

Detroit high school student, on brink of graduating, deported to Colombia

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Maykol Bogoya-Duarte, a senior at Western International High School in Detroit, has been deported to Colombia by the Trump administration. A June 12 post on the Facebook page of the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center reads: “We are deeply saddened to report that our young client Maykol was deported yesterday. His flight left approximately 3 hours after his stay was denied. Instead of being able to complete his education, Maykol was abruptly removed from his family and friends. These are the real life and heartbreaking consequences of the policies of this administration.”

Bogoya-Duarte, who arrived from Colombia in 2022, was pulled over by police on May 20 while driving to a school field trip. After he was unable to present a driver’s license due to Michigan law, and had difficulty communicating in English, officers called Border Patrol, who confirmed his undocumented status and a final deportation order from 2024. Despite being just 3.5 credits shy of graduation and having complied with the removal order—even working with ICE and the Colombian consulate to prepare for departure—Maykol was detained and transferred to Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (Chippewa County) and later transferred to Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center in Louisiana.

Before the stop, Maykol and his mother had been complying with ICE and Colombian consulate officials to obtain travel documents and plan a voluntary return to Colombia—intending to wait until he finished high school since he was only 3.5 credits from graduation on May 31, just 11 days after he was arrested.

Maykol was held at the Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center in Louisiana, a common departure point for deportation flights. His legal team filed for bond release and a temporary stay of removal to allow him to finish school, but ICE denied both requests on June 11. On June 12, Maykol was deported, just hours after his stay

was denied, abruptly removing him from his family, friends and the opportunity to complete his education.

On Sunday, June 8, ICE notified him that he would be moved and that his deportation was imminent, according to attorney Ruby Robinson.

On Monday, June 9, Robinson filed a request with the Detroit ICE office for a stay of removal so Maykol could finish his high school credits. By June 9, Maykol was confirmed to be at Pine Prairie, heightening concerns that his deportation was imminent.

According to the *Detroit Free Press*, Maykol’s attorney confirmed his deportation to them on June 20.

Maykol arrived in Colombia sick, hungry and distraught, according to his attorney. She also described him as unshowered for over a week and suffering from flu-like symptoms.

In a similar case in Boston, ICE released a high school student, Marcelo Gomes da Silva, 18 who was arrested on May 31 in a Boston suburb on his way to volleyball practice.

Marcelo Gomes da Silva came to the US from Brazil at age 7, and had little understanding of his own immigration status until his arrest, highlighting the confusion that many young immigrants face when confronted with legal realities far beyond their control.

During his six days in detention, Gomes da Silva endured harsh and dehumanizing conditions faced by detainees. He was confined in a windowless room with up to 35 men, many twice his age, and he was denied basic comforts such as privacy, showers and adequate food—sometimes receiving only crackers to share with his cellmates. He described the experience as “humiliating” and wore a bracelet made from the metallic blanket he was given to sleep on the cement floor. Gomes da Silva comforted fellow detainees who did not speak English and were unaware that they were

being deported, many of whom broke down while incarcerated.

The working class must take action to force a stop to Trump's immigration gestapo, which is a key part of his broader strategy to build a dictatorship in the United States. This was shown by the deployment of Marines and National Guard troops to the streets of Los Angeles in response to largely peaceful protests, denouncing immigrants and their supporters as an "invasion." Mass outrage contributed to the massive turnout in nationwide protests on June 14, by some estimates the largest in American history.

But the fight to stop deportations must be rooted in the industrial and political mobilization of the international working class. This requires workers take action themselves. Not a single major trade union, including the AFT and the Teamsters, has called for any real action—such as strikes or protests—in defense of immigrant rights.

To that end, workers, students and community members must build **independent rank-and-file committees** in every school, workplace and neighborhood. These democratic structures, united through the **International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC)**, must take up the following immediate tasks:

- **Organize emergency meetings** in schools, hospitals and workplaces to expose the full extent of immigration repression.

- **Plan for a general strike** to unite workers—immigrant and native-born alike—against deportations, police violence, and economic exploitation.

- **Expand the movement internationally**, linking struggles in the US with those of workers worldwide.

Workers must not rely on toothless appeals or performative resolutions, which is the position put forward by groups like the People's Assembly, By Any Means Necessary and the National Action Network.

Particularly notable at the last school board meeting for the Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) held on June 10, was the performance of board member Sherry Gay-Dagnogo, a former teacher and state representative who markets herself as a defender of education. She did not raise any objection to Maykol's incarceration. After an hour of public comments appealing to the school board to pass a

resolution opposing his imminent deportation, the board recessed and Vice President LaTrice McClendon presented the resolution, which the board passed unanimously.

But the resolution itself—vague and symbolic—did nothing to address the broader political complicity of the Democratic Party in the ongoing wave of deportations. Its language, calling for an "immediate stay" and describing Maykol as "part of the DPSCD family," read more like a public relations statement than an act of resistance. It functioned as political cover, not as a meaningful challenge to the state's brutal immigration apparatus, particularly since the deportation machinery had already been set in motion.

Introduced at 10 p.m. by McClendon, the resolution read in part: "The DPSCD Board of Education stands firmly with our community in demanding an immediate stay of deportation ... We want him to complete his coursework and graduate with his high school diploma just as he has worked so very hard to do." Bogoya-Duarte was deported the next day.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) Michigan President Terrence Martin were also conspicuously silent in the early weeks of the incident. It was not until the "No Kings" demonstration in Clark Park on June 14 that Martin issued a public statement—an action of performative damage-control. Similarly, Rep. Rashida Tlaib only released a statement on June 14.

What is required instead is an uncompromising offensive against the capitalist system and the political parties that serve it.



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