



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS Announces 2010 Grant Recipients and New Citizenship Resource Center on Constitution Day and Citizenship Day

WASHINGTON—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced nearly \$8 million in grants for community-based organizations, unveiled a new Web-based Citizenship Resource Center, and discussed citizenship research and immigrant integration at a special Constitution Day and Citizenship Day conference.

“The 2010 expanded citizenship and integration grant program and the new Web-based Citizenship Resource Center provide much-needed support for citizenship services in communities across America,” said USCIS Director Alejandro Mayorkas. “By supporting the integration of those on the path to citizenship, we are able to send a welcoming message to those who aspire to become U.S. citizens, and at the same time proactively foster an increased understanding of the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship that are so foundational to our experience as Americans.”

Seventy-five organizations from 27 states and the District of Columbia will receive a total of \$7.8 million in federal grant funding to promote citizenship education and immigrant integration in communities across the country. The [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2010 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program](#) includes two competitive funding opportunities. The first grant program strengthens locally based citizenship education programs and expands naturalization services. The second grant program increases the capacity of national, regional and statewide organizations to offer new citizenship services through their members or affiliates in communities across America.

This year’s program represents a significant increase in funding over the previous year. In 2009, USCIS awarded 13 organizations a total of \$1.2 million to expand citizenship preparation programs.

In addition to the grant program announcement, USCIS officially launched the [Citizenship Resource Center](#)—a Web-based portal that centralizes citizenship resources for immigrants, educators and organizations. This free, easy-to-use website will help users better understand the naturalization process and gain the necessary skills to be successful during the naturalization interview and test.

The Citizenship Resource Center will include podcasts and interactive learning activities for applicants, links to an expanded [America’s Literacy Directory](#) with a new online citizenship class search function, and lesson plans and teaching tools for citizenship instructors.

The [Promoting Citizenship and Immigrant Integration Conference](#) is part of USCIS’s

celebration of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, celebrated every Sept. 17 in remembrance of the signing of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. Since 1952, Citizenship Day has been celebrated in conjunction with Constitution Day, although Congress first underscored the significance of U.S. citizenship in 1940, when it designated the third Sunday in May as “I Am an American Day.”

For additional information, please visit www.uscis.gov or view the grant announcement or immigrant integration initiative fact sheets.

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USCIS Immigrant Integration Initiatives Fact Sheet

Introduction

As part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act (Public Law 111-83), Congress provided \$11 million to enhance U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS's) immigrant integration initiatives. This funding will bolster the Citizenship and Integration Grant Program and support additional initiatives for aspiring citizens, immigrant-serving organizations and citizenship instructors. These initiatives include:

- An expanded **Citizenship and Integration Grant Program** to support citizenship education and preparation programs for lawful permanent residents (LPRs)
- **Improved Web-based resources** to help immigrants, educators and immigrant-serving organizations—including a new, one-stop [Citizenship Resource Center](#) and the expansion of [America's Literacy Directory](#) to include an online citizenship class search function and new program offerings
- A national public awareness and education initiative to emphasize the rights, responsibilities and importance of U.S. citizenship.

Citizenship and Integration Grant Program

On Sept. 17, 2010, USCIS announced federal funding for 75 organizations to support citizenship education and preparation programs for LPRs. This funding will build capacity in communities to meet the increasing demand for citizenship services, including civics-based English classes, and support those on the path toward U.S. citizenship.

This competitive funding opportunity provides approximately \$7.8 million through two separate grant programs. The Direct Services Grant Program will fund locally based citizenship preparation programs and allow recipient organizations to expand services. The National Capacity Building Grant Program will increase the capacity of national, regional and statewide organizations to offer new citizenship services through their members or affiliates in communities needing citizenship resources.

Funded programs aim to improve English language skills, provide education in U.S. history and government (civics), and prepare immigrants for the naturalization application and interview process. The 75 recipient organizations, along with their partner organizations, represent a wide variety of program types including immigrant-serving organizations, community and faith-based groups, public schools, adult education programs, community colleges and public libraries. The period of performance for these awards is between one and two years.

The FY 2010 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program represents a significant increase in funding over the previous year. In FY 2009, USCIS awarded 13 organizations a total of \$1.2 million to expand citizenship preparation programs.

Improved Web-based Resources

USCIS is committed to making the naturalization process more meaningful and transparent for all applicants. Providing accurate and easily understandable information is the first step

toward achieving this goal. In an effort to provide learners, teachers and immigrant-serving organizations with a one-stop resource for citizenship information and educational materials, USCIS developed the [Citizenship Resource Center](#). This free, easy-to-use website will help users better understand the citizenship process and gain the necessary skills required to be successful during the naturalization interview and test.

- Aspiring citizens visiting the website will be able to:
 - Learn about the naturalization process and testing requirements in clear language
 - Locate appropriate test preparation materials
 - Access interactive learning activities and multimedia resources
 - Search for upcoming citizenship and naturalization-related events
- Educators visiting the website will be able to:
 - Learn about the naturalization process and testing requirements
 - Locate appropriate citizenship-focused teaching materials
 - Access multimedia resources to supplement classroom instruction
 - Identify free training and professional development opportunities
- Organizations visiting the website will be able to:
 - Find information on USCIS grant programs and technical resources
 - Locate grant application opportunities and program development content
 - Browse success stories and promising practices for citizenship preparation from current and former USCIS grant recipients

The Citizenship Resource Center was designed on a platform that can be improved over time and easily expanded to meet evolving needs. In the upcoming months, USCIS plans to

introduce:

- Interactive learning activities to help applicants prepare for the English and civics portions of the naturalization test
- An online training course to help volunteer instructors learn basic strategies for teaching English and citizenship; and
- Short lesson plans and teaching tools for citizenship instructors.

Recognizing the continued demand for English language and citizenship instruction, USCIS partnered with the U.S. Department of Education to enhance the Web-based America's [Literacy Directory](#) to include a prominent citizenship class search function and an expanded list of program offerings. Through this joint effort, approximately 1,000 new citizenship programs have been added to the zip code searchable database.

National Public Awareness and Education Initiative

In spring 2011, USCIS plans to implement a national initiative to raise awareness about the rights, responsibilities, and importance of U.S. citizenship and the free educational tools and resources available to help eligible LPRs prepare for citizenship. The initiative seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

- Increase awareness of the rights, responsibilities and importance of U.S. citizenship among LPRs
- Increase understanding of the naturalization process and eligibility requirements among LPRs
- Increase awareness of available citizenship preparation resources among LPRs and immigrant-serving organizations
- Establish the Citizenship Resource Center as the preeminent location for identifying and utilizing citizenship preparation materials

For more information on the FY 2010 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program, please visit www.uscis.gov/grants.

To learn more about the Citizenship Resource Center, please visit www.uscis.gov/citizenship.

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