

EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY, 11/21/2016, 10:00am

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Two Virginia DREAMers File Lawsuit Seeking DACA Extension

On **Tuesday, November 21, 2017**, two immigrant youth from Virginia will file a lawsuit seeking to have their Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (“DACA”) reinstated and extended for two years. Represented *pro bono* by the Legal Aid Justice Center and the law firm of Outten and Golden, they argue that the Trump Administration’s decision to deny them the opportunity to once more renew DACA violated their constitutional rights. The lead plaintiff and his lawyers will hold a press conference to announce the lawsuit on **Tuesday, November 21, at 10:00am**, at the offices of the Legal Aid Justice Center, 6066 Leesburg Pike #520, Falls Church VA 22041. (Call-in number: 703-226-3428, conference code 1234, no “#” necessary.)

“DACA changed my life,” said 26-year-old Nurimaro Park of Fairfax, Virginia. “Before DACA, I didn’t see much of a future for myself. I was always anxious, my job prospects were poor, and I couldn’t even get a driver’s license. Even though my family came to this country from Korea to give me a better life, I didn’t see myself being able to have much of a life at all.”

Mr. Park’s second two-year DACA extension had recently lapsed and he was saving money to pay for the \$495 renewal fee, when on September 5, 2017—without any warning—the Trump Administration announced that the entire DACA program would be phased out beginning in March 2018. But for Mr. Park, and some 50,000 other immigrants like him¹ whose DACA extensions had already lapsed and who were still making plans to renew, the program was being cancelled effective immediately, robbing them of a fair chance to renew and plunging their lives into uncertainty. “I was crushed,” Mr. Park said. “I had no warning. If the government had told me this was coming on September 5, I could have taken steps to renew before then.”

“Nurimaro Park played by the rules, but the Trump Administration changed the rules on him,” said Simon Sandoval-Moshenberg, Legal Director of the Immigrant Advocacy Program. “Fifty thousand other Dreamers just like him were wrongly denied their right to two more years of DACA. To change a deadline without telling people that you are going to do it, and then denying them DACA because they missed the deadline that they had no way of knowing about, violates a basic sense of fair play and decency, and it also violates the Constitution.”

“Many people think that the deadline for Congress to pass a Dream Act is March 5, 2018, because when that’s when the whole DACA program will begin to sunset,” said Mary Bauer, executive director of the Virginia-based Legal Aid Justice Center. “But for Nurimaro Park, and for some 50,000 others, the DACA program has already ended. The emergency has already begun.”

¹ According to the Department of Homeland Security, “about 50,000 people lost DACA because they failed to renew their protections before the two years were up[.]” Dara Lind, “How many immigrants have DACA, really?”, Vox (Oct. 6, 2017), *available at* <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/10/6/16431524/daca-how-many>

David Lopez, a Washington, D.C.-based partner in Outten & Golden LLP, which concentrates on employee rights, added, “The Administration’s decision to change the DACA renewal policies abruptly and without notice illegally pushed thousands of productive workers who followed the rules into the shadows without legal status.” Outten & Golden recently launched a Resistance Task Force to protect individuals like Mr. Park from efforts by the current administration to curtail workplace protections.

Nurimaro Park and his lawyers will be available to speak to the press on **Tuesday, November 21**, at **10:00am**, at the offices of the Legal Aid Justice Center, 6066 Leesburg Pike #520, Falls Church, VA 22041. (Call-in number: 703-226-3428, conference code 1234, no “#” necessary.) A leader from the DREAMer community will also be available to put the lawsuit into perspective with regards to the broader struggle for a Clean Dream Act.

About the Legal Aid Justice Center’s Immigrant Advocacy Program: The Legal Aid Justice Center’s Immigrant Advocacy Program supports low-income immigrants in their efforts to find justice and fair treatment. In addition to representing clients with individual legal issues, we promote systemic reforms to reduce the abuse and exploitation of immigrants, and advocate for state and local policies that promote integration and protect immigrants from aggressive immigration enforcement. Our work aims to end the mass detention and deportation of immigrants, with a special focus on child refugees fleeing violence and individuals and communities targeted for enforcement by overzealous federal immigration agents.

About Outten & Golden LLP: Outten & Golden LLP, a 50-plus attorney law firm, represents employees in individual and class action litigation challenging employment discrimination, wage theft, and other workplace injustices. As advocates for workplace fairness, our passion and profession is to help advance the goals of employees and protect their rights against injustices. Outten & Golden LLP also recently launched a Legal Resistance Task Force to protect the workplace rights of the people and communities targeted by the actions and policies of the Trump Administration. Details: <http://www.outtengolden.com> and <http://www.ogresistance.com>.

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