

## Personal Statement

I am undocumented and my status has shaped my interactions with the world around me.

I moved to the United States from Mexico when I was 9 and it was very difficult. Throughout middle and high school, I was constantly reminded of my undocumented status, and it made me feel alone. Though I worked hard and got good grades, I felt that my classmates were better than I was because they were citizens. While my peers heard, "you can do it," from guidance counselors, teachers, and school administrators, I grew up hearing that I couldn't do it because I was undocumented.

The challenges I faced at school, at home, and in my community, inspired me to seek an organization working to improve the lives of undocumented people in New York City. That organization taught me to value myself, and to stop living in the shadows. It made me understand that my status did not define who I was or limit my capacity to achieve my goals.

My experiences have shown me that, through education and advocacy, we can expand opportunities for all those who seek a better life. Next year, I hope to begin college and pursue a double major in Political Science and Latino Studies. These majors will allow me to study both the historical and contemporary experiences of Americans of Latin American origin, as well as our government's relationship with marginalized groups. After obtaining my bachelor's degree, I plan on going to law school and eventually becoming an immigration attorney. I know that my undocumented status is an obstacle for me to practice law, but I believe I can do it.

Pablo Neruda once said, "You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming." My undocumented status will not keep me from fulfilling my dreams and making a difference in my community. I know that if I am given the resources necessary to achieve my goals, I will succeed.