



WET: A DACAmended Journey

**A Performance by
Alex Alphaaraoh**

**Monday, October 7, 2019
Joyce J. Cammilleri Hall**

Photo: Linda Blase

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- ◉ *WET: A DACAmended Journey* is a solo performance by Alex Alphaaraoh.
- ◉ It was awarded Best Solo Performance by the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle.
- ◉ Alex Alphaaraoh is an emcee and spoken word artist who has performed at venues including NYC's Nuyorican Poets Café. He created the L.A.-based ensemble SP!T: Spoken Word Theatre, which combines hip hop, spoken word, acting, and movement to tell L.A.-based stories that explore societal issues.

WET: A DACAMENTED JOURNEY

WET: A DACAmended Journey tells the story of Anner Cividanis, who has lived his entire life in the United States as an undocumented American. The play examines the mental, emotional, and psychological hardship he has to endure in order to secure his livelihood in the only home he has known: Los Angeles. The solo performance, originally developed as part of the True Story program at Ensemble Studio Theatre/LA, was written and is performed by Alex Alphaaraoh, directed by Kevin Comartin, and produced by Liz Ross.

DACA

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a U.S. immigration policy established by the Obama administration in June 2012. DACA allows certain undocumented immigrants who entered the country as children to receive temporary permission to stay in the United States in the form of a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation. Although DACA does not provide a pathway to lawful permanent residence in the United States, it does provide temporary protection from deportation, eligibility for a work permit, and the ability to apply for a Social Security number.

DACA began accepting applications in August 2012. In 2014, President Obama announced his intention to expand the program. In 2017, the Trump administration announced plans to phase it out. The phase-out is currently held up in courts. In 2018, a judge ruled that DACA is likely unconstitutional, but allowed the program to stay in place while litigation proceeds. As of 2019, first-time applications are not currently being accepted, but renewal applications still are.

About 800,000 people have been recipients of DACA. DACA has increased the wages of participants, improved mental-health outcomes for participants and their children, and reduced the number of undocumented-immigrant households living in poverty.

DREAMERS AND THE DREAM ACT

The DREAM Act (which stands for Development, Relief, and Education for Early Minors Act) is different from DACA—notably in that it *would* provide a path to permanent residency for people who came to the United States as children. The bill was first introduced in Congress in 2001, and at least ten different versions have been debated by lawmakers over the past two decades, but none of them has yet become law.

In 2011, California enacted a state version, the California DREAM Act, which gives undocumented students access to scholarships to state schools. At least 19 states have passed similar laws. States cannot legalize the status of undocumented immigrants, but they can enact policies like this that mitigate some of the issues that stem from undocumented status.

Young people who would gain access to a path to citizenship if the DREAM Act were passed are popularly called “DREAMers.”

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ◉ Did this performance affirm or change your understanding of or opinions about the U.S. immigration system?
- ◉ *WET* captures the desperation DREAMers feel in the face of limited options. Have you experienced anything like this?
- ◉ Do you think the DREAM Act should become law? Why or why not?
- ◉ What do you think is the ideal immigration policy?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- ◉ Alex Alphaaraoh on Social Media
[@alphaaraoh](#)
- ◉ SP!T: Spoken Word Theatre on Instagram
[@spitaboutit](#)
- ◉ Ensemble Studio Theatre Los Angeles
www.estlosangeles.org
- ◉ OnStage LA
<https://onstage.la>

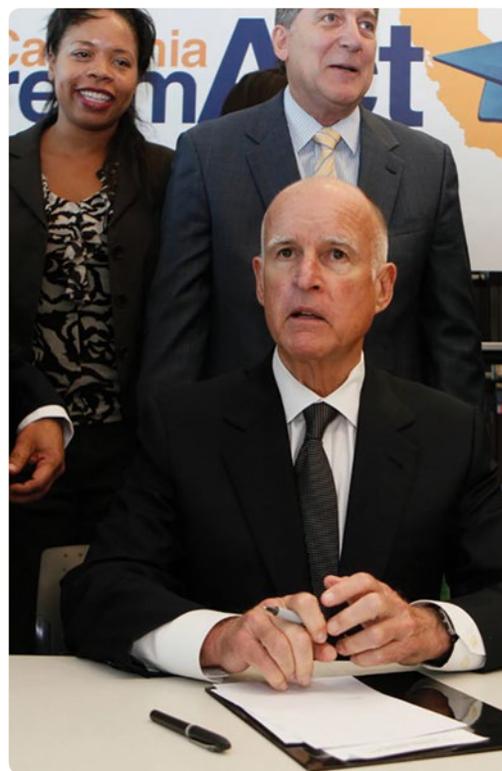
DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

JAVIER S. GARIBAY and **BARBARA ROBINSON** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about Alex Alphaaraoh, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and stories of undocumented youth in the U.S.

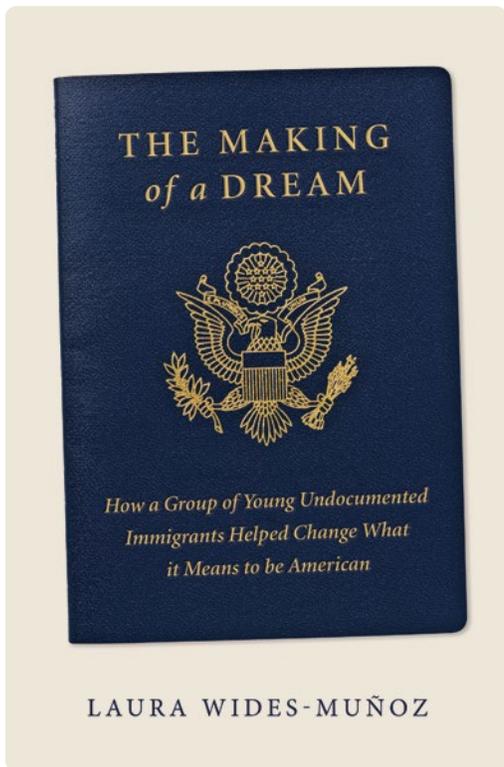
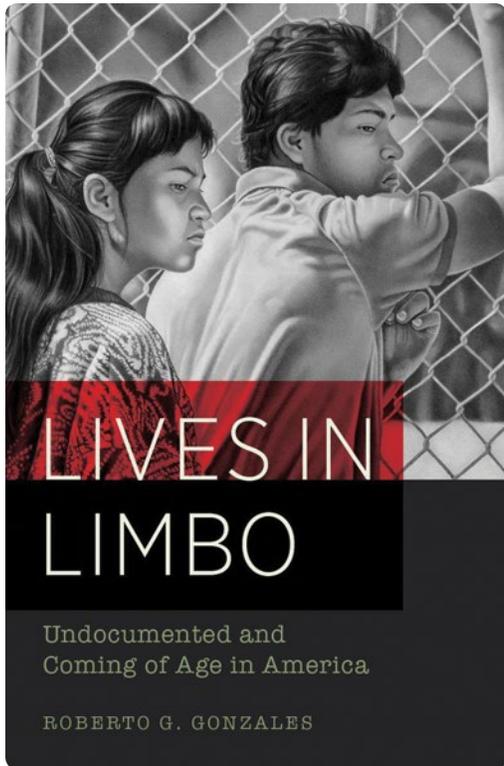
Those with a call number (e.g., books) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g., e-books, journal articles, and databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu. To make arrangements to view Special Collections materials on Doheny Library’s second floor, email specol@lib.usc.edu.



Shepard Fairey, *Dream Act Now!*, 2018



In July 2011, Governor Jerry Brown signed a bill that gave undocumented students access to privately financed scholarships and other aid.



BOOKS

- ⦿ Gonzalez, Roberto G. *Lives in Limbo: Undocumented and Coming of Age in America*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016. (EBOOK)
- ⦿ Wides-Munoz, Laura. *The Making of a Dream: How a Group of Young Undocumented Immigrants Helped Change What It Means to Be American*. New York: Harper, 2018.
LEAVEY LIBRARY JV6483 .W528 2018

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- ⦿ Benuto, Lorraine T., et al. "Undocumented, to DACAmented, to DACAlimited: Narratives of Latino Students with DACA Status," *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 40, no. 3 (August 2018): 259-278.
- ⦿ Gelt, Jessica. Alex "Alpharaoh Put His Own DACA Story on Stage and the Audience Keeps Growing," *The Los Angeles Times* (September 23, 2017). (See: <http://bit.ly/VVWETfeature>)
- ⦿ Roth, Benjamin J. "The Double Bind of DACA: Exploring the Legal Violence of Liminal Status for Undocumented Youth," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (November 6, 2018): 1-18.
- ⦿ Tafoya, Joe, et al. "I Feel Like I Was Born Here: Social Identity, Political Socialization, and DeAmericanization," *Latino Studies* 18, no. 1 (Mar 2019): 48-66.
- ⦿ Solis, Jose. "Perchance to DREAM: DACA Recipients, Feeling Unwelcome in the Country They Call Home, Claim a Home Onstage. (STAGE MIGRATIONS)." *American Theatre* (May 1, 2018): Vol. 35 Issue 5.

DATABASES

- ⦿ **Chicano Database:** contains newspaper and journal articles and books in Chicano and Latino studies on DACA, Dream act, Latino performance art, and related topics in humanities and social and behavioral sciences.
- ⦿ **JSTOR:** contains fulltext scholarly resources (in journals, newspapers and magazines and primary sources) in the humanities, social sciences and the arts. Search topics such as DACA, Dream act, undocumented youth.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

- ⦿ Gómez-Peña, Guillermo and Felicia Rice. *Doc/Undoc: Documentado/Undocumented: Ars Shamánica Performática*. Santa Cruz, CA: Moving Parts Press, 2017. Boeckmann Super Oversize (uncataloged). USC's copy is a deluxe edition housed in a hi-tech aluminum case containing screen-folded artist book, multimedia (sound and light), video by Gustavo Vazquez, altar, and cabinet of curiosities.
- ⦿ *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Poster and Photograph Collection*. Created September 2017. Collection no. 5327.

STREAMING VIDEO

- ⦿ Leland, Andrea. "The Long Road Home: The Odyssey of a Young Guatemalan Maya Refugee," New Day Films, 1993.
<https://bit.ly/2ZeS3ho>