



BRING HOPE  
**HOME**  
BEFORE YOU VISIT



**HOPE**  
CommUnity Center  
Building Community. Enriching Lives.  
<http://hcc-offm.org>

# WELCOME

You have made the choice to see something new, and try something unique. This time spent with real families facing real issues will change how you see some very serious issues. Social justice isn't just a buzz word – it is the ability people have to realize their potential in the society where they live.

The first step in doing justice is to understand the reality. It is too easy to assume that we know what to do. Maybe you have heard someone say “Oh, well why don't they just...” and offered what seemed like a good suggestion. So often those good suggestions can quickly turn to nothing in the realities facing people making hard decisions. By joining the Immersion Experience, you may gain new perspectives as you hear from the people that these farm worker and immigration issues affect directly. Your most important service on this trip will be to have open ears, open minds, and open hearts! You are invited to become allies of a community who struggles together to make real the values of human dignity.



## PACK ME!

- Pillows
- Towel
- Work gloves
- Close-toed work shoes
- Jeans for worksite
- Sunscreen and sunglasses
- Clothing for appropriate number of days
- Personal hygiene items
- Notebook and pen/pencil

## Learning to Learn

At Hope CommUnity Center, we have some tried and tested ideas about teaching and learning. Our first premise is that **everyone has something to teach, and everyone has something to learn**. No matter what the titles in the room are, everyone brings something to the table. Sometimes the most important thing you can learn is how to listen, and everyone can help you learn that.



Secondly, **we choose to face each other in what we do**. That means physically sitting facing each other as well as metaphorically making sure our thoughts are in the room tuned into the others there, and not off on some other issue or topic or our cellphones. By giving others our real attention we reinforce that they have something valuable to say, something worth hearing. Actually arranging a room or table in a circle physically reminds us that every person is worth our attention.

Before we try to serve someone else, we must **first walk a mile in their shoes**. Real service begins with listening to the community - anything else can easily become just an exercise in someone feeling like a good person without really helping. You must first understand someone from their own point of view first. Only then will you have some idea of what might actually serve them.

**Take the time to reflect on what you do**. If you rush in the business of doing good, but don't take time to think about it, you will spin on accomplishing little. A little thoughtfulness with your service is essential, and it won't happen by accident. Plan ahead to give yourself breaks to think over your experience.

It can be hard to connect with another person. When you add in trying to communicate across cultural differences it can feel impossible. One important tool for us is **talking about values through symbols**. We use physical pieces of art to be symbols of our values that can be held, turned over in your hands, and looked at from many angles. As people unpack what a symbol means to them, it makes the conversation come alive with new ideas and deeper understanding of each other.

## Myths about Immigration

### Immigrants don't pay taxes

In fact, most immigrants pay thousands of dollars in taxes per year. One study found that undocumented immigrants paid \$10.6 billion in state and local taxes in 2010.<sup>1</sup> The study found that undocumented immigrants are paying a tax rate close to that of "taxpayers in similar income situations and, in many states, can be higher than the effective tax rates paid by upper income taxpayers."



### Unauthorized immigration is a criminal offense

Unauthorized immigration is not classified as criminal, it is a civil violation. Think jaywalking, not stealing.<sup>2</sup> Yet, as a civil violation, the punishment is deportation—imagine if the penalty for jaywalking was so severe.

### Immigrants get welfare and free food stamps

It is against the law for undocumented people to receive public assistance such as welfare and food stamps, and the government has to check the immigration status of everyone who applies.<sup>3</sup>

### Immigrants take all our jobs

The largest wave of immigration to the US since the 1900s coincided with our lowest unemployment rate and fastest economic growth.<sup>2</sup> Their labor actually created more jobs as new businesses were able to start at a higher rate than ever.

### Immigration reform will explode the national debt

Immigration reform will actually help grow the national economy, potentially by as much as \$329 billion over the next decade or so.<sup>4</sup> That means more jobs and more customers for businesses.

#### Footnotes:

1. <http://thinkprogress.org/immigration/2014/04/15/3426680/tax-day-undocumented-immigrants-pay-taxes/>

2. <http://www.seiu.org/a/immigration/they-take-our-jobs-debunking-immigration-myths.php>

3. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2013/05/29/addressing-and-discrediting-7-major-myths-about-immigration/>

4. <http://fusion.net/american-dream/story/study-dreamers-add-329-billion-economy-11216>

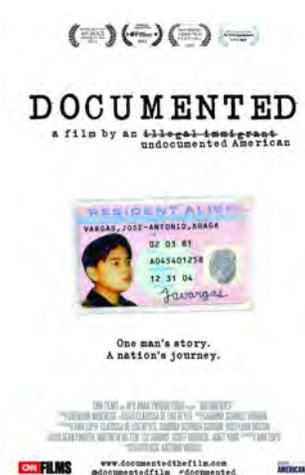
5. <http://www.csmonitor.com/Photo-Galleries/Infographics/10-Immigration-myths-debunked>



## Documentaries to Watch



*Which Way Home* focuses almost exclusively on interviews with the train-hopping children, who range in age from roughly 8 to 18, makes this documentary touching and effective. One gets a more well-rounded impression of the socioeconomic problem here; for every feeling of liberation the children experience, there are dangers lurking around the corner. While *Which Way Home* chronicles a problem that demands attention, it does so in a touching manner, leaving its star characters' dignities intact as they confess their motivations, namely devout family loyalty.



Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Jose Antonio Vargas began working on *Documented* shortly before "outing" himself as undocumented. Vargas has traveled around the United States, telling his story in solidarity with the more than 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the country. As he connected with others -- particularly those who, like Vargas, came to the United States as children -- his personal reflections compelled him to reconnect with his mother, whom he had not seen in 20 years.

Watch on YouTube:

<http://tinyurl.com/documented-cnn>



*The Invisibles*, a film by Marc Silver & Gael García Bernal, gives a peek into the hidden world of the immigrant journey. Every year, ten of thousands of women, men and children travel through Mexico without legal permission. As "invisible" migrants they head for the US border in the hope of finding a new life far from poverty they've left behind. Their journey is one of the most dangerous in the world.

Watch on YouTube:

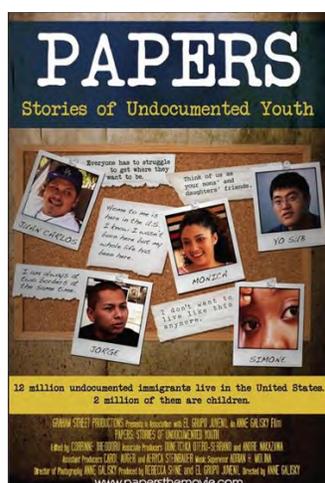
<http://tinyurl.com/the-invisibles-playlist>

## Documentaries to Watch



***The Dream is Now* is a compelling 30-minute documentary by Academy Award-winning director Davis Guggenheim (Waiting for 'Superman', An Inconvenient Truth).** It gives voice to and puts a human face on the undocumented children of immigrants who are desperate to earn their citizenship and give back to the only country they've ever called "home."

Both moving and thought-provoking, *The Dream is Now* brings this pressing issue to America's attention, where we can all debate, discuss, and decide for ourselves what is right, what is fair, and what is best for our nation.



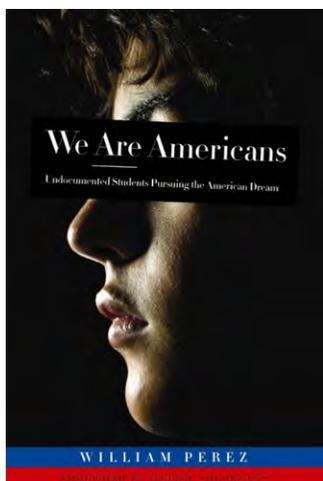
***Papers* is the story of undocumented youth and the challenges they face as they turn 18 without legal status.**

There are approximately 2 million undocumented children who were born outside the U.S. and raised in this country. 65,000 undocumented students graduate every year from high school without "papers." It is against the law to work or drive. It is difficult, if not impossible in some states, to attend college. They live at risk of arrest, detention and deportation to countries they may not even remember.



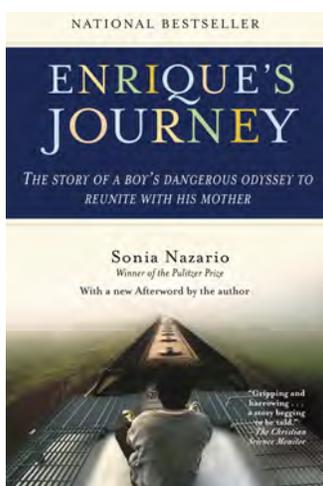
**Every year there are more than 400,000 American children who are torn away from their friends, schools and homes to pick the food we all eat.** Zulema, Perla and Victor labor as migrant farm workers, sacrificing their own childhoods to help their families survive. ***THE HARVEST/LA COSECHA*** profiles these three as they journey from the scorching heat of Texas onion fields to the winter snows of the Michigan apple orchards and back south to the humidity of Florida's tomato fields to follow the harvest. This award-winning documentary provides an intimate glimpse into the lives of these children who struggle to dream while working 12 hours a day, 7 days a week to feed America.

## Readings



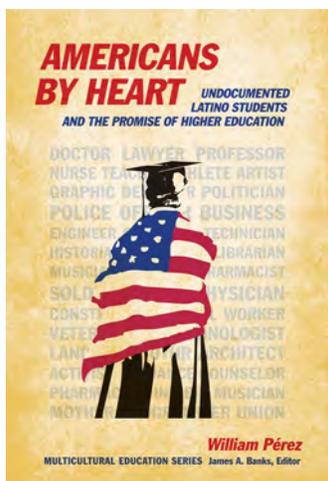
### **We Are Americans: Undocumented Students Pursuing the American Dream**

About 2.4 million children and young adults under 24 years of age are undocumented. Brought by their parents to the US as minors, they account for about one-sixth of the total undocumented population. Illegal through no fault of their own, 65,000 undocumented students graduate from the nation's high schools each year. They cannot get a legal job, and face enormous barriers trying to enter college to better themselves. What future do they have? And what should we be doing?



### **Enrique's Journey**

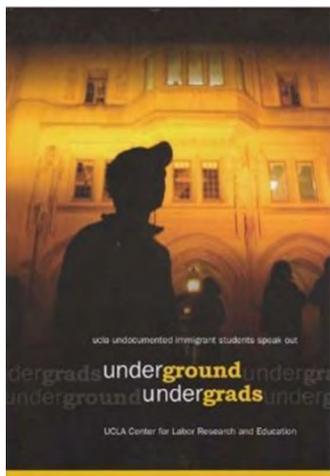
In this astonishing true story, award-winning journalist Sonia Nazario recounts the unforgettable odyssey of a Honduran boy who braves unimaginable hardship and peril to reach his mother in the United States. When Enrique is five years old, his mother, Lourdes, too poor to feed her children, leaves Honduras to work in the United States. After eleven years apart, he decides he will go find her. Enrique's Journey is the timeless story of families torn apart, the yearning to be together again, and a boy who will risk his life to find the mother he loves.



### **Americans By Heart: Undocumented Latino Students and the Promise of Higher Education**

Examine the plight of undocumented students as they navigate the legal tightrope presented by their status. This compelling account brings to light the hard work of these students and their families; their commitment to education; and their deep sense of uncertainty and marginality. The author presents a new framework for policies that recognizes the potential of undocumented students and links their situation to larger social and policy issues of immigration reform and higher education access.

## Readings



### **Underground Undergrads**

This student publication, *Underground Undergrads*, features the growing student movement around access to higher education for undocumented students. Written by the students themselves, these stories provide the focal point of *Underground Undergrads*. The stories are unique and diverse, but they all demonstrate the pain, financial hardship, and emotional distress these students face as well as their ultimate triumph when they graduate from UCLA. It also provides a summary of the history of legislation impacting undocumented students in higher education.



### **PolitiFact.com**

PolitiFact.com is a project operated by the Tampa Bay Times, in which reporters and editors from the Times and affiliated media outlets "fact-check statements by members of Congress, the White House, lobbyists and interest groups". They publish original statements and their evaluations on the PolitiFact.com website, and assign each a "Truth-O-Meter" rating. They often have resources for better understanding statements from pundits.

### **PolitiFact on Immigration:**

<http://tinyurl.com/politfact-immigration>

### **History of Immigration Readings**

Some good resources to get a better understanding of immigration policies throughout American history, check out

- History.com: U.S. IMMIGRATION BEFORE 1965  
<http://tinyurl.com/pre-1965>
- Harvard Immigration Timeline  
<http://tinyurl.com/harvard-timeline>
- Immigration Policy Center's History of Immigration  
<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/issues/history>

# PREFLECTION QUESTIONS

When you think of poverty what comes to mind?

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What do you expect Apopka to look like/smell like/feel like?

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What do you think of when you hear the word "community?"

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What do you think are significant stereotypes about immigrants?

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Describe your own community: the people, environment, and culture.

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How do you understand service?

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# FIND OUT MORE

## Resources

### iCitizen



Contacting your representative has an app! The iCitizen App tracks your elected officials and the issues you care about.

Download the app or visit the website <http://www.icitizen.com>



### US Citizenship and Immigration Services



The USCIS has a history of immigration law and policy in the United States that gives more details on the changing face of America. You can trace the changes in policy stemming from economics, racism, and international pressures over time.

<http://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/our-history/agency-history/early-american-immigration-policies>

### Other Resources

- The Bridge Project  
<http://www.americanbridgeproject.org>
- Reform immigration for America  
<http://www.americanbridgeproject.org>
- FWD  
<http://www.fwd.us>
- Presente  
<http://presente.org>
- Cuentame  
<http://www.mycuentame.org>
- National Immigration Law Center  
<http://nilc.org>
- America's Voice  
<http://americasvoiceonline.org>
- United We Dream  
<http://unitedwedream.org>
- People in Community Organizing  
<http://www.piconetwork.org>
- Immigration Policy  
<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org>
- Border Inc.  
<http://www.borderinc.org>
- Justice for Immigrants  
<http://justiceforimmigrants.org>
- FLIC  
<http://floridaimmigrant.org>
- Network: a Catholic Social Justice Lobby  
<http://networklobby.org>
- Interfaith Immigration Coalition  
<http://interfaithimmigration.org>

# EXAMPLE OF POSSIBLE SCHEDULE

## WELCOME DAY

12:00-5:00PM

### Hope Ritual

Share the mission and story of Hope Community Center and our context: the people, the work, the community, and the culture.

### Icebreaker

Share your own story!

5:00-5:30PM

Review Purpose and Plans for the Weekend

5:30-6:30PM

Introduction and Dinner With Host Families

## SAMPLE DAY

*Breakfast at Homestays*

7:30AM

Arrive at HCC to Transit to Fields

8:00AM- 2:00PM

Fieldwork (bring lunch with you)

2:00-2:30PM

Travel back to HCC

2:30-3:30PM

Team reflection on working the fields

3:30-5:00PM

Tour of Local Reality

5:00-6:00PM

Drive to Homestays for Dinner

## CLOSING DAY

*Breakfast at Homestays*

7:30AM

Arrive at HCC to Transit to Fields

8:00AM-12:00PM

Fieldwork

12:00-12:30PM

Travel Back to HCC

12:30-1:00PM

Lunch at HCC (Packed at home)

1:00-2:30PM

### Service is not Helping or Fixing

Our concept of Service Learning

2:30-3:30PM

### Bring Hope Home

Actions you can take back home to be in solidarity

3:30-4:00PM

Trip Evaluation and Feedback

5:00-6:00PM

Closing Ceremony