

Abstract Submitted
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An Unstable Equilibrium: My Journey in Physics as a DACA Recipient SEBASTIAN TORRES-LARA, University of Houston — According to the US Department of Homeland Security there are 643,430 immigrants protected under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program as of March 2020. DACA has allowed these young immigrants to continue living in the US, and pursue their careers. On a more personal note, this program provides a critical amnesty for me to continue with my doctoral studies. However, my opportunities in physics have been limited due to my status. Federal grants, traveling abroad to work, and internships at national labs are out of reach for all DACA students. I often found myself overwhelmed by the uncertain future of DACA during the prior administration. Nonetheless, these downsides and worries pale in comparison to how empowering this program has been. I hope that by sharing my experiences in looking for research experience as an undergrad, applying to grad schools, and searching for grants will shed some light on how impactful DACA has been.

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