocumented Students and Higher Education in Washington: Barriers and Opportunities." Web. 20 Oct. 2010. 29 Feb. 2012.
- LEAP Student Ambassadors. "The Value of Immigrants in Washington State." PowerPoint. 2012. 29 Feb.2012