



## A MESSAGE FROM USCIS DIRECTOR EMILIO GONZÁLEZ

On January 28, 2008, senior USCIS Leadership joined me in welcoming the first group of students to attend BASIC Training at the USCIS Academy Training Center in Dallas, TX. Together, we congratulated the class of 48 students for being selected amongst an intensely competitive applicant pool and underscored the agency's commitment to investing in their professional development.

In my remarks to the class, I spoke to the importance of creating a first-class officer corps that is prepared to enter the USCIS workforce upon completion of the BASIC program. The two temporary USCIS training facilities located in Dallas offer the increased capacity to train more new hires than was before possible, while greatly enhancing flexibility and accessibility. BASIC Class #803 is made up of 48 students from across the agency, representing every Service Center, 12 of the 26 domestic district offices, the National Benefits Center and HQ components.

The goal of the BASIC Training curriculum—newly restructured as a 9-week program that includes a new hire orientation, classroom instruction, and a hands-on practicum—is to create a world-class Immigration Officer Corps. The core learning objectives of the Academy's programs are to build immigration expertise, foster a culture that honors public service, emphasize the significance of national security and public safety, underscore the human consequence involved in every USCIS decision, and cultivate the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct.

Over the course of 2008, the USCIS Academy will welcome more than 1,500 new Immigration Officers to the agency who will be brought onboard to address the increase in the number of applications and petitions filed by individuals seeking immigration benefits. USCIS has significantly expanded its capacity to train a high volume of new Immigration Officers. Beginning in March, USCIS will be offering supervisory training classes in a third facility located near Dulles Airport in Virginia.

It takes years to train, develop and grow into an experienced immigration officer. USCIS employees perform a unique function within the federal government that cannot be automated, outsourced or contracted to a private company. Our experience is invaluable, our adjudicators are irreplaceable. People like me come and go, as I serve at the pleasure of the President, but the real responsibility rests with our employees, and their vigilance, hard work and tireless efforts to securely administer our immigration system.

## FEBRUARY 2008 “Securing America’s Promise”

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Director Gonzalez and members of BASIC Class #803

# NEWS YOU CAN USE...

## FROM [USCIS COMMUNICATIONS](#)



### [E-Verify Program Surpasses 52,000 Employers](#) - 02/12/2008

More than 52,000 employers have signed up to participate in E-Verify, the nation's employment authorization status verification program. The program has been growing by approximately 1,000 new employers each week since last October. See the [E-Verify Fact Sheet](#) for more information.

### [USCIS Announces Centralized Filing Location for Certain H-1B Cap Exempt Petitioners](#) - 01/30/2008

A new customer service initiative was launched to streamline the adjudication of H-1B petitions, employing a special unit dedicated to processing specific types of H-1B cap exempt petitions at the USCIS California Service Center. Aliens employed by defined educational, nonprofit or governmental organizations (normally referred to as "cap exempt,") and are not subject to the H-1B numerical limitations.

### [USCIS Announces New Guatemalan Adoption Legislation](#) - 01/25/2008

On Dec. 11, 2007, the Guatemalan Congress passed new adoption legislation toward meeting obligations under the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. The new legislation is intended to implement Hague requirements. All intercountry adoptions initiated in Guatemala on or after Dec. 31, 2007 are subject to new requirements to comply with the Hague Convention and the new Guatemalan legislation.

### [USCIS Announces Improvements For E-Verify Telephone Assistance](#) -01/08/2008

E-Verify has expanded the available hours for customers to reach program support by utilizing the [USCIS National Customer Service Center](#) (NCSC). Employers and others requesting information on E-Verify can contact the program through NCSC by calling the E-Verify program number at (888) 464-4218 from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., Monday-Friday, regardless from which time zone the call originates.

### [USCIS Holds White House Naturalization Ceremony](#) - 01/16/2008

USCIS Director Emilio Gonzalez welcomed 25 new citizens, including [six immigrant service members](#), during a special naturalization ceremony at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building in Washington, D.C., just steps from the White House. Director Gonzalez also presented four prominent, naturalized U.S. citizens with the "Outstanding American by Choice" certificate of recognition during the ceremony. Department of Homeland Security Acting Deputy Secretary Paul Schneider delivered remarks and other senior White House officials were present to congratulate both the new citizens and the honorees.



The four [Outstanding Americans by Choice](#), U.S. Congressman Albio Sires; U.S. Army Major General (retired), John L. Fugh; Department of Defense Scientist and Weapons Designer, Anh Duong; and Vice President of Walt Disney World Parks and Resorts, Duncan Wardle. Originally from Cuba, China, Vietnam, and the United Kingdom, respectively, they were acknowledged for their outstanding contributions in civic participation, professional achievement, and responsible citizenship, showing their commitment to this nation and the common civic values that unite all Americans.





# OUTSTANDING AMERICANS BY CHOICE

The [Outstanding American by Choice](#) initiative recognizes the achievements of naturalized U.S. citizens. Through civic participation, professional achievement, and responsible citizenship, recipients of this honor have demonstrated their commitment to the country and to the common civic values that unite us as Americans. Throughout the year, USCIS Director González will continue to recognize naturalized citizens who have made significant contributions to both their communities and adopted country.



## ANH DUONG

Anh N. Duong and her family came to the United States as refugees of war after the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. She and her relatives left the day Saigon fell by helicopter and were taken to a Vietnamese boat that met up with a U.S. ship. Each family member jumped one by one onto the U.S. ship in high seas.

Originally entering the U.S. through Pennsylvania, the First Baptist Church of Washington later sponsored her family and they moved to Maryland area. While her parents worked to start their lives from scratch, Anh entered 10th grade at Montgomery Blair High School in Maryland with a determination to excel, despite not speaking a word of English. She ended up in the top 3% of her high school class and went on to graduate Cum Laude with a degree in Chemical Engineering and Computer Science from the University of Maryland at College Park. Anh has also earned a master's degree in Public Administration from American University.

The United States of America



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Whereas the United States of America was established through the collective efforts and perseverance of immigrants from various seas and far, and the establishment of naturalized citizens further strengthens the character of our great Nation. Let it be known this day that we recognize

our Outstanding American by Choice.

Through naturalization, immigrants fully embrace the values and ideals that define our national identity and also accept the fundamental responsibilities and duties inherent to citizenship. Therefore, it is important to recognize the significant contributions that naturalized Americans have made to their communities and their country through civic participation, professional achievement and responsible citizenship.

You made my land and the land of the Department of Homeland Security a better official place at the City of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year of our Lord one thousand \_\_\_\_\_ and of the Independence of the United States the \_\_\_\_\_ hundred \_\_\_\_\_.



The Outstanding American by Choice Certificate

A career civil servant, Anh has spent her entire career of 23 years to date working for the U.S. Navy. Before assuming her current position, Anh was responsible for Navy explosives research and development efforts. In the past decade, Anh successfully led the design and development of 18 different Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps explosive weapons. This accomplishment was cited in her receipt of the Dr. Arthur Bisson Prize for Naval Technology Achievement in 2000.

Anh gained praise from her peers in the Defense community for her role in the development of thermobaric weapons and the design of thermobaric explosives used by U.S. and coalition forces in combat operations in Afghanistan. In only 67 days, her team of nearly one hundred scientists, engineers and technicians successfully produced the first thermobaric weapon in the U.S. arsenal, the BLU-118B bomb. This earned her team the Roger Smith Team Award, while Anh was given the Civilian Meritorious Medal.



Anh Duong receives the Outstanding American by Choice Certificate from DHS Acting Deputy Secretary Paul Schneider, Director Gonzalez

Before her arrival to the Pentagon, Anh served as Director of Science and Technology at the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head Division, and as Deputy Director of the Naval Energetics Enterprise. She currently is Science Advisor to the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information, Plans and Strategy and to the Director of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. Her current focus is on Anti-Terrorism and Force Protection.

Anh's passion for work and dedicated service to her adopted country are obvious. She has been featured in newspapers and magazines and has given numerous interviews on national and international television and radio networks. She is also featured in the new book Changing Our World: True Stories of Women Engineers by the American Society of Civil Engineers.



# ADOPTED VALOR: IMMIGRANT HEROES

## FOREIGN BORN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

### CHIEF WATERTENDER PETER TOMICH - WWII

Peter Tomich was born in 1893 in Prolog, in what is now Bosnia-Herzegovina near the Croatian border. After immigrating to the United States in 1913 at the age of twenty, Tomich joined the Army in 1917, and following service in the First World War, enlisted in the Navy in 1921.

By the age of 48 he had 22 years of Naval experience, and although he was not an officer, Tomich served longer than many of the senior officers he served under. The Navy was his life, and Chief Watertender Tomich forged his own American identity in the literal melting pot of the engine boiler rooms aboard the steam - propelled dreadnoughts of the Pacific Fleet. He was below deck on the USS Utah, stationed at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Just before 8 a.m. on that fateful December morning, two Japanese torpedoes struck the Utah and the ship began to list heavily to port. Below deck, in the engineering plant, water rushed towards the huge steam engine boilers. Tomich, ever mindful of his crew, ran in to warn them of the danger and relayed the order to evacuate. Knowing that the boilers would explode if not properly secured, he ignored his own evacuation order and set himself to the job that had to be done.

As the crewman began up the ladders and headed for daylight above, they turned one last time to watch their Chief. He calmly moved from valve to valve, setting the gauges, releasing steam pressure, stabilizing and securing the huge boilers that otherwise would have turned the entire ship into a massive inferno. His time for escape had run out. But before the ship rolled over, he completed his mission and prevented an explosion that would have killed hundreds of men trying to swim to safety.

For his heroic actions, Chief Watertender Peter Tomich was posthumously decorated with the Medal of Honor, however, subsequent efforts to locate Peter Tomich's next of kin proved to be a dead end. Tomich's Medal was placed in Navy Museums and at the U.S. Naval Training and Engineering School at Great Lakes, IL while his shipmates and others continued the search for his relatives.



**Peter Tomich**  
**Rank: Chief Watertender**  
**Branch: U.S. Navy**  
**Nation of Birth: Bosnia Herzegovina**



Tomich's Medal is presented to his family aboard the USS Enterprise



Director Gonzalez displays a poster in memory of Peter Tomich at the grand opening of the new USCIS Conference Center in Washington D.C.

After an exhaustive search, including a trip to Bosnia, U.S. Navy retired Rear Admiral Robert Lunney located members of the Tonic family. It was later revealed that Peter Tomich was born Petar Tonic, and as anyone born to an immigrant family knows, names can lose constancy when they cross oceans. Petar became Peter. Tonic became Tonich, then Tomich. In 2006, Admiral Harry Ulrich, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, presented retired Croatian Army Lieutenant Colonel Srecko Herceg Tonic with the Tomich Medal of Honor during a solemn ceremony aboard the USS Enterprise.

On February 4, 2008, USCIS Director Emilio Gonzalez honored the heroism of Chief Watertender Tomich by dedicating the new USCIS Conference Center in Washington D.C. in his memory.



# “How Do I...?”

## RECEIVE AN EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENT ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is an Employment Authorization Document?**

U.S. employers must check to make sure all employees, regardless of citizenship or national origin, are allowed to work in the United States. If you are not a citizen or a lawful permanent resident, you may need to apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

### **USCIS issues EADs in the following categories:**

**EAD:** This document proves you are allowed to work in the United States.

**Renewal EAD:** You cannot file more than 120 days before your original employment authorization expires.

**Replacement EAD:** This document replaces a lost, stolen, or mutilated EAD. A replacement EAD also replaces an EAD that was issued with incorrect information, such as a misspelled name.

### **Who is Eligible?**

The specific categories that require an Employment Authorization Document include (but are not limited to) asylees and asylum seekers; refugees; students seeking particular types of employment; applicants to adjust to permanent residence status; people in or applying for temporary protected status; fiancés of American citizens; and dependents of foreign government officials.

Please see [Form I-765 \(Application for Employment Authorization\)](#) for a complete list of the categories of people who must apply for an Employment Authorization Document to be able to work in the United States.

**If you are a U.S. citizen, you do not need an Employment Authorization Document.**

**If you are a lawful permanent resident or a conditional permanent resident, you do not need an Employment Authorization Document.** Your Alien Registration Card proves that you may work in the United States.

**If you are authorized to work for a specific employer, such as a foreign government, you do not need an Employment Authorization Document.** Your passport and your Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) proves that you may work in the United States. Please see 8 CFR 274a.12(b), which provides a full list of the categories of people who do not need to apply for an EAD.

### **How Do I Apply?**

You may be eligible to file Form I-765 electronically. Please see our [Introduction to E-Filing USCIS Forms](#) for more information. The procedures for forms electronically filed with USCIS are different than described in the following paragraphs. If you are not eligible for electronic filing, you must file an Form I-765 by mail with the USCIS Regional Service Center that serves the area where you live. Please read the entire application carefully and submit the right documents, photos, and fee. Forms are available by calling 1-800-870-3676, or by submitting a request through our forms by mail system. For further information on filing fees, please see [USCIS filing fees, fee waiver request procedures, and the USCIS fee waiver policy memo](#). Please see our [USCIS Field Offices Homepage](#) for more information on USCIS Service Centers.

### **How Can I Check the Status of My Application?**

Please see our information on [checking the status of your application](#).

### **How Can I Appeal?**

If your application for an Employment Authorization Document is denied, you will receive a letter that will tell you why the application was denied. You will not be allowed to appeal a negative decision to a higher authority. However, you may submit a motion to reopen or a motion to reconsider with the office that made the unfavorable decision. By filing these motions, you may ask the office to reexamine or reconsider their decision. A motion to reopen must state the new facts that are to be provided in the reopened proceeding and must be accompanied by affidavits or other documentary evidence. A motion to reconsider must establish that the decision was based on an incorrect application of law or USCIS policy, and further establish that the decision was incorrect based on the evidence in the file at the time the decision was made. For more information, please see [How Do I Appeal the Denial of a Petition or Application?](#)

### **Can Anyone Help Me?**

If advice is needed, you may contact the [USCIS Office near your home](#) for a list of community-based, non-profit organizations that may be able to assist you in applying for an immigration benefit. Please see our USCIS field offices home page for more information on contacting USCIS offices.



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# USCIS FISCAL YEAR 2009 BUDGET REQUEST

## BUILDING AN IMMIGRATION SERVICE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

President Bush has requested a \$2.7 billion budget for USCIS in Fiscal Year 2009. Over \$2.5 billion of the agency's budget will be funded through fees collected from immigration benefit applications and petitions.

USCIS' largest fee funding source, the Immigration Examinations Fee Account (IEFA), includes fees collected from immigration benefit applications and petitions. Funding in this account reflects activities planned in tandem with changes to the USCIS fee structure put in place in the summer of 2007 to ensure the security and integrity of the immigration system, improve service delivery, and modernize business infrastructure.

The budget will also continue support for substantial growth in human and capital infrastructure underway in 2008 that will enable USCIS to aggressively address last summer's application surge. USCIS is working to add nearly 1,300 temporary and permanent adjudicators this year both to address surge workload and permanently improve processing time performance.

### BUDGET FAST FACTS

- The budget includes \$100 million for the E-Verify program, an increase of over \$17 million from FY 2008.
- \$50 million in new funding will be used to develop an electronic information sharing and verification "hub" capability to help States complying with the REAL ID Act to quickly verify document information with Federal and State databases.
- The budget also continues to utilize revenue generated from premium processing requests for continuing modernization of USCIS business operations. USCIS anticipates collecting at least \$139 million in premium processing revenue in FY 2009.

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## COLLEGE STUDENTS RECEIVE PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD AT USCIS CITIZENSHIP EVENT



Members of the California State University at Fullerton Chapter of [Project SHINE \(Students Helping In the Naturalization of Elders\)](#) received President Bush's Volunteer Service Award for helping older immigrants learn English and prepare to become United States citizens. The awards were presented during a meeting at Los Angeles City College hosted by USCIS and the White House Office of USA Freedom Corps to encourage individuals to volunteer to help legal immigrants and become more actively engaged with citizenship programs in their communities.

Since 2001, 564 CSUF Project SHINE students have volunteered more than 11,000 hours of service to 1,071 older immigrants. A CSUF student and a volunteer coordinator at Los Angeles City College were also recognized for their individual accomplishments.

During this event, Alfonso Aguilar, Chief of the USCIS Office of Citizenship, demonstrated the [zip-code based web search](#) tool of the [Task Force on New Americans](#) website that lists volunteer opportunities to teach English, American history and civics, or help a new immigrant settle in his or her new American community. Following the meeting, Mr. Aguilar taught a citizenship class using the new USCIS video, [A Promise of Freedom: An Introduction to U.S. History and Civics for Immigrants](#), and engaged the students in a discussion using the lesson plan in the accompanying booklet.

To read Press Release regarding this event, click [here](#).

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## USCIS AND DHS: SECURING OUR HOMELAND

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# ROYAL PALM BEACH FIELD OFFICE

## GROUNDBREAKING



Director Gonzalez joins USCIS and local officials for a ground-breaking ceremony in Royal Palm Beach

USCIS Director Emilio Gonzalez hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the USCIS Royal Palm Beach Field Office in Florida on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

This latest facility groundbreaking is part of a new facilities revitalization program to transform USCIS field offices into standard full-service, community-based customer processing facilities. USCIS customers can expect an improvement in services as USCIS' new customer-centric buildings will contain all of the resources necessary to efficiently process a full range of immigration benefits, from the collection of biometrics, to the adjudication of individual applications and the administration of naturalization ceremonies.

USCIS plans to renovate or replace approximately twelve facilities each year through 2009. These new customer-centered agency offices are scheduled to open in more than 30 cities across the country, located in close proximity to the communities we serve based on a geographical survey of neighborhoods where our customers live.

The new facilities model will eliminate the need for traveling to multiple locations during the application process and offer convenient, safe, secure and environmentally friendly offices located along major transportation routes and accessible to public transit.

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## WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK AT USCIS?

How would you like to work for an agency that changes lives everyday, invests time and money into the career development and growth of its employees, and comprises a diverse workforce providing unique opportunities? USCIS offers all that and more!

SEE THE LINKS BELOW TO FIND OUT  
IF A CAREER AT USCIS IS FOR YOU!

[USCIS Career Descriptions](#)

[Prep Guide for Adjudication Officers and Applications Adjudication Test Battery](#)

[Special Programs at USCIS](#)

[Federal Employment Benefits at USCIS](#)

[Current job openings at USCIS](#)

OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE  
NATIONWIDE, APPLY NOW!



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“WE ARE A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS”

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# FACES OF AMERICA

NEW CITIZENS...UNIQUE STORIES

## MARIO PACHECO PEREZ - MEXICO

USCIS Deputy Director Jock Scharfen administered the Oath of Allegiance in a Military Naturalization ceremony at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, Virginia for Marine Lance Corporal Mario Pacheco Perez, a native of Mexico.

Pacheco-Perez said he wanted to thank God and his family for getting him to this point in his life. He came to America three years ago as a permanent legal resident, then joined the Marines in summer 2006, learning English while in Boot Camp.

He didn't know when he enlisted that his service could lead to citizenship. But when he found out that USCIS provides specialized naturalization services for members of the military, Mario and his twin brother, Josue, put in their paperwork. Josue is a Marine stationed at Camp LeJeune and is in the process of becoming a naturalized citizen.

"Here I'm fighting for this beautiful country, and I just decided to become a citizen," Jose said. What's the first thing that Pacheco-Perez plans to do as a citizen? Vote. "Too many immigrants that I know, they become citizens and they don't vote," he said. "That's the biggest right we have. Don't be crying later, if you don't vote."

In Fiscal Year 2007, USCIS naturalized 4,721 military service members, with more than 1,300 taking the Oath of Allegiance during ceremonies overseas, in places like Iraq and Afghanistan.

Pacheco-Perez will be deployed to Okinawa next month, "I knew I had the opportunities in front of me," he said, "and I want to prove immigrants can do it."



USCIS Deputy Director Scharfen and new U.S. citizen Marine Lance Corporal Mario Pacheco Perez



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## IN MEMORIAM: TOM LANTOS

### OUTSTANDING AMERICAN BY CHOICE

Lantos was the only holocaust survivor ever to serve in Congress. Following the end of World War II, Lantos was awarded an academic scholarship to study in the United States. For three decades prior to his service in Congress, Lantos was a professor of economics, an international affairs analyst for public television, and a business consultant. Throughout his career, Lantos was a leading advocate for Human Rights around the world. Congressman Lantos was recognized as an "Outstanding American by Choice" by USCIS Director Emilio Gonzalez on March 9, 2006. Lantos is survived by his wife Annette, their two children and 17 grandchildren.

*"My life today, given my background, is something I cannot believe possible. I am privileged to serve the Congress of the United States. I think back to my life fifty years ago, when I was a hunted animal in the jungle, and how I am dealing with issues of state of a country I love so deeply. It all seems like a dream and it all places an incredible sense of responsibility on me. I didn't achieve this because of what I am, it happened because of what this country is." - U.S. Representative Tom Lantos*



Thomas Peter Lantos served as a Member of the U.S. Congress from January 3, 1981 until his passing on February 11, 2008.

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USCIS: AN IMMIGRATION SERVICE FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY