



October 22, 2004

# Press Release

## **USCIS DIRECTOR CELEBRATES CHILD CITIZENSHIP ACT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

*More than 11,500 Citizenship Certificates Issued Since January*

Buffalo, NY – Today, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Director Eduardo Aguirre celebrated the citizenship of 40 adopted children and honored the success of the Child Citizenship Act Project (CCAP) during a ceremony held at the Buffalo District office. The event comes in advance of the 14<sup>th</sup> annual National Adoption Month in November, which celebrates adoption as a positive way to build families.

Since January 2004, more than 11,500 Certificates of Citizenship have been issued by the CCAP, which is based at the Buffalo USCIS office. Children adopted overseas by U.S. citizens and admitted into the U.S. in the IR-3 category automatically receive a Certificate of Citizenship within 45 days of their admission. The IR-3 visa accounts for approximately seventy percent of children adopted by U.S. citizens, and is used for cases where adoptions are made final overseas.

“In making this program change last year, we sought to simplify the process for establishing the citizenship of children adopted abroad,” said Director Aguirre. “The results have been overwhelming, and thousands of orphaned children have been welcomed into loving homes as U.S. citizens.”

In November 2003, USCIS created the Child Citizenship Act Project to streamline the process by which parents obtain a Certificate of Citizenship for their children. The program eliminated the backlog of N-643 forms, and since January 1, 2004, automatically provides Certificates of Citizenship to certain adopted children within 45 days of their entry into the United States.

The Child Citizenship Act of 2000 amended Section 320 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, sanctioning automatic citizenship for certain children upon entry into the U.S., or upon adjustment of status to that of a Lawful Permanent Resident. At the time of enactment, the status of thousands of adopted children in the U.S. changed from Lawful Permanent Resident to United States Citizen.

– USCIS –

On March 1, 2003, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services became one of three legacy INS components to join the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. USCIS is charged with fundamentally transforming and improving the delivery of immigration and citizenship services, while enhancing our nation's security.