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Quinn announces 7 members of Dream Fund Commission to raise immigration scholarship money

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CHICAGO (AP) — Gov. Pat Quinn on Saturday named a diverse group of educators and community leaders to serve on a state commission that will raise scholarship money for college-bound students from immigrant families.

Quinn announced the seven members of the Illinois DREAM Fund Commission at a rally hosted by the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights.

The commission will create a not-for-profit entity to raise money for immigrant students, in addition to choosing recipients and publicizing the program.

Rigorous fundraising must take place before any scholarships can be awarded, officials said.

"We have to tap the resources of people who understand that an investment in our kids is an investment in the future of this country," said commission member Ronald Perlman, president of a professional development services organization.

Other commissioners include Tanya Cabrera, associate director of minority student outreach at Illinois Institute of Technology, Nam H. Paik, part at the Baker and McKenzie law firm, and Moises Zavala, director of organizing at United Food and Commercial Workers Local (hash)881.

The Illinois Dream Act, signed into law last year, created a privately funded scholarship program for high school graduates from immigrant families.

"It's all about making sure that folks who have the opportunity to go to college have the finances to go to college," Quinn said.

The governor also made a \$1,000 pledge to the Dream Fund, saying the state has to get the Dream Act going.

Several Illinois officials were on hand for Quinn's announcement, including U.S. Reps. Luis Guterrez and Jan Schakowsky.

"Maybe at the federal level we failed, but you give us hope at the state level by passing the

Dream Act here in Illinois," Gutierrez said.

Hundreds attending the rally at Malcolm X College cheered when Juan, a 14-year-old high school student, addressed the crowd saying, "I am undocumented, I am un-afraid and I want to go to college."

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