

**Itzel Perez is a current FCNL Advocacy Corps member from the 2017-2018 class working with her community to help build support for Congress to act to mitigate the effects of climate disruption on U.S. and global communities.**

Itzel Perez was born and raised in Puebla, Mexico, at the age ten her family immigrated to the United States in search of better opportunities. For the past 14 years she has lived in New Jersey and has become an active community advocate and volunteer. Every week she tutors at her local library, helping Americans learn the necessary technological skill to get back into the workforce. She also helps her local homeless shelter providing meals for those in need.

Receiving DACA also allowed her to get a driver's license and pay her taxes, but most importantly it allowed her to work and pay her way through college. Like many other undocumented youth, she dreamed of becoming the first in her family to fulfill her education. Despite working four jobs while attending school full time, funding for college was still an issue. DACA allowed her to pursue new scholarship opportunities, ultimately allowing her to achieve what once seemed impossible. This past May, she graduated summa cum laude, earning a dual Bachelor's of Science in National Security Studies & Political Science as well as a dual minor in Pre-Law and Psychology. Her dream is to be able to work for the F.B.I on counter terrorism and cybersecurity, to protect and serve the country that has she loves and given her so many opportunities.

Itzel started working with FCNL in August of this year as an Advocacy Corps Organizer, with the goal of creating long term meaningful bipartisan solution on Climate Change legislation. She carries out her work in Rep. Chris Smith's district and empowers citizens to lobby their representatives on the issues that matter to them.

With the termination of DACA, Itzel, like many others, had to put her career goals on hold, unsure of what the future holds for not only her but her family, friends and community. Today, along with the 11 million undocumented immigrants and countless allies, Dreamers demand action from Congress to protect families and communities from living in fear and being torn apart.