

A raindrop is one in million. On its journey downward it feels similar if not identical to the others. Through great effort and concentration it strives to stay in one piece, to stay in the lead. As it approaches the final stages of its journey, it is momentarily paused by a shocking truth. Unlike the others, this drop will not reach its final destination it has worked so diligently to achieve. Though it followed the same path as the others and expressed more drive than many, it was created by a different cloud, and will therefore be deprived of its greatest goal. Though exaggerated, this anecdote very similarly correlates in various ways to the plight thousands of graduating seniors face each year and serves the purpose of introducing a very necessary and intriguing bill.

The majority of illegal immigrant students are brought to the United States by their parents, naive and at a very young age. Immersed in a society dissimilar to their household's culture, they must accommodate to and learn from their scholastic environment. They are saturated with the teachings of the "American Dream," the "American Opportunity." Some young students, noting their parents struggle, decide to aim for this dream, or proven reality, he witnesses and is taught. He understands he must toil with great perseverance and make numerous sacrifices, but the end result seems more than attractive to the young immigrant.

The illegal immigrant is very special. He must live in obscurity, while surpassing peers through academic excellence. He must rely on hope and intrinsic motivation to retain positive concentration. He must balance cultures while feeling distant and rejected from both. The most notable fact about outstanding immigrant scholars and athletes is their continuous hope and determination through constant "put-down" and seemingly decreasing opportunity. The most appalling fact about their life is their penalization for something they never did, something they never had control over: being brought to a foreign country.

I am a firm believer of everyone having a motive, valid at least to him, for all actions. Every individual who has emigrated to the United States of America has done so, as the founders

of this nation, in search of a better destiny or to escape an ill. Who, and with what perceived power decided he could set limits on others' aspirations, restrictions on travel and exploration, and confine the opportunity of seeking a better life for oneself and family and of realizing self-actualization by the ultimate means possible without interfering with nor causing harm to others? In order to maintain an orderly society, I agree restrictions must be imposed and punishment to uphold these. These laws, however, shall not harm the innocent and disable the worthy.

It is incredible how a country that preaches freedom, that promotes equality, and travels across borders to restore order and to recruit intelligence, does not witness the injustice and covert brilliance within its own oceans. It fails to recognize the benefits of providing for American children, though they are not referred to as such, the opportunity to contribute to the country. Many brilliant minds are hindered by the system; minds full of determination, creativity, and a desire to learn. Rather than pay millions for languid individuals and spend immense effort in persuading them to work, allowing those with overflowing potential and desire to prepare themselves would greatly benefit the country.

If the point of the matter is to instill penalty and prevent further illegal immigration, the limits can be set on those who infract upon the law and not on those who innocently become destined or condemned by it. This is what the "Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2007" intends to explain and to repair. When compassionate people find out about current policy that destroys thousands of aspirations each year, they are incredulous and become outraged. As a result, the activists of this group have united to advocate for and to provide an opportunity for the plethora who have prayed for change, a change in conscience and morality.

The DREAM Act, as it is referred to, would offer the opportunity to undocumented students, desirous of pursuing post-secondary education and who have expressed focus and excellence in their endeavors, to attend college or serve in the armed forces, and provide occasion for attaining documented status. The requisites for benefiting from this bill would

include: proof of having arrived in the United States at age 15 or younger; proof of residence in the United States for a least five (5) consecutive years since their date of arrival; ages of 12 and 30 at time of bill enactment; having graduated from an American high school, or obtained a GED; and "Good moral character," essentially defined as the absence of a significant criminal record (or any major drug charges), compliance with Selective Service laws and an absence of fraudulent information in documents. The student would be granted "conditional" status for six years during which he would be required to complete at least two years towards a 4-year degree or to graduate from a two-year community college, or to serve two years in the U.S. military. After completing either of the requirements in the six-year period, the immigrant would be eligible to apply for legal permanent resident status.

This act is much more than about clearing a lengthy blocked path to dreams. It is about rectifying justice, ethics, and tolerance, characteristics the United States intends to exemplify to its citizens and to the world. In advocating this law, we may encounter significant opposition, as have all past great achievements. If these young-minds have maintained hope and endured disappointment for a lifetime, it would be a great disgrace and discouragement to secede from the objective.

Can it be possible that basic liberties and privileges are being denied to children who know nothing else and who take pride in nowhere else than the United States of America; the country where they have grown and learned and resided in for all but one or two years of their lives? We are here today to reflect on children who have pledged allegiance to the flag since the first day of kindergarten, children who take pride and joy in calling America their beloved country and are willing to defend it in any situation, children who ask only for equality and acceptance. These children have no where else to go. They are not accepted as contributors to this country and much less know the country of their birth of which they were denied access to in a lifetime of captivity. Now fellow congress men, note the benefit that would exceed the fright of

passing this bill. We are faced today with a situation not much different to the ones our ancestors faced in allowing women to vote and in desegregating our schools. Equality is equality. Change causes insecurity. There comes a time in our lives in which we must decide to challenge tradition and reflect on morality. The time has come to discontinue the negligence towards our *own* children we have raised, educated, learned from, and come to love. Let us accept these raindrops that have conveniently been blown in our direction and aid them in reaching and contributing to our progressing and promising puddle.

Dear Wites & Kapetan,

When I first viewed your application for this scholarship I thought the essay would be about the DREAM Act. At the time this bill was being reviewed by Congress, I wrote this response and thought I could later send my essay to your firm as well. I do not expect to be evaluated by this passage but would like to send it in case it could be of any use to your work in the matter.

A world separated by its opportunity and security from the outskirts of oppression and injustice. A world that provides encouragement and assurance to its inhabitants, that serves as a sanctuary for foreign refugees and a symbol of justice and morals to developing nations. A prospering nation named the United States of America by its philosophical and incredibly insightful forefathers.

Living in America is living in a protected bubble, shielded from common perturbations that those outside its borders face. Naïve of alien tribulations, our free conscience provides room for ideas of progress and delight. When we face a problem, we know our hovering blanket of protection can eventually bail us out. This blanket thus represents agencies, organizations, and governments formulated for the common good of its residents. To those alien to this country and its principles, this structure is inconceivable, fantastic. This base of protection, stability, and confidence is what assembles continuous improvement. Lack of insecurity, fear, and agitation is what produces societal growth and personal advancement. The United States of America grants this serenity to each citizen to ensure ultimate choice and opportunity.

There are rare places where members of society can be assured life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These words are unheard of elsewhere, and readily mocked if mentioned. In the United States we enjoy freedoms many cannot even imagine. We experience freedom of thought, of expression, of choice and action. We are so privileged, we have become accustomed to our liberties and often disregard, usually neglect them. I am occasionally awakened to the horrific global circumstances through foreign news reports, family accounts, and participation in community involvement. These occurrences refocus my gratefulness, strive for self-actualization, and efforts to mitigate universal problems.

There are millions of people who can barely dream of attaining what many of us have become accustomed to. Therefore, in respect to them as well as in appreciation of this, one should become the best one can be rather than let these gifts dissipate. We must take advantage of what is offered to us in this extraordinary country to positively contribute to exploited societies.

My parents, though citizens of a foreign country, praise this country as their own. I have observed their thankfulness to this nation, which has provided for them the means to eventually provide a very comfortable life for their children. They still cannot believe the opportunities that this nation continues to present. How can it be that a government and private institution can fund a costly education for thousands of students? They have witnessed my tedious work and final compensation of academic financial assistance with awe. I have family members in foreign countries who have worked fervently to fund their college educations to finally result with a professional paper diploma and no prospect for a relevant job. I may accumulate over one-hundred thousand dollars worth of debt to fund my college education but can continue pacified by the assurance that this investment will once be recuperated through a promising preparation. Thus, this incredible system provided by the United States of America remains outlandish to my relatives. I attribute my perseverance and dedication to their driven characters. One mentions chance and opportunity, but these words are nothing without action. My parents have taught me through actions, much more than words, that all is attainable through tenacity and focused labor. This country is for the dynamic and the grateful. There is too much possibility in this nation to be dissipated upon lethargic, unappreciative individuals.

They say one cannot buy peace of mind, but it is certainly more accessible in less turbulent atmospheres. The United States has become the symbol of advancement and righteousness in the globe. It is not the "American Dream" that highlights this nation, it is the American Reality. It is the credence that through ardor and honesty, one will succeed. Let us never forgot the exertion that founded this country nor disregard the origins of our entitlements. We must protect, cherish, and further elevate this nation that has provided, within its confines, blessings unknown to the majority of mankind.