January 19, 2022

Dear Coordinators & Directors,

Below you will find updates and information on the following topics: I. UCImm updates: Outreach to graduating students; UCImm is searching for a new ED; II. State policy: Californians For All College Corps; III. Federal policy: What is happening with Build Back Better?; IV. USCIS: What does the Ombudsmans office do?; and V: ICYMI: ILRC’s Social Media toolkit for protected areas from ICE & CBP; Take Action: Urge the Biden Administration to adopt policies that reduce visa backlogs and delays; USCIS is processing expedited EADs for healthcare workers; California Health & Human Services Agency’s Public Charge Guide.

I. UCImm updates

• Outreach to graduating students

We invite you all to please remind graduating students to book their appointments for legal services as soon as possible. As most students know, our Center is only able to open new cases for currently enrolled students; however, many don’t realize that we often must first conduct a case investigation before a new case can be opened.

• UCImm is currently searching for a new Executive Director

As you likely know, our Executive Director Maria Blanco recently announced she will be stepping down on June 30, 2022. While this news makes our hearts heavy, we are optimistic that our next Director will fill Maria’s small but mighty shoes in their own unique way. The deadline to apply is January 28. Click here for the position description and application link; current UC employees should use this link to apply.

II. State policy: Californians For All College Corps

"Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Tuesday that 45 colleges and universities in California, including some of the most prestigious campuses in the state, will be part of a new public service program that will subsidize tuition for students who do community service alongside their studies . . . In exchange for 450 hours of service, each student will receive $10,000 toward their education and can get academic credit for their work . . . The program’s website outlines a competitive application process for the program that it says will focus on admitting low-income students and 'dreamers' . . . "

III. Federal policy: What is happening with Build Back Better ("BBB")?

As you likely know, in December the Senate Parliamentarian ruled against the parole provisions in BBB, and Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) announced he wouldn’t support the House bill. At this point it remains unclear what Democrats plan to do. According to this article, "potential steps forward range from ambitious to downsized" but apparently "a person familiar with the discussions" stated that "Democrats are poised to at least vote on disregarding the parliamentarian’s advice and plowing ahead on rejected immigration provisions," which is a departure from their previous stance that they would not push forward without the Parliamentarian's approval.

Despite this Congress' failure to pass immigration legislation to date, attorneys nonetheless recommend that individuals be prepared for any new policy that allows undocumented people to apply for legal status or protection from deportation. This document from the national Ready to Stay Coalition provides a simple checklist of things to do. It’s available in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

IV. USCIS: What does the Ombudsman’s office do?

The CIS Ombudsman can help with many common issues (this list is not exhaustive): cases past processing times; typographic errors in immigration documents; cases where the beneficiary may “age-out” of eligibility for the requested immigration benefit; applications and petitions that were improperly rejected by USCIS; mailing issues; and certain cases involving an emergency or a hardship.

In this AILA video, Deputy Ombudsman Nathan Stiefel explains the case assistance services the office provides, and shares tips on how to use the services most effectively. Campus attorneys may be able to assist with contacting the Ombudsman's office.

V: ICYMI

- ILRC’s Social Media toolkit for protected areas from ICE & CBP
- Take Action: Urge the Biden Administration to adopt polices that reduce visa backlogs and delays
- USCIS is processing expedited EADs for healthcare workers
- California Health & Human Services Agency's Public Charge Guide

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Thank you,
The UC Immigrant Legal Services Center team