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By Flavio Bravo and Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz

Undergraduate students at Loyola University Chicago voted in the spring of last year to pay an additional $2.50 in student fees each semester to establish the Magis scholarship fund for undocumented students. With this vote, Loyola students made history – this was the first student-led, student-supported initiative of its kind. The campaign for the Magis scholarship not only made it possible for select students to attend a university that would otherwise be unaffordable, it also transformed the conversation about immigration on Loyola's campus, in our Chicago communities, and beyond.

Each year, some 65,000 undocumented youth graduate from U.S. high schools. Of these, only five to ten percent go on to college. Undocumented students face a series of extra hurdles to higher education, including ineligibility for FAFSA, exclusion from work-study and other employment opportunities, concerns about post-graduation job opportunities, and, often, feelings of hopelessness and social isolation.

At Loyola, our aims were manifold. First, we wanted to ease the financial burden by providing financial assistance to undocumented students who are ineligible for federal financial aid and most private scholarships. Second, we sought to foment a university-wide conversation about migration, human rights, and education that would unify the university community around the Magis initiative. In particular, we were inspired by Jesuit teachings on equity in access to education, the legacy of student leadership on social justice issues on college campuses, and the historic steps taken by Loyola's Stritch School of Medicine in 2013, which became the first medical school in the country to welcome undocumented students openly. Third, we hoped that bringing together the university community in support of the Magis would create a campus environment that was not only accessible but also openly welcoming to undocumented students.

The reaction to this historic vote was immediate and widespread. Regional and national news outlets interviewed members of the Student Government and the Latin American Student Organization about the campaign. As the news spread, student groups at college campuses nationwide contacted us about how to implement similar programs at their own schools. Two months after the student vote, Loyola was contacted by Don Graham, former owner of the *Washington Post* and cofounder of TheDream.US, the largest provider of scholarships for undocumented students in the country. Inspired by the work of Loyola students, Mr. Graham pledged a donation of $50,000 to match the student contribution. The Loyola administration also pledged five full scholarships for undocumented students and created a scholarship account for undocumented students to which members of the public can contribute.

Just as importantly, the Magis campaign catalyzed conversations across our campus about whether and how to welcome the undocumented students in our midst. This conversation is ongoing and fraught with controversy, and for that reason it is especially timely and important.

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