September 5, 2017

The presidents of Washington’s six public baccalaureate college and universities, 34 community and technical colleges, 10 members of the Independent Colleges of Washington, as well as the 10 members of the Washington Student Achievement Council issued the following statement following today’s announcement terminating the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in six months:

“Today’s announcement leaves us with profound disappointment and pained yet unequivocal resolve to stand up for our students who are among the 800,000 nationwide registered under DACA. These young people are some of the finest and most resilient students at our colleges and universities, often exhibiting unique character forged in the fire of adversity. They overcome major obstacles just to gain and retain eligibility without access to the federal financial assistance needed by so many to help make a college education attainable.

In Washington, all of our students, regardless of their immigration status, are invaluable to the teaching we provide in our classrooms, the research we perform in our labs, and the discoveries we make in medicine. These students and those who came before them are not strangers on our campuses, in our communities, and in our homes. They are our neighbors, our co-workers, our friends and our family. They are us.

Our nation’s history has proven that education and service are essential components to sustaining communities and stimulating economic growth in addition to helping create personal success and happiness. Washington’s colleges and universities are working aggressively to produce graduates with degrees in science, business, technology, and medicine and a variety of other high-demand areas of endeavor. Employers in their desperate search for talented young people are already reaching out of state to fill top jobs. DACA graduates are playing and will continue to play an important role in meeting this critical need in the state of Washington. They embody the initiative and resolve that has made the United States of America the most prosperous and innovative country in the world.

This lamentable decision to end DACA threatens to rob us of hundreds of thousands of gifted, hardworking, and dedicated young people who are American in every way but their immigration status. We agree with the many business leaders throughout the country who are urging Congress to pass the bipartisan Dream Act or legislation that will allow these students to continue to contribute to the global competitive environment.”
On behalf of:

Central Washington University  Pierce College Fort Steilacoom
Eastern Washington University  Pierce College Puyallup
The Evergreen State College  Renton Technical College
University of Washington  Seattle Central College
Washington State University  Shoreline Community College
Western Washington University  Skagit Valley College
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges  South Puget Sound Community College
Bates Technical College  South Seattle College
Bellevue College  Spokane Community College
Bellingham Technical College  Spokane Falls Community College
Big Bend Community College  Tacoma Community College
Cascadia College  Walla Walla Community College
Centralia College  Wenatchee Valley College
Clark College  Whatcom Community College
Clover Park Technical College  Yakima Valley College
Columbia Basin College  Gonzaga University
Edmonds Community College  Heritage University
Everett Community College  Pacific Lutheran University
Grays Harbor College  Saint Martin’s University
Green River College  Seattle Pacific University
Highline College  Seattle University
Lake Washington Institute of Technology  University of Puget Sound
Lower Columbia College  Walla Walla University
North Seattle College  Whitman College
Olympic College  Whitworth University
Peninsula College  Washington Student Achievement Council