Why we welcome DREAMers as medical students

Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine is the first in the United States to encourage a newly recognized group of remarkable young people to apply for admission.

Called “DREAMers” (after proposed federal legislation known as the DREAM Act, for “Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors”), these young people were brought to the U.S. as children and have lived here for more than five years. Loyola Stritch is accepting applications only from DREAMers who qualify for the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

This important decision builds upon the school’s well-established dedication to diversity to meet the health care needs of its local and global communities.

What is DACA status?
- Qualified undocumented immigrants can receive a two-year, renewable authorization to remain and work in the United States. Criteria include arrival at the United States before age 16, specified levels of education or military service, and an absence of a felony conviction.

Why has the Stritch School of Medicine made DREAMers eligible for admission?
- Loyola University Chicago’s Catholic, Jesuit values require the inclusion of these young people in the admissions process. The dignity and worth of persons calls us to steward the talents of qualified applicants rather than reject their contributions for arbitrary, arcane, or political reasons.
- This approach makes pragmatic sense. The United States is facing a significant shortage of physicians. In addition, large portions of the U.S. are underserved by the current distribution and demographic profile of physicians.

Upon completion of MD degrees, can DREAMers get a license, a residency, and practice medicine?
- Yes.

Will DREAMers’ applications be treated preferentially in regard to selection for admission?
- No.

Does Loyola Stritch dedicate spots to any category of applicant, including DREAMers?
- No.

How are these students treated in regard to financial aid?
- Almost all Loyola Stritch students receive some form of financial aid. However, DREAMers are ineligible for the federal student loans available to students who are U.S. citizens. To face this iniquity, highly qualified DREAMer applicants may combine school-based aid with a targeted loan for DACA-status students available from the Illinois Finance Authority (IFA), the state’s infrastructure bank. The loan is interest-free in return for years of service (one year of service for each year of securing a loan) in an underserved community in Illinois. Failure to perform that service requirement carries substantial interest penalties.

Are tax dollars being used to support this initiative?
- No.

For additional and updated information, visit www.stritch.LUC.edu/daca.