



THE ORACLE

UndocUnited hosting Dream Week to raise awareness about undocumented students

March 22, 2021 12:43 am by [Emma Lail](#), CORRESPONDENT



UndocUnited, a student organization created to support and advocate for undocumented students, is establishing a scholarship as well as hosting Dream Week from March 22-26 to bring awareness to the students' experiences through trivia nights, panel discussions and lectures. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/UNSPLASH/Chris Montgomery

For the first time since 2018, UndocUnited has put the “Dreamers” in the spotlight by creating a week that celebrates their stories and a scholarship that supports their success.

UndocUnited, an organization focused on creating an inclusive and supportive environment for undocumented students, is hosting Dream Week, which includes a series of events to highlight the stories and experiences of undocumented students at USF as well as educate allies about their experiences.

The events, ranging from trivia nights to panels with students who immigrated under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, will teach participants about the obstacles undocumented students face as well as offer ways to support and embrace their cultures.

Dream Week will run from March 22-26, with all events occurring from 7-8:15 p.m. on Microsoft Teams with the exception of Thursday's event, which will be on Zoom so students can be anonymous on the call if preferred.

Melanie Escue, a committee member of the UndocUnited team, expressed how passionate the team is about creating a week that will help dispel stereotypes about immigrants.

“The idea behind Dream Week was that we felt that with the change of administration [in the White House] we needed to do something impactful, we wanted to be a part of changing that anti-immigrant narrative,” she said.

In celebration of Dream Week, UndocUnited is also fundraising money to give one undocumented student a scholarship. The scholarship application opened in mid-February and closes April 9.

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants need to be an undocumented undergraduate or graduate student, be protected under DACA or have a Temporary Protected Status, which is a temporary status given to eligible nationals of certain countries who are currently residing in the U.S.

UndocUnited has set up a GoFundMe and a Venmo account, @UndocUnited-atUSF, to raise money for the scholarship. There is no set goal for how much the team wants to raise, but UndocUnited has high hopes they will give someone in need a chance to gain financial stability, according to Escue.

The GoFundMe was launched Jan. 21 and has fundraised over \$1,200 as of March 22.

UndocUnited is planning on continuing Dream Week for years to come, which can grant undocumented students with this scholarship annually.

Escue said UndocUnited is going against the grain with this scholarship opportunity by making its decisions based on each student's story about what makes them unique rather than looking at academic achievements. There will be several short answer responses on the application that will allow the candidates to elaborate on their life experiences being undocumented.

“We really want to give these resources to students who really need it, a lot of these students have multiple jobs and we want to acknowledge that and be considerate of that,” she said.

The week of events will begin Monday at 7 p.m. with a lecture by Tampa immigration attorney Diana Castro about her experiences of being born and raised in Puerto Rico, moving to Florida, her current work and what influenced her to work in immigration. Castro will be taking questions at the end of the hourlong event.

An “Around the World” showcase on Tuesday will consist of students, faculty and staff from all three campuses sharing about their native languages, foods, cultures and music. Individuals who attend will learn about the differences that make each country unique.

“[The Around the World Showcase] is essentially going to be a discussion with students, faculty and staff from around the world, so anyone who is not born in the United States [is] going to talk about their country of origin,” Escue said.

Through the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), Wednesday's events will include a trivia night hosted by UndocuAlly, a free, three-hour interactive certification program for USF students, faculty and staff on the undocumented student experience, federal and state policies and how to be an ally.

The event will provide participants the opportunity to support undocumented students by learning about their lives as well as test their knowledge on the undocumented student experience.

Escue said the trivia night will be a friendly competition where students will be able to engage with others and have the opportunity to win a “swag bag” which will include an assortment of key chains and water bottles provided by OMA. The swag bags will be mailed out to the winners, according to Escue.

There will also be a Q&A session with Heide Castañeda, an anthropology professor at the College of Arts and Sciences who created UndocuAlly.

Thursday’s event will be the most personal, according to Escue, as it will allow undocumented students to share their personal experiences as an immigrant in the U.S.

UndocUnited will host a DACA student panel and each member will speak about their background. There are eight panelists speaking that have come from all across the world, including Mexico, Peru, Sri Lanka and Thailand, according to Escue.

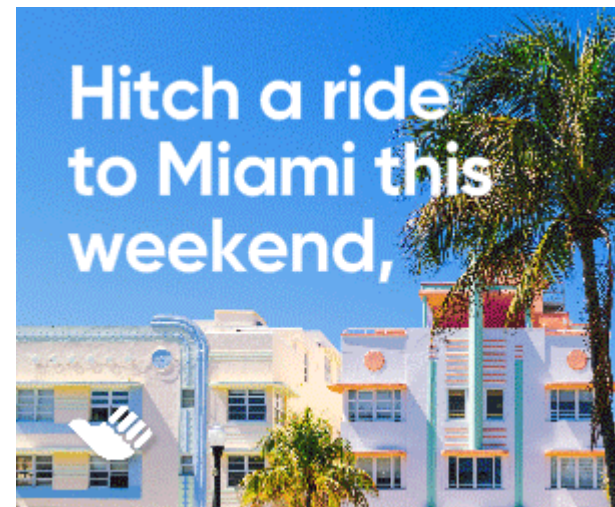
During Dream Week’s last day, Beatriz Padilla, interim director of Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean (ISLAC), will host a Latin American trivia night to teach attendees about the region’s culture and traditions through a trivia game.

UndocUnited has been an advocate for undocumented immigrants since 2018 while striving to ensure students have equal opportunity inside and outside the classroom. Sharon Benito, the president of UndocUnited, decided to bring this event back to USF since it hasn’t been hosted since 2018. Benito began the plan to revive Dream Week back in December 2020 and the team began meeting right away, according to Escue.

“We have been planning this endlessly every day, sending out emails, getting people to get involved and fundraising, and now it is finally going to happen,” Escue said.

Escue is eager to see the impact Dream Week will make on undocumented students and the USF community.

“Having Dream Week is a way to acknowledge [undocumented students’] obstacles and challenges and hopefully invite allies to come and be a part of this fight for their human rights and for them to get support at USF,” Escue said.



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Students worried for Ukrainians' safety after Russian invasion



Michael Mardones
EDITOR

ASSISTANT NEWS

When news broke that her home country invaded Ukraine on Tuesday, second-year Russian international student Anna Ostrin was overwhelmed with shame and frustration that her government ignored the will of the Russian people while inaugurating the sovereignty of Ukraine.

"There is a sense of responsibility and guilt I hold, even though it is not of my control to do anything about the situation," Ostrin said. "I am very against war, especially with a country that we share lots of history with."

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine was set free from the grips of the failed communist regime and independently installed a democratic republic.

Russia-Ukrainian relations experienced turbulence in 2014 after the Russian annexation of the formerly Ukrainian

Crimian peninsula and the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk. A resurgence of heightened tension between the two states manifested at the end of 2021 when Russia began mobilizing troops to the Ukrainian border, signaling a potential invasion.

The buildup leading to the Russian assault included failed discussions with the U.S. government and member states of the EU into the new year to ease the pressure.

As a Russian citizen, Ostrin said it's important for Americans to recognize that the Russian government doesn't act on behalf of the desires of its people, but rather its own ambitions.

"I think Americans might not understand that the Russian government and what actual citizens believe in, are completely different things," she said. "Most of the Russians I know did not choose or agree with the course of events."

See UKRAINE on PAGE 3



Some students are frustrated with the Russian government and global leaders' inability to prevent assault on Ukraine.

PIKABAY

Fraternity temporarily suspended for antisemitic acts



Clinton Engelberger
NEWS EDITOR

NEWS EDITOR

Phi Kappa Phi was suspended until further notice Thursday as a result of recent antisemitic acts performed by members of the fraternity.

The Fraternity was charged with two conduct violations, including USF Student Code of Conduct/Ancolab/Ancolab 4 and USF Student Code of Conduct/Hazing/Hazing according to an email sent Thursday by Director of Student Conduct and Behavioral Development Melissa Graham.

The incidents that were recognized under these charges involved underage students drinking and driving on campus on others at Phi, off-campus Bud Party, according to Graham.

"Cases were given the charge and told to engage with the associate members and then write on their shirts," she said.

"Associate members had inappropriate behavior (ignoring and a swastika) drawn on their shirts and/or body parts. Ancolab was present at the event and consumed by associate members."

In an effort to address

these occurrences and reach a consensus on the status of the suspension, Graham said an informational meeting will be held Tuesday at 10 a.m. with the president of Phi Kappa Phi over Microsoft Teams.

"An informational meeting is an opportunity to explain the Student Conduct Process, the student organization due process rights, the allegation and charges, and review all available information supporting the charges," Graham said.

"The Hearing Officer will review available information to determine if the interim suspension will remain, be modified or be lifted."

Before a final decision is reached on the level of Student Conduct and Behavioral Development, no discussions or meetings are permitted to take place by anyone associated with Phi Kappa Phi, internally or externally, including and directing messages on others at Phi, off-campus Bud Party, according to Graham.

All events and pledge activities are also banned until further notice, according to the email the fraternity prescribes an unhealthy disturbance to the community," Graham said.

"Based on the information received, the event operations of the organization are also banned until these disruption or incidents to the health and safety of our community," Graham said.

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