



Fact Sheet

Sept. 17, 2009

USCIS Selects Recipients for the FY 2009 Citizenship Grant Program

\$1.2 Million in Awards to Expand the Number of Citizenship Preparation Programs for LPRs

Introduction

On Sept. 17, 2009, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that 13 organizations have been selected to receive federal funding to support citizenship preparation programs for legal permanent residents (LPRs). This funding will also expand outreach on U.S. citizenship, rights and responsibilities, and available educational opportunities and resources.

Background

Through the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2009 (Public Law 110-329), Congress created the Fiscal Year 2009 Citizenship Grant Program. This competitive grant program provides approximately \$1.2 million in federal funding to support citizenship preparation programs for legal permanent residents (LPRs).

USCIS, through a published review process, will provide funding to selected community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve one or more *priority immigrant groups* in areas of the United States that contain a large representation of the country's immigrant population. The funding will be used to expand the number of people served by programs that assist LPRs improve English language skills, gain knowledge of U.S. history and government (civics), and prepare for the naturalization application and interview process.

The funds may only be used to provide direct services to immigrants with legal status in the United States. Specific services to be provided include, but are not limited to, the following:

- English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language (EL)/Civics instruction;
- Citizenship education;
- Educational resources (textbooks, language software, computers, etc);
- Naturalization preparation assistance (including case management); and
- Citizenship-focused community outreach and staff/volunteer training.

Priority Immigrant Groups

Eligible CBOs that submitted proposals addressed how their program will serve one or more of the following *priority immigrant groups*:

- LPRs 65 years or older who are eligible, or soon to be eligible, to apply for naturalization;
- Refugees or asylees who have adjusted to LPR status and are eligible, or soon to be eligible, to apply for naturalization;
- Those persons who have adjusted to LPR status under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), U or T-Visa, or Special Immigrant Juvenile Visa status and are eligible, or soon to be eligible, to apply for naturalization; and
- Other disadvantaged groups as defined and justified by the proposing organization.

Review Process

USCIS conducted a thorough review of more than 290 eligible applications.

- Proposals were evaluated by a team of USCIS reviewers from across the agency over two rounds of technical review.
- Applications were scored numerically using published selection criteria and rank ordered.
- An internal review panel, led by the USCIS Office of Citizenship, then determined the finalists.

USCIS is awarding grants to the 13 highest-ranking applications.

- Each applicant could request up to \$100,000.
- Several finalists requested less than \$100,000, allowing for a 13th award.
- A representative from each of the 13 organizations will participate in an orientation session in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 30, 2009.

Recipient Information

The 13 selected recipients, 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; legal associations; public libraries; and community colleges. The period of performance for each of these awards is one year. The selected recipients are as follows:

ORGANIZATION

- Association House of Chicago
- Catholic Charities of Dallas, Inc.
- Central American Resource Center, Los Angeles
- Federation Employment and Guidance Service, Inc.
- International Institute of St. Louis
- International Rescue Committee, Inc.
- Jewish Family and Children’s Services
- Jewish Vocational Service of MetroWest, Inc.
- Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas
- OneAmerica
- Progreso Latino
- Saint Mark Roman Catholic Parish
- Young Women’s Christian Association of Tulsa, OK

LOCATION

- Chicago, Ill.
- Dallas, Texas
- Los Angeles, Calif.
- New York, N.Y.
- St. Louis, Mo.
- San Diego, Calif.
- San Francisco, Calif.
- East Orange, N.J.
- Raleigh, N.C.
- Seattle, Wash.
- Central Falls, R.I.
- Dorchester, Mass.
- Tulsa, Okla.

Recipient organizations are geographically diverse and represent both traditional immigrant destinations and new immigrant gateways in 11 states. Funding will provide services to immigrants from more than 30 different countries representing Asia, Africa, South and Central America, Europe, and North America. Specifically, grantees represent:

- Seven of the top 10 states with the highest foreign-born population (California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Texas and Washington);
- Five of the top 10 metro areas with the highest foreign-born population (Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco);
- Four of the top 10 metro areas with the highest proportion of foreign-born (Los Angeles, New York, San Diego and San Francisco); and
- Three of the top 15 states that have seen the fastest growth in their foreign-born population since 2000 (Missouri, North Carolina and Oklahoma).

Contact Information

For additional information on the FY 2009 Citizenship Grant Program, please contact the USCIS Office of Citizenship at (202) 272-1310 or by e-mail at citizenshipgrantprogram@dhs.gov. To learn more about applying for federal funding opportunities, please visit <http://www.grants.gov/> or contact the **Grants.gov** support line at 1 (800) 518-4726.