



# ASPIRE HIGHER:

AN UNDOCUMENTED  
STUDENT'S GUIDE TO  
COLLEGE IN MICHIGAN



**PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE** | ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
AND IMMIGRATION

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                |    |
|------------------------------------------------|----|
| Table of Contents .....                        | 1  |
| Introduction .....                             | 2  |
| What does it mean to be<br>undocumented? ..... | 4  |
| Who is a DACA Student?.....                    | 5  |
| Step 1: Do not give up! .....                  | 6  |
| Step 2: Do your research! .....                | 7  |
| Step 3: Find the right fit! .....              | 12 |
| How to apply for college .....                 | 13 |
| Step 4: Research how to pay .....              | 17 |
| Looking for Help? .....                        | 36 |
| Life In College .....                          | 37 |
| Glossary .....                                 | 39 |
| Acknowledgments .....                          | 41 |

## I TRIED TACKLING THE BATTLE OF APPLYING TO COLLEGE AS AN UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT. TO SAY I WAS LOST WAS AN UNDERSTATEMENT

"In the beginning of my senior year in high school I went online to the University of Michigan website; I clicked on the "Apply Online" tab and stared at the application trying to figure out what to do. Confused and alone I tried tackling the battle of applying to college as an undocumented student.

To say I was lost was an understatement. I reviewed the application, trying to answer all the questions in my mind. The social security and citizenship blanks were just staring at me, as if taunting me to figure out how to fill them in. I had no idea what to do, who to turn to, or where to begin. I was so afraid of asking anyone for help because the thought of bringing up the topic seemed like a huge risk. I was even afraid of doing a simple "Google" search on undocumented students in college to figure out where to start."

- Undocumented Student



*Every year, approximately 65,000 undocumented students graduate from U.S. high schools.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, Michigan is home to approximately 129,000 undocumented immigrants, including 13,000 DACA eligible individuals. These students have goals,<sup>2</sup> plans, and dreams of going to college and having successful careers.*

The right to free K-12 public education was protected by the 1982 case *Plyler v. Doe*. In this case, the United States Supreme Court ruled that undocumented children could not be denied a K-12 education. Michigan's constitution and laws also ensure all children may attend school. Sadly, many undocumented students believe that because they do not have legal immigration status, they cannot go to college. But that's not true! There are many ways that undocumented students can access higher education. This guide is designed to help those students and

their families by providing resources available for undocumented students interested in pursuing education after high school, regardless of citizenship status. There are **NO LAWS** in the state of Michigan that prohibit students from attending college based on immigration status. Additionally, *several* colleges and universities in Michigan **do** grant in-state tuition to undocumented and DACA students. College cost policies may vary from school to school, but accessing college is possible for everyone. Please keep in mind that this guide should not be considered legal advice.

1. Higher ED Immigration Portal: Fact Sheet: Number of Dreamers Graduating from High School, available at: <https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/research/migration-policy-institute-fact-sheet-on-number-of-dreamers-graduating-from-high-school/>
2. Higher ED Immigration Portal: State Data, available at: <https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/state/michigan/>

# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE UNDOCUMENTED?

1

You were born in a country other than the United States, and

2

You are not a naturalized citizen, and/or

3

You do not have any legal immigration status, such as:

- Permanent residence ( also known as a “Green Card”)
- Student Visa
- Refugee/Asylum Status

People who are undocumented typically do not have a:

- Social Security Number
- Driver’s License
- Or Work Permit

But this can vary depending on your individual circumstances.<sup>3</sup>



3. Anyone who earns income may report this income to the IRS using an Individual Taxpayer Identification number. For more information, please go to <https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/overview/>

# WHO IS A DACA RECIPIENT?

If you are undocumented, then you do not qualify for federal or state based financial aid in Michigan. You cannot work legally unless you get employment authorization, for example, through Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or as an asylum or permanent resident applicant. In Michigan, you cannot get a driver's license or state identification card without legal presence.<sup>4</sup>

Please note: DACA is temporary and does not provide a pathway to permanent residence or citizenship. However, it grants eligible applicants temporary permission called "deferred action". This allows you to:

- Stay in the United States
- Receive a Social Security Number
- Apply for a work permit
- Obtain a Michigan driver's license.<sup>5</sup>

If you already have DACA, to maintain valid employment authorization, the best time for you to submit your DACA renewal application is 120 to 150 days (4-5 months) before the date your current DACA and work permit expires. DACA recipients usually must renew their employment authorization every two years. .

Be aware that there are legal requirements and fees associated with renewing DACA. Please visit the [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website](https://uscis.dhs.gov/) for further details. As of January 2025 the legality of DACA has been called into question by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. DACA renewal requests are being accepted and processed. Initial DACA applications are currently being accepted but not processed. Please consult with the [Michigan Immigrant Rights Center](https://michiganimmigrant.org/) or [OneMichigan](https://www.onemichigan.org/) for more information.

## **PREPARE, APPLY, ENROLL**

**Being undocumented does not stop you from attending college.**

Several colleges and universities in Michigan admit and enroll undocumented students, and several provide institution-based financial aid. There are also private scholarships available to help fund your education.

**That is the purpose of this guide: to help you prepare, apply, enroll in, and pay for college.**

4. Michigan Immigrant Rights Center, Immigrants and Michigan Driver's Licenses: Past, Present, and Future, Feb. 2023, <https://michiganimmigrant.org/sites/default/files/MI-DLenglish-12-18-2018.pdf>

5. For more information about obtaining a driver's license in Michigan, please go to <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/all-services/first-time-license-or-id>

# PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

Planning for college can seem like a daunting task that can be difficult to start for many people. Let this guide take you through the steps to get the ball rolling for college! For additional information, visit [Higher Ed Immigration Portal](#).

## STEP

# 1

## DON'T GIVE UP

**Identify your support system. This will look different for every person.**

- Look for support people in your school that you can trust!
  - Teachers; Coaches; Faculty/Staff members; Counselors<sup>6</sup>
    - All of these people should be there to help you succeed!
- Family Support
  - Don't underestimate the impact that Parents or other family members can bring even if they haven't been to college. They most likely will have real experiences and useful knowledge that can help you on your way.
- Community Support
  - Reach out to neighbors or mentors who have been through the process and ask how they did it!
- Friends
  - They may be going through similar situations as you. But sometimes you can share information the other hadn't known!

**Seek out programs that are designed to help with college preparation.**

- [Hispanic Center of Western Michigan- Supporting Our Leaders \(SOL\) Youth Program](#)
- [Advocates for Latino Student Advancement in Michigan Education](#)
- [Ferris State University's Promesa Summer Program](#)
- [The College Board's "Big Future"](#)
- This list is not exhaustive. Don't be afraid to ask your support system for more resources!

Remember to believe in yourself. Don't ever take that "no" in your head for an answer! **You can do this. You belong.**

6. Counselors cannot ask about your immigration status. However, if you have a trusted counselor, teacher, or mentor that you choose to disclose your status with, they may be able to connect you with helpful resources for the college application and preparation process.

# PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

## STEP

## 2

## DO YOUR RESEARCH

### CHOOSING A HIGH SCHOOL

Preparing for college can start as early as middle school in the U.S. It's a good idea to start researching the type of college-prep courses and options available in different schools and districts near you. Some districts offer more undocumented student-friendly scholarships than others. High school offerings may include Advanced Placement (AP) courses, International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, early/middle colleges, or high school dual enrollment.

Before enrolling into the designated high school according to district boundaries, make sure you research the different schools nearby and ask if there is a "School of Choice" program. Each school district may decide whether or not they participate in this program. The best way to find out about your school district and those around you is to look on their websites and/or get into contact with someone that works for the district. There may even be transportation options available to you within your district to another district. Another route to explore is virtual programming.

### GED

If you are unable to finish high school, a GED, or General Education Development Certificate can help open some of the same opportunities. By passing a series of examinations, you will have demonstrated the same level of knowledge and skills as someone with a high school diploma.

"I wish I had researched which high schools offer you the most scholarships. Instead I just picked the closest one to my house. Little did I know that some schools even offer you full-ride scholarships."

- Undocumented Student



## HIGH SCHOOL CHECKLIST

Please click [here](#) to  
download the High School  
Checklist for Freshman,  
Sophomore, Junior and  
Senior Years.

# PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

## Here is more information regarding the classes you take and how to prepare for college:

### COLLEGE PREP CLASSES:

The [Michigan Merit Curriculum](#) requires specific credits in certain subjects to graduate from high school. It is recommended that all students take as many [college prep courses](#) within those requirements to best prepare for the rigor of college coursework.<sup>7</sup>

### Earn College Credit While in High School:

Did you know you can start earning college credits at little or no cost while you're still in high school? There are several ways to do this:

#### Advanced Placement (AP)

Earn college credit if you enroll in these courses, take the AP Exams, and earn a score of 3 or higher (on a scale from 1 to 5) on the course exam at the end of the school year. Usually, AP classes are available for juniors and seniors only, however, it's a good idea to check with your school counselor to pick what classes are best for you. Visit this link ([Results of Your College Search - BigFuture](#)) for more information on AP policies depending on each institution!

If you want more information on earning college credit before you graduate high school, visit [College Credit in High School Program Definitions - Michigan](#) or the [glossary](#) at the end to view definitions.

### International Baccalaureate (IB)

Participate in the IB program to potentially earn college credits. Enrolling in these courses and scoring well on the exams—typically a 4 or higher on a scale of 1 to 7—can translate into college credits, enrollment into more advanced classes, or both, depending on the institution you plan to attend. Similar to AP classes, IB classes are generally offered to juniors and seniors, so make sure to talk to your school counselor in the process. Visit this link ([Find an IB Program](#)) to find schools in Michigan that offer the IB program!

### Dual Enrollment:

By taking college-level courses through a local college or university while you're still in high school, you can get a head start on your college education and potentially save on tuition costs. Dual enrollment is often available to juniors and seniors and is more often than not, free. Remember, since you cannot legally drive without a valid license, check with your high school about options for getting to the college for these courses. Many times there are public transportation options available for commuting students. As always, it's a good idea to talk to your school counselor to learn about your options and ensure you meet any eligibility requirements.

7. Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Merit Curriculum High School Graduation Requirements [https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Academic-Standards/MMC/Michigan\\_Merit\\_Curriculum\\_Overview.pdf?rev=6e1cddc97fac43abaf9a665e3f120650&hash=DBEEC6F832EEB5C20AB74FFB71E61180](https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Academic-Standards/MMC/Michigan_Merit_Curriculum_Overview.pdf?rev=6e1cddc97fac43abaf9a665e3f120650&hash=DBEEC6F832EEB5C20AB74FFB71E61180)

# PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

## Here is more information regarding the classes you take and how to prepare for college:

### **SAT and ACT Standardized Tests:**

*It's very important that you take this test seriously.*

The higher you score, the better the chances of getting into a good college and the more scholarship money you can earn. The average SAT score for students in the state of Michigan in 2025 was a 953<sup>8</sup> and for the ACT it was 24.5.<sup>9</sup>

The good news is that if you don't do as well as you would like, you can retake either test!

Typically, colleges and universities take your highest SAT or ACT score for admission. Most schools want you to have a higher-than-average test score to receive better scholarships.

Therefore, it's important you prepare and realize that even though you may not have legal status yet, this test WILL help you! Both tests are accepted in colleges and universities.

You can prepare for the SAT and ACT using [Khan Academy](#). Many schools have become test-optional, meaning that it is not necessary to submit an SAT or ACT score to be considered for admission. However, SAT and ACT scores can factor into the amount of financial aid you could be afforded. A higher standardized test score can often lead to a school offering you more financial aid. A list of test-optional schools can be found here: <https://fairtest.org/test-optional-list/>

Presenting valid (unexpired) photo identification is necessary to be able to take the SAT or ACT.

A school ID is acceptable to present rather than a driver's license or government issued document, and a school ID from the previous school year is valid through the end of December of the current calendar year. The ACT specifies that the ID must be in hard, plastic card format as paper and electronic card formats are not acceptable. Ensure that you can access a [credible form of identification and have looked over other necessary materials](#) before your exam date.

For test dates beginning on August 23, 2025, the SAT registration fee is \$68. The current ACT registration fee is \$63 for the full ACT without the writing section and \$93 for the full ACT with the writing section included (check to see if the university or program you are applying to requires the writing section as many do not). Keep in mind that both tests include hidden fees for changes, cancellations, and late registrations. You can find a list of these fees here: [SAT](#) and [ACT](#). Fee waivers are available for eligible students. You can find the fee waiver eligibility requirements for each exam here: [SAT](#) and [ACT](#). Your school counselor should be able to confirm eligibility and assist you with any additional questions regarding fee waivers.

<https://fairtest.org/test-optional-list/>

8. CollegeBoard SAT Suite of Assessments Annual Report 2025:

<https://reports.collegeboard.org/media/pdf/2025-michigan-sat-suite-of-assessments-annual-report%-ADA-v0.2.pdf>

9. Average ACT Scores by State Graduating Class of 2025: [ontocollege.com/average-act-test-score/](https://ontocollege.com/average-act-test-score/)

# PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

## GET INVOLVED:

Colleges are seeking well-rounded students – students who are also active “out of the classroom.” Not only does it help set you apart from other students, but it also gives you the opportunity to meet people who can potentially help you later on. You never know if the community center you volunteer for offers private scholarships you can later apply for.

## VISITING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES:

Don't just believe the college fliers and handouts you receive in the mail. Invite trusted adults or family members to join you to explore the different colleges. Take a tour of the school and meet the instructors and students. If necessary, ask the colleges/universities if they provide a translator for family members who do not speak English. Ask your high school to connect you with former students from your school who attended colleges you are interested in. Many colleges offer Open House programs, which are large events that offer much information.



# PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

STEP

3

## FIND THE RIGHT FIT

*Find out what kind of school is the best match for you and your career goals.*

### WHAT'S THE RIGHT MATCH?

The kind of college you choose to attend should reflect your goals and your personality. Whether you choose a public, private, community, technical, trade or even online college, make sure it's the best fit for you and your goals. Take a look at this helpful site on the differences between the different types of colleges.

### HOME OR AWAY?

Attending a local college and living at home versus living on campus—what's better? Well, it depends. For some, residence hall life is an important part of the college experience, but commuting from home can be less expensive. Most college websites have tools that can help you confirm what tuition and room & board costs. Do be aware that some colleges may require you to live on campus for the first year, which is something to take into consideration.

### WHICH MAJOR?

Figuring out what you like doing most, plus what you are best at, can point to the careers you should consider and the majors that will help you reach your career goal. Michigan's Pathfinder website can help. Consider and research whether the major or career you are interested in will eventually require certification or state licensure. This may require lawful status and will require proof of authorization to work legally in the U.S. if you plan to work for an employer. Research the requirements with the licensing board in the state you wish to work, and don't be afraid to follow your interests or passions, as your status could change in the future!

### DO EXTRAS MATTER?

Yes! Getting into extracurricular activities outside of class—like band, science club, the school newspaper, drama and even volunteering—helps you discover what your real interests are and where you are headed in the future. Colleges also vary in the kinds of professional and internship experiences they can offer to students, so pay attention to that as well when doing your research.

# HOW TO APPLY TO COLLEGE

*Applying for college makes everyone nervous, even more so if you are undocumented. One very important thing to remember is that **YOU ARE NOT ALONE**.*



When I was applying I felt so alone and confused. I wish there had been someone to give me some sort of direction or at least have someone who would let me vent about how angry and disappointed I felt. If only I had known that thousands of kids were in the same situation it would have made it a lot easier to face.



-Undocumented Student



# HOW TO APPLY TO COLLEGE

## TIPS FOR FILLING OUT A COLLEGE APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION:

- 1 Fill out the application completely.
- 2 Do not claim you are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident if you are not. It is important to never provide false information throughout the application process. You may choose to leave questions about citizenship or immigration status blank
- 3 If the application asks for your Social Security Number, leave it blank or fill in all zeros unless you have your own valid Social Security Number.
- 4 If you are leaving some answers on your application blank, you may not be able to fill out the online application, as many will not let you continue to the next page until every section is complete. If that's the case, you may have to print the application and send it through the mail, which is usually acceptable. Be sure to call or email to make sure you can mail your application in and also to confirm their mailing address.
- 5 It's very important to make sure all information on your application is true/accurate. Making a false claim of U.S. citizenship or providing fraudulent information on an application can have serious consequences on your future immigration options and lead to criminal prosecution

# HOW TO APPLY TO COLLEGE

## *Will a school tell Immigration and Customs Enforcement I'm undocumented?*

### **GENERALLY, NO.**

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)), schools are not allowed to share your personal information from school records without your permission. There are some very limited exceptions where the school may share your information without your consent, such as reporting suspicions of fraud involving Federal Student Aid or falsely claiming to be a U.S. citizen.<sup>10</sup>

It can be very helpful to discuss your status with the admissions counselor of a specific college you're interested in so that he or she can tell you more about how the school's policies and resources apply to you. Every college and university has their own admissions policies. You can ask your high school counselor to help you find more information, or contact a university's admissions office directly.

Please visit [College Corner](#), a new initiative by the Presidents' Alliance designed specifically for K-12 college counselors working to support undocumented students and their families.

10. See 20 U.S. Code § 1232g; 34 CFR § 99.31; 34 CFR § 668.16.

“When I was applying to college I decided it would be best to talk to my admissions counselor and explain that I was undocumented. Although I was afraid of what she would think I did not know of any other options. She showed me which scholarships I could apply for and how I should fill in the admissions application. She wasn’t judgmental or anything like that, and it really did help.”

- Undocumented Student

# HOW TO APPLY TO COLLEGE

## *Questions to ask admissions and financial aid officers:*

- 1 How should an undocumented student fill out citizenship/residency questions on your application, or which box should I check on the application?
- 2 Do I leave it blank or add zeros where it asks for a Social Security number?
- 3 Can I apply online or only in person?
- 4 Do I qualify for in-state tuition?
- 5 Do you have any merit-based financial aid I can apply for, even though I don't have a Social Security Number (SSN)?
- 6 Do you have any need-based financial aid I can apply for, even though I don't have a Social Security Number (SSN)?
- 7 Are there specific majors that are not available to me because of my status? Does applying to the major/school that I want require a background check?
- 8 Does my course of study eventually require licensing or certification and will I be able to complete it despite my status?
- 9 When am I eligible to start applying for institutional scholarships?

## RESEARCH HOW TO PAY

***Paying for college is by far one of the most difficult challenges that undocumented students face.***

This is not only because they are not eligible for Federal Financial Aid, but also because they often cannot apply for private loans. However, don't let this discourage you or get you thinking that college is out of the question simply because of the cost. Colleges and universities have their own array of scholarships you can apply for, even if you're undocumented, so make sure to ask about them. These campuses will also be able to give you more money if you do well on your SAT or ACT so be sure to take those exams seriously. The [College Board provides information and resources](#) to help undocumented navigate paying for college. Currently, they recommend students apply for aid directly from the schools they are considering. There are a lot of different types of financial aid out there, so you need to find out which kind or combination works best for your needs.

### **RAISEME MICRO SCHOLARSHIPS**

One of the first things you can do in high school to start getting money for college is participating in the RaiseMe program. It is a free way to earn micro-scholarships for all the work you're doing in high school. For example, you can earn between \$400 and \$1,000 just for getting an "A" in a core class and hundreds of dollars for each extracurricular activity you do and for each leadership position you hold in your student organizations. You can enroll in this program for free at any point in high school but it's best to enroll as soon as possible to maximize your scholarships. Only colleges that are partners with RaiseMe offer scholarships this way. Go to the [RaiseMe website](#) to sign up and to see if the college/university you are considering is a partner. Nearly 20 colleges in Michigan participate in RaiseMe.

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE



## FAFSA

FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It is a form that some students fill out once a year to determine how much federal and state financial aid they can get based on their family income. **Undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid**, so they typically will not fill out the FAFSA.

Students with undocumented parents are eligible for federal aid and can fill out the FAFSA. For more information about filling out the FAFSA as a member of a mixed-status family, check out [this guidance from Federal Student Aid](#) or visit the [FAFSA Hub](#) on the Higher Ed Immigration Portal.

## FAFSA FREQUENTLY<sup>11</sup> ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1) If I am not eligible for federal financial aid, should I fill out the FAFSA?

In general, undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid and do not need to fill out the FAFSA.

There are some scholarship or school-based aid programs that ask for a copy of the FAFSA to understand your income and how much your family might be able to contribute to your tuition and living expenses.

If you are planning to apply for a scholarship that uses the FAFSA to understand applicants' financial situation, you should work with your high school counselor to fill it out.

Make sure that the program you are applying for **requires** a FAFSA. There may be other options for non-FAFSA-eligible students.

**You will not receive federal financial aid as an undocumented student, even if you fill out the FAFSA.**

11. Much of this information is copied from the U.S. Department of Education's publication "Questions and Answers: Financial Aid and Undocumented Students," available at <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/undocumented-students> as of February 2025. Please check for updates regularly!

## FAFSA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

### 2) How do I fill out the FAFSA if I don't have a social security number?

If you do not have a social security number (SSN), you will not be able to fill out the FAFSA online. Instead, you should either fill out a PDF version of the form or print it out and enter your information by hand. You can then mail your FAFSA to the appropriate recipient.

Fill out the form completely and truthfully. Leave the section for social security number blank. For the question, "Are you a U.S. citizen" you may leave it blank or select "Neither U.S. citizen nor eligible noncitizen." Leave the A-number section blank.

Alternatively, you can fill out the [College Board CSS Profile](#) if you do not have a social security number since many colleges also accept it. More information on the CSS Profile is on page 21. Michigan schools that use the CSS Profile can be found [here](#).

### 3) If I have DACA, does that change how I fill out the FAFSA?

Even if you have DACA, you are not eligible for federal financial aid. You should only fill out the FAFSA if it is required for a scholarship or institutional aid program.

If you have DACA, then you have a valid SSN and may choose to fill out the FAFSA online. First, you will need to set up a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID. You can use your SSN to set up your account and follow the steps for filling out the form.

Even though you have DACA, you are still considered an undocumented student.

You should fill out the form completely and truthfully. Leave the question about citizenship blank or select "Neither U.S. citizen nor eligible noncitizen." Leave the A-number section blank.

You can find more instructions about filing the FAFSA online as a DACA recipient [here](#).



## FAFSA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

### 4) Does the FAFSA ask about my parents' immigration status?

Your parents' immigration status does not affect your eligibility for financial aid. The FAFSA does not directly ask about parents' immigration status. However, if your parents are filling out the form online, they will need to indicate that they do not have an SSN.

You can learn more about how FAFSA information is protected on the [FAFSA Hub](#) on the Higher Ed Immigration Portal.

### 5) Do my parents need Social Security numbers to fill out their portion of the FAFSA?

No. Since your parents' citizenship does not affect your ability to complete the FAFSA, they do not need Social Security numbers. Parents or spouses can access the portion of the FAFSA form they need to fill out by creating a StudentAid.gov account.

Your parents may need to answer some personal questions to access a FAFSA account. If they do not know the answers, they can still fill out their section of the form.

If your parent or spouse has an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) they can add that number to the form where indicated. If they do not have an ITIN, they should not fill out that question and should leave it blank.

***Do not enter an ITIN number in the SSN field.***

You can find more information about how to create a contributor account without an SSN [here](#).



# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## FAFSA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

### 5) How do I submit my tax information?

If you are completing the [FAFSA online](#) and you filed your income tax return with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), you may be able to link your FAFSA directly to your IRS information. However, you may run into challenges. If you are not able to link your accounts, you can still set up an FSA ID, fill in the FAFSA, and submit it online.

If you did not file an income tax return with the IRS, you should enter the requested financial information into the form on the FAFSA website.

You can also fill out a paper FAFSA and mail it in.

### 6) How do my parents submit their tax information?

Similar to question 5, if you are completing the FAFSA online and your parents filed their income tax returns with the IRS and have a SSN, they may be able to link their financial information to their contributor FSA ID.

If your parents did not file taxes, they will need to enter the requested information manually into the form on the FAFSA website. They may need to obtain proof that they did not file taxes (called a “certificate of non-filing”), indicate that they do not need to file taxes, or indicate that they plan to file their taxes late. [This resource](#) provides more guidance on what aid you can get if your family did not file taxes.

FAFSA uses information from **prior** tax years. For 2026-2027, you and your parents will need to provide tax information from 2024.

All contributors need to provide consent and approval to share their financial. In order to be considered for aid a contributor needs to provide consent even if they didn’t file taxes, don’t have an SSN, or filed taxes outside of the U.S.

For a detailed guide on filling out the FAFSA, visit [understandingfafsa.org](https://understandingfafsa.org).

## FAFSA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

### 7) Why do I need to submit my FAFSA to the Department of Education?

If you are applying for a program or scholarship that requires a FAFSA, you need to fill it out and submit it to the Department of Education. Even though you are not eligible for aid, the Department of Education will send you a FAFSA Submission Summary with information from your FAFSA that you can share with schools.

Your application will be rejected, since you are not eligible for federal aid. It will not include a Student Aid Index (SAI).

### 8) If I submit my FAFSA to the Department of Education, will they give my information to immigration?

The Department of Education shares FAFSA information under a number of circumstances. If you claim U.S. citizenship or a certain immigration status on your application (like refugee status), the Department of Education

generally sends that information to the Social Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security for verification in their databases.

However if you have left the citizenship and A-number sections blank, then the Department of Education will not attempt to check your status. Your application will simply be denied as incomplete.

FAFSA information has not been used for immigration enforcement in the past. To learn more about how FAFSA information is stored and protected, review [this resource](#).

If you prefer not to submit your FAFSA to the government, you can send a copy of your FAFSA directly to the schools and scholarships you are applying for.

### 9) Do deadlines matter?

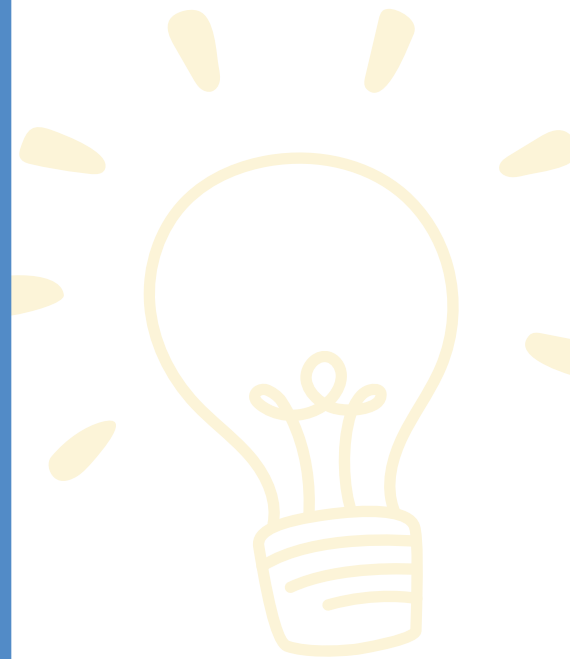
**Absolutely.** College financial aid goes fast. The earlier you can get in your [FAFSA](#) application and all of the other information that a college asks for, the sooner you'll receive your financial aid package.

12. Federal Student Aid Handbook all versions available here: [Federal Student Aid Handbook | Knowledge Center](#)

## FAFSA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

### CSS PROFILE

If, for whatever reason, you are uncomfortable with or unable to fill out a FAFSA application, you can complete the CSS Profile and submit that to colleges so they can assess your financial need for scholarships. Often, students who do not have a social security number use the CSS Profile. The CSS Profile is managed by the College Board and usually, only colleges and universities that are “participating members” will accept a CSS Profile submission from a student. However, you should save a copy of your CSS Profile report on your computer and email the financial aid offices of colleges you are interested in to ask if they will use that report to consider your eligibility for scholarships instead of FAFSA. As of October 2025, four Michigan colleges use the CSS Profile: Adrian College, Hillsdale College, Olivet College, and the University of Michigan.



12. Federal Student Aid Handbook all versions available here: [Federal Student Aid Handbook | Knowledge Center](#)

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## COST OF COLLEGE

*There is no way around it, college costs money. It's important to research your options and see what suits you and what is most affordable.*

### PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Public schools are partially funded by the government. There are three different tuition rates for students:

**In-State:** The price that students who are Michigan residents pay. In Michigan, colleges and universities vary on whether they grant in-state tuition to undocumented students, so it is very important that you ask the specific college you are interested in whether you can get in-state tuition because you might actually be eligible!

**Out-of-State:** The price of students who live in states other than Michigan. This price may also be charged to undocumented students who attend public Michigan colleges.

**International:** International students are those who come from another country for college or university; they usually have legal status while in school. Undocumented students are typically not international students.

### PRIVATE/INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Independent colleges offer a diverse environment, smaller campus sizes for all, and a personalized commitment to assist students in addition to resources that support DACA recipients.

Do not take yourself out of the game by ruling out a particular college or university based solely on the published tuition rate. The price of college can often intimidate students and families, and while the overall tuition or “sticker price” of an independent college or university can be higher, once all types of financial aid are factored in, the actual “out-of-pocket” expense is often about the same or sometimes even less at an independent college or university.

It is important to talk to the admissions office to see how your status will affect the application process and what financial aid options are available to you. Faculty and staff at independent colleges and universities want to help in your student success.

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## COST OF COLLEGE (CONT.)

### TUITION EQUITY

Some Michigan colleges and universities allow undocumented students who meet the Michigan residency requirements to qualify for in-state tuition regardless of their immigration status. But others charge out-of-state tuition. There is no statewide-policy when it comes to allowing undocumented students to attend college. Therefore, we strongly recommend checking with each school's admissions office for the most up-to-date in-state tuition policies for undocumented students. Equally important, do not accept the answer you receive from one individual as the last word. Ask different people from different departments of the same school.

### COLLEGE ASSISTANCE MIGRANT PROGRAM (CAMP)

If you are a child of a migratory or seasonal farmworker, you may be eligible for financial aid stipends during your first year of college as a part of the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP).<sup>13</sup>

Contact the Institution of Higher Education (IHE) you are considering to inquire. Other types of services you may be eligible for as a part of the CAMP include counseling, tutoring, skills workshops, health services, and housing assistance during your first year of college.

13. U.S. Department of Education, Migrant Education - College Assistance Migrant Program, <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-migrant-education/>



COST OF COLLEGE (CONT.)

IN-STATE/IN-DISTRICT TUITION FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Community colleges are a great option for all students, undocumented or not. They offer the general required classes all college students must take, usually at a much less expensive rate. However, if you decide to attend a community college first, you have to make sure that the classes you are taking transfer to the university you plan on attending.

See below for some examples of community colleges that offer in-direct tuition rates for undocumented or DACA students that meet the other in-district requirements. Other Michigan community colleges may offer this as well; we recommend that you contact them for more information.

| FOR UNDOCUMENTED AND<br>DACA STUDENTS | FOR DACA STUDENTS ONLY             |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Grand Rapids Community College        | Oakland Community College          |
| Lake Michigan College                 | Oakland Community College          |
| Mott Community College                | Kalamazoo Valley Community College |
| Macomb Community College              |                                    |
| Muskegon Community College            |                                    |

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## TOP PUBLIC COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES IN MICHIGAN FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS



The Higher Ed Immigration Portal is a platform that integrates data, policy analysis, and resources to support DACA and undocumented, refugee, other immigrant, and international students.

The [Portal to the States](#) tracks state policies for undocumented students on in-state tuition, state financial aid, professional and occupational licensure, and driver licenses. Each state page integrates student data, economic contributions, state policies, effective practices, and other resources to learn about and better support the state's undocumented, other immigrant, and international students in higher education.

Michigan's public universities are diverse enough to offer something for every student, whether it's an urban, suburban, or rural environment you're seeking, a research experience, or a small liberal arts program. You can live on or off campus or even commute from home, and major in one of hundreds of majors, with advisors ready to help steer you. Best of all, with financial aid, public universities are on average 40% cheaper for students and families than the full published price.

If you are ever unsure about whether you are eligible for in-state tuition or financial aid from a specific university, please take a moment to reach out to someone at that campus for advice. And remember that it's usually worth getting another opinion from someone else on that campus if you need to.

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## TOP PUBLIC COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES IN MICHIGAN FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS (CONT.)

### FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES<sup>14</sup>

| SCHOOL                                              | IN-STATE TUITION FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS? (If yes, that means you just have to fulfill state residency requirements and graduate from a Michigan high school; citizenship status, green card, visa, etc. does not matter) | SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>Central Michigan University</u><br>Lansing, MI   | <u>Yes</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Contact the admissions office at <a href="mailto:cmuadmit@cmich.edu">cmuadmit@cmich.edu</a> for more information                                                                     |
| <u>Eastern Michigan University</u><br>Ypsilanti, MI | <u>Yes</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Contact the admissions office at <a href="mailto:undergraduate_admissions@emich.edu">undergraduate_admissions@emich.edu</a> for more information                                     |
| <u>Ferris State University</u><br>Big Rapids        | Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Specific resources and support for undocumented students provided through the Center for Latin@Studies. Contact <a href="mailto:KayleeMoreno@ferris.edu">KayleeMoreno@ferris.edu</a> |

11. Last updated October 2025

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## TOP PUBLIC COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES IN MICHIGAN FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS (CONT.)

| FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES                               |                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SCHOOL                                                      | IN-STATE TUITION FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                                                                                           | SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                                                                                                                     |
| <u>Grand Valley State University</u><br>Allendale, MI       | <u>Yes</u>                                                                                                                                                   | Contact Adriana Almanza for specific support as an undocumented/DACA student                                                                                                                 |
| <u>Lake Superior State University</u><br>Sault Ste Marie MI | <u>Yes, because there is only one tuition rate for all students worldwide.</u>                                                                               | Contact the admissions office at <a href="mailto:admissions@lssu.edu">admissions@lssu.edu</a> for more information                                                                           |
| <u>Michigan State University</u><br>East Lansing, MI        | <u>Yes, but <i>please read the regulations carefully.</i></u><br>Here is more information on <a href="#">Regulations for Qualifying for In-State Tuition</a> | Contact the Office of the Registrar at (517) 432-3488, <a href="mailto:Feeclass@msu.edu">Feeclass@msu.edu</a> or visit the <a href="#">In-State Tuition Status</a> page for more information |
| <u>Michigan Technological University</u><br>Houghton, MI    | <u>No, but eligible for merit-based financial aid</u>                                                                                                        | Contact the admissions office <a href="mailto:mtu4u@mtu.edu">mtu4u@mtu.edu</a> for more information                                                                                          |

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## TOP PUBLIC COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES IN MICHIGAN FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS (CONT.)

### FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

| SCHOOL                                                                 | IN-STATE TUITION FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                  | SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Northern Michigan University</u></b><br>Marquette, MI            | <u>Yes</u>                                                                          | Contact Admissions at (906) 227- 2650 or <a href="mailto:gdaniels@nmu.edu">gdaniels@nmu.edu</a> for more information. Specific scholarships for students can be found <a href="#">here</a> .                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b><u>Oakland University</u></b><br>Auburn Hills/Rochester Hills, MI   | <u>Yes</u>                                                                          | Contact the admissions office at <a href="mailto:oakuniv@oakland.edu">oakuniv@oakland.edu</a> for more information or:<br>Mikayla Gipson- Senior Recruitment Adviser (248) 370-2861<br><a href="mailto:mgipson2@oakland.edu">mgipson2@oakland.edu</a><br>Erika LeDonne- Admissions Adviser (248) 370-3280<br><a href="mailto:eledonne@oakland.edu">eledonne@oakland.edu</a> |
| <b><u>Saginaw Valley State University</u></b><br>University Center, MI | <u>Yes</u> (if a student qualifies under the residency requirement)                 | Please contact the Office of Admissions at <a href="mailto:admissions@svsu.edu">admissions@svsu.edu</a> for more information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b><u>University of Michigan-Ann Arbor</u></b>                         | <u>Yes</u> (If a student <u>qualifies under the attendance residency pathway.</u> ) | Specific resources and support for undocumented and DACA students available <a href="#">here</a> , <a href="#">here</a> , and <a href="#">here</a> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## TOP PUBLIC COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES IN MICHIGAN FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS (CONT.)

| FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES                                   |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SCHOOL                                                          | IN-STATE TUITION FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                                                  | SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                                                                                                  |
| <u><a href="#">University of Michigan-Dearborn</a></u>          | <u><a href="#">Yes</a></u> (If a student <u><a href="#">qualifies under the attendance residency pathway.</a></u> ) | Specific resources and support for undocumented and DACA students available <u><a href="#">here</a></u> , <u><a href="#">here</a></u> , and <u><a href="#">here</a></u> . |
| <u><a href="#">University of Michigan-Flint</a></u>             | <u><a href="#">Yes</a></u> (If a student <u><a href="#">qualifies under the attendance residency pathway.</a></u> ) | Specific resources and support for undocumented and DACA students available <u><a href="#">here</a></u> , <u><a href="#">here</a></u> , and <u><a href="#">here</a></u> . |
| <u><a href="#">Wayne State University</a></u><br>Detroit, MI    | <u><a href="#">Yes</a></u>                                                                                          | Apply for in-state tuition as a DACA or undocumented <u><a href="#">here</a></u> and email <u><a href="mailto:ESP@wdayne.edu">ESP@wdayne.edu</a></u> for help             |
| <u><a href="#">Western Michigan University</a></u><br>Kalamazoo | <u><a href="#">Yes</a></u>                                                                                          | Specific support and financial aid for DACA and undocumented students available <u><a href="#">here</a></u>                                                               |

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS IN MICHIGAN FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

| PRIVATE/INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITIES                         |                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SCHOOL                                                   | IN-STATE TUITION FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?    | SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                                                                                                    |
| <b><u>Albion College</u></b><br>Albion, MI               | <u>Yes</u>                                            | Albion provides a tuition scholarship for all DACA students requiring them to only pay for room and board to attend.<br><a href="#"><u>Additional information here.</u></a> |
| <b><u>Alma College</u></b><br>Alma, MI                   | Yes, they have the same tuition rate for all students | No specific resources, scholarship information <a href="#"><u>here.</u></a>                                                                                                 |
| <b><u>Andrews University.</u></b><br>Berrien Springs, MI | Yes, they have the same tuition rate for all students | Specific resources, support, and scholarships for undocumented and DACA students available <a href="#"><u>here</u></a>                                                      |

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS IN MICHIGAN FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS (CONT.)

| PRIVATE/INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITIES                          |                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SCHOOL                                                    | IN-STATE TUITION FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?            | SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR UNDOCUMENTED & DACA STUDENTS?                                                                                                                         |
| <b><u>Aquinas College</u></b><br>Grand Rapids, MI         | No                                                            | Undocumented students are able to fill out a net price calculator for <u>financial aid</u> to determine any availability of institutional money outside of academic scholarships |
| <b><u>College for Creative Studies</u></b><br>Detroit, MI | Yes, they have the same tuition rate for all students         | No specific resources, scholarship information <u>here</u>                                                                                                                       |
| <b><u>Cornerstone University</u></b><br>Grand Rapids, MI  | <u>Yes</u> , they have the same tuition rate for all students | Contact Admissions at admissions@cornerstone.edu or (616) 222-1426                                                                                                               |
| <b><u>Madonna University</u></b><br>Livonia, MI           | <u>Yes</u> , they have the same tuition rate for all students | Contact Financial Aid at <u>finaid@madonna.edu</u> or (734) 432-5663                                                                                                             |

## FINANCIAL AID

### ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL AID

|                                                                                          | U.S. Citizen | Legal Permanent Resident | Other Immigration Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | DACA or Undocumented                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Federal Aid (including grants, loans, and work study)</b>                             | Yes          | Yes                      | Refugee Asylee<br>Cuban-Haitian Entrant<br>Conditional Entrant (before 4/1/80) Parolee (1yr+)<br>T-visa or applicants with HHS T-visa eligibility Letter<br>VAWA “battered immigrant”<br>Citizen of Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, or Republic of Palau | No                                                                       |
| <b>State of Michigan Aid (including scholarships, grants, loans and other resources)</b> | Yes          | Yes                      | Refugee Asylee<br>Cuban-Haitian Entrant<br>Conditional Entrant (before 4/1/80) Parolee (1yr+)<br>T-visa VAWA “battered immigrant” Citizen of Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, or Republic of Palau                                                        | No, but DACA students may have employment opportunities on some campuses |

## FINANCIAL AID

### ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL AID

|                                     | U.S. Citizen | Legal Permanent Resident | Other Immigration Status                     | DACA or Undocumented                                         |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>In-State Tuition in Michigan</b> | Yes          | Generally, yes           | Depends on the College/University            | Depends on the College/ University (see tables on pg. 26-31) |
| <b>Private Loans</b>                | Yes          | Generally, yes           | Depends on lender; may require U.S. cosigner | Depends on lender; may require U.S. cosigner                 |
| <b>Institutional Aid</b>            | Yes          | Generally, yes           | Depends on the College/University            | Depends on the College/University                            |



Visit the websites of the sponsors of this Guide for an updated list of scholarships available to undocumented students. This list can change and will be updated accordingly.

## LOOKING FOR HELP?

Contact One Michigan for Immigrant Youth if:

- 1 a counselor or teacher says you can't go to college because of your immigration status
- 2 a university or college says you can't apply, or
- 3 you're having problems filling out applications



## JOIN ONE MICHIGAN

One Michigan is an undocumented youth-led immigrant rights organization. Its mission is to provide immigrant youth and allies the space, training, and opportunity to make a difference in the lives of immigrants all over Michigan.

They work to organize youth leaders in Detroit and across the state and believe that organizing communities is the first step in protecting the rights of immigrants across the state of Michigan.

College is not out the question. Every day, undocumented students are beating the odds and enrolling in

college. Many of the undocumented members of One Michigan are enrolled in college and can help guide you through the process. They continue to fight for your education and for your rights.

Some of the work that One Michigan does includes rallies, trips to Washington, D.C., anti-deportation campaigns, community service, book drives for immigrant detainees, know-your-rights workshops, DACA renewal workshops, college workshops, scholarships, and college application support.

# Life In College

Navigating college as an undocumented student comes with unique challenges, but there are resources available to support you every step of the way. Here are some resources that you might consider looking into as an undocumented student.

**Academic Support Services:** Take advantage of tutoring services and academic advisors who can help you excel academically. Attend workshops on study skills and time management to boost your performance. Most colleges also have English as a Second Language programs and other support for undocumented and foreign-national students.

**Community and Support Networks:** Join or create student organizations for undocumented students. These groups provide community and support. Seek out mentorship programs where you can connect with others who understand your experience.

**Fellowship/Internship Opportunities:** To explore career paths that align with your legal status, visit your college's career center for guidance. While you might not be eligible to work on most campuses, you may still qualify for financial aid to participate in internship programs that don't require specific work authorization. It's important to start this process early so you have a clear understanding of what to expect after graduation. Many colleges are now making efforts to help undocumented students find on-campus work opportunities, and [here's](#) how they are doing it.

**Career Center Services:** Connect with a career advisor and attend workshops to build your professional portfolio, expand your network, and gain confidence in interviews. Regardless of work authorization, the skills you develop through the Career Center will be transferable and valuable throughout your career. It's never too early to start planning for your career and life after college.

**Healthcare Access:** Find out about health clinics on or near campus that offer affordable or free healthcare services. You can [find Free and Charitable Clinics in Michigan](#) and utilize the [Health Resources and Services Administration \(HRSA\)](#) website to locate Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) across the country. These centers provide essential medical care regardless of immigration status.

Look into options for health insurance regardless of your immigration status. For most colleges, they require you to have health insurance to access clinics on campus. If your current insurance does not meet their criteria, you will have to be enrolled in the insurance they use at that specific university, and the cost is usually added to your tuition. Depending on the financial aid you receive, this cost could be completely covered.

Keep in mind that your college likely offers free and confidential mental health services including counseling. Ask for support from counselors who understand the challenges you face as an undocumented student.

**Awareness and Advocacy:** Get involved in awareness campaigns and advocacy efforts on campus. However, be careful when considering your participation in protests, demonstrations, and public statements that you make. For example, the government may consider your involvement in Pro-Palestinian activities as associating with a terrorist organization or engaging in terrorist activity (even if that isn't true) which could result in deportation. Be mindful that protests about immigration reform may be targeted for immigration enforcement.

**What Will Happen When I Graduate?** Life after college can be particularly challenging for undocumented immigrants due to the many complexities involved. [This guide by Immigrants Rising](#) covers topics such as graduate and professional schools, securing internships, earning a living, exploring options to remedy your status, and managing the emotional aspects of your journey.

# GLOSSARY

**Advanced Placement (AP)** - This program is made up of classes and exams that allow you to earn credit towards a college or university. These classes typically start during the 11th (junior) year of school and continue through the 12th (senior) year. The main benefits are that taking these classes allows a student to earn credit for their college at a lower price than they would pay at their institution of choice, and allows for faster movement through college due to having already earned that credit while still in high school. Do be mindful when taking these classes and picking a college, as some colleges have different rules when it comes to taking credits earned outside of their institutions.

**American College Testing (ACT)** - A standardized test that is used for college admissions in the United States. The test has 4 multiple-choice tests within it. Those tests cover English, Reading, Math, and Science. It totals 215 questions and is a 2 hour and 55 minute test. There is a 15-minute break after the Math portion of the test. There is an optional essay/writing portion that is 40 minutes long with an additional 5-minute break before the writing portion begins.

**College Prep Courses** - Classes that fall under this category are often more challenging in nature for a student. They are meant to prepare you for college-level course work. Types of classes included in this term are honors courses, AP, IB, and some electives offered at your school. These classes do involve more work and dedication in comparison to their required counterparts, but they tend to be very rewarding and helpful towards higher education and life in general. Some may even provide college credit.

**Commuting Students** - A commuting student is a student who lives off campus, and therefore, travels from their home to campus for classes. A dual-enrolled student, for example, does not live on campus, so they commute to take classes.

**Different Types of Post-Secondary Schools** - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/plan-for-college/find-your-fit/types-of-colleges/types-of-colleges-the-basics>

**Dual Enrollment** - Some high schools have the option for students to take classes at a nearby college while they are still attending high school. Typically, your school will be able to let you know what classes are covered and if they will let you earn college credit. There may also be transportation options available, depending on what your school/district provides. See your advisor for more details.

**Higher Education** - This is used to describe any type of education from a wide range of institutions, after high school or secondary school education. This can include community colleges, universities, vocational schools, trade schools, technical schools, etc. It can also be referred to as post-secondary or tertiary education.

**Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** - The IRS is the entity in charge of managing and collecting federal taxes for the United States federal government. They also enforce tax laws.

# GLOSSARY

**International Baccalaureate (IB)** - The IB Programme has several different programmes within it. Some start as early as elementary school. Traditionally, their Diploma Programme is what is offered at the 11th and 12th grade levels. Schools that offer the IB Diploma Programme can choose to follow the whole program by taking all IB classes, or by selecting which classes they would like to take to eventually earn college credit for. It's best to take the time to talk to your advisor about what route will be most beneficial to you.

**A Mentor** - This is a person in your life that you look up to and in many ways could be living the life that you want to live. They often spend time with you and put in effort to teach you things that they have learned throughout the years. The most important thing about a mentor is that you trust them and that they have the type of experience that you wish to gain.

## **Merit-Based Financial**

**Aid/Scholarships/Awards** - This type of financial aid is not dependent on your or your family's financial needs, but instead based on the academic, athletic, artistic, etc. performances of you, the student. These kinds of scholarships go a long way and can help immensely during your time at college. That is why it's so important to keep up good grades and find extracurriculars that you enjoy and can lead to potential aid.

**Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)** - This is the Michigan standard for graduating/earning a high school diploma from a public school. It is designed to prepare students to be successful in the economy, workforce, and higher education after they are done earning their diploma.

## **Need-Based Financial**

**Aid/Scholarships/Awards** - Unlike Merit-Based awards, Need-Based awards are determined by the student/student's family's ability to pay for college. For example, if you are considered low-income, you may receive need-based financial aid. Like merit-based awards, these are not loans and do not need to be paid back.

**Room & Board** - Room & board are the costs you pay to live on campus. Typically, the fee includes your room, amenities of the dorm building, cafeteria, etc. It is important to note that a lot of universities have requirements that first-year students live on campus for their first whole year. Just remember to look into this as part of your college search. Another important note is that many tuition calculators take this into account as part of tuition, but not always.

**Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)** - A standardized test that is used for college admissions in the United States. The test lasts a total of 2 hours and 14 minutes with a 10-minute break in between the Reading and Writing sections, and the Math section. Students have 64 minutes to complete the 54 question Reading and Writing portion, and 70 minutes for the 44 question Math portion. There is an optional essay portion. Note: Michigan requires that the essay portion be taken if the test is administered during school.

**Student Aid Index (SAI)** - This is a number that colleges use to determine how much federal aid a student will be receiving if they attend their school. The number is based on the FAFSA.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*The Undocumented Students' Guide to College is made possible by the following supporters:*

## ONE MICHIGAN

One Michigan and its members are dedicated to fighting for immigrant youth rights and we continue to grow.

## MICHIGAN COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

As the leader in the state's college access movement, MCAN is committed to increasing Michigan's college readiness, participation and completion rates, particularly among low-income students, first-generation college going students, and students of color. Visit **MCAN's Tools and Resources** for assistance.

## MICHIGAN IMMIGRANT RIGHTS CENTER

The Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC) is a resource center for advocates seeking equal justice for Michigan's immigrants. MIRC works to build a thriving Michigan where immigrant communities experience equity and belonging. Visit our website for more information.

## NATIONAL FORUM ON HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

The National Forum exists to support higher education's role as a public good. In this pursuit, the Forum utilizes research and other tools to create and disseminate knowledge that addresses higher education issues of public importance. More specifically, the Forum has investigated ways to increase access to institutions of higher education for undocumented students in Michigan.