

A young man in a graduation gown is shouting with his fist raised, surrounded by other graduates at a ceremony. The image is overlaid with a dark blue tint.

Freedom University

**Empowering undocumented youth
and fulfilling their human right to
education.**



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WHO WE ARE

Freedom University is a modern-day freedom school based in Atlanta. We provide rigorous college preparation classes, college and scholarship application assistance, and leadership development for undocumented students in Georgia.

HISTORY

Freedom University opened its doors in 2011 following the passage of Georgia Board of Regents Policy 4.1.6, which bans undocumented youth from attending Georgia's top public universities, and Policy 4.3.4, which bans undocumented students from in-state tuition. While more than 20 states allow undocumented students to attend public universities or qualify for in-state tuition, Georgia is the only state in the country to ban students both from select universities and from in-state tuition. These policies effectively target and exclude undocumented students and usher in a modern era of educational segregation in the U.S. South.

Since the 2016 election, Freedom University has taken a leadership role in the national sanctuary campus movement, and has expanded its work to host community Know Your Rights trainings and organize trusted networks of pro-bono mental health and legal services for undocumented students.

CORE BELIEFS

We believe that all human beings – regardless of race, ethnicity, class, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or citizenship status – have a right to education. We uphold Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that everyone has the right to education and that higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

We believe that human rights are universal, inalienable, and interdependent. Regardless of where people are born or what borders they may cross, human beings have rights by virtue of their humanity that can never be taken away. Because human rights are interdependent, we believe that our movements for human dignity are interdependent as well. As such, Freedom University partners with human rights organizations working to advance racial justice, gender equality, workers' rights, indigenous rights, and freedom in all its forms.

OUR STUDENTS & FACULTY

Freedom University accepts students ages 16-25 who identify as undocumented youth. We welcome fully undocumented students, students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and survivors of human trafficking. Our students come from Mexico, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, West Africa, India, and Eastern Europe. Our only requirement for admission is that students commit to believing in themselves, supporting their undocumented peers, and never giving up on their dream of higher education.

Our faculty members are fully committed to providing undocumented students high quality academic courses that prepare them for admission to selective universities. Our faculty members are full-time faculty at Emory University, Morehouse College, Georgia State University, and Georgia Tech, and volunteer their time at Freedom U to teach rigorous courses in human rights, social sciences, biological sciences, language arts, and creative arts. Our educational programs provide leadership development, public engagement opportunities, and movement skill-building to empower a new generation of undocumented youth leaders.

STRATEGY

Georgia is recognized globally as a historic epicenter in the struggle for human rights. Georgia is home to two Nobel Peace Prize Laureates - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Jimmy Carter - and the cradle of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. In this tradition, Freedom University works actively with students, educators, supporters, policy makers, and other social justice stakeholders to advance the rights of undocumented youth in Georgia and across the country. Our strategy is

multidimensional, participatory, and highly disciplined. Our strategy involves:

1. Creative non-violent civil disobedience that highlights modern segregation and pressures the Georgia Board of Regents to repeal Policies 4.1.6 and 4.3.4
2. Campaigns with documented student allies to secure fair admissions and sanctuary policies at private universities across the country
3. Legal action at the federal level that seeks remedy for violations of undocumented students' right to equal protection under the law
4. International human rights advocacy that involves coordination with international legal mechanisms and the United Nations system

Through strategic direct actions, policy campaigns, and local, national, and international partnerships, we are changing college admissions policies and transforming the public debate on the human right to higher education.

SUCCESS

As a result of our work, one out of every four Freedom University students wins a full merit scholarship to college. Our graduates are now students at colleges such as Dartmouth College, Smith College, Emory University, Middlebury College, Berea College, Tougaloo College, and many others. As a result of our collaboration with the Freedom at Emory Initiative, Emory announced in April 2015 that it would accept qualified undocumented students and provide privately funded, need-based financial aid to those who qualify. We are building a powerful student movement that will win fair admissions policies across the country and give rise to a new generation of movement leaders.

GET INVOLVED

Because we do not charge our students tuition of any kind, our sustainability relies on the generosity of friends and donors around the world: To donate, volunteer, or learn more about our work, please visit:

www.freedom-university.org