



## A MESSAGE FROM USCIS DIRECTOR EMILIO T. GONZÁLEZ

Since beginning a comprehensive plan to reform and update the Naturalization Exam in 2000, USCIS experts have worked countless hours to design more meaningful, substantive and fair test questions. Led by the Office of Citizenship, USCIS is proud to announce the beginning of a pilot program to test a new set of questions and answers for the Naturalization Exam. At the beginning of 2007, USCIS will begin to administer the pilot exam to about 5,000 volunteer citizenship applicants in 10 cities nationwide.

When you raise your hand and swear allegiance to the United States, you really ought to know what you are swearing allegiance to. You ought to internalize by that time, the very values that make this country what it is, the very reason why you are raising your right hand. Studying for the test should itself carry special meaning. Past surveys of citizenship applicants found that the current naturalization exam lacked standardization, encouraged applicants to memorize facts just to pass a test, and did not guarantee comprehension of the answers. Further inconsistencies were reported in the way the exams were administered, and there was no accountability or easily measurable standards for assessment.

Our goal with the new exam is to inspire immigrants to learn about the civic values of this Nation so that after they take the oath of citizenship they will participate fully in our great democracy. The test should be a credible instrument we can use to gauge an immigrant's appreciation for our shared principles, and a learning tool to help them identify with the history of their adopted nation. As such, the questions on the test should correspond to the high honors received following successful passage.

USCIS included new questions that focus on the concepts of democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. In designing the new exam, USCIS received assistance and worked with test development contractors, U.S. history and government scholars, and English as a second language experts. USCIS also sought input from a variety of stakeholders, including immigrant advocacy groups, citizenship instructors and district adjudication officers. Questions that are not successful in the pilot will be dropped, narrowing the list to 100 questions like the current exam. The range of acceptable answers to questions will increase so that applicants may learn more about a topic and select from a wider range of responses. In addition to new questions, USCIS will soon release a new civics-based vocabulary list to help applicants study for the English reading and writing portion of the proposed test.

The exam pilot program will allow USCIS to work out any problems and refine the exam before it is fully implemented nationwide in the spring of 2008. All of the new [Questions and Answers](#) are posted on [uscis.gov](http://uscis.gov) and a [Naturalization Exam Pilot Fact Sheet](#) is also available.

There is no secret recipe for making an American. At USCIS we empower individual immigrants with the information and tools necessary to become a part of our American community, and thus create their own unique American identity. This principle, and the promotion of a common civic bond that exists between all Americans, both native-born and naturalized, is at the core of our efforts to transform immigrants into committed and loyal Americans who voluntarily accept the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship.

## DECEMBER 2006

### “Securing America’s Promise”

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# ON BEHALF OF A GRATEFUL NATION

## USCIS COMMEMORATES VETERANS DAY WITH MILITARY NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES IN IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN

More than 200 active-duty service members became America's newest U.S. citizens during military naturalization ceremonies held in Afghanistan and Iraq over the Veterans' Day weekend.

The ceremonies took place at Camp Victory in Baghdad where 75 service members were naturalized, and at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan, where 61 service members were naturalized on Veterans' Day. On Sunday, November 12, at Camp Anaconda in Balad, Iraq, 44 service members were naturalized and on November 14, 29 others were naturalized at the U.S. Consulate, in Frankfurt, Germany.

USCIS Director Emilio González led the new citizen service members in the Oath of Allegiance during the Iraq ceremonies and was accompanied by U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad and General George Casey, Commander of Multinational Forces in Iraq.

"Thousands of immigrant troops are making extraordinary sacrifices for America," said González. "These men and women have pledged to defend with their lives liberties they have yet to secure for themselves. There is no more fitting way for a grateful Nation to show its appreciation than through granting qualified military service members U.S. citizenship as quickly as possible."

During the Frankfurt naturalization ceremony, Director González presented a posthumous U.S. citizenship certificate to Salina Jimenez for her late husband [Sergeant David Jimenez-Almazan](#). Sergeant Jimenez-Almazan, a 27-year-old Army combat medic, died on August 27 in a roadside blast in Iraq's Anbar Province. He was the 84<sup>th</sup> recipient of posthumous U.S. citizenship since September 11, 2001.

Recent changes to the law governing U.S. citizenship, allow USCIS to hold naturalization interviews and ceremonies overseas for U.S. military service members. Since inception of the program in 2004, USCIS personnel have naturalized more than 2,500 Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines during ceremonies in Afghanistan, Djibouti, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, South Korea, Spain, the United Kingdom and in the Pacific aboard the USS Kitty Hawk. In total, more than 26,000 service members have become naturalized Americans through their service to the Nation.

Each year, USCIS welcomes more than 500,000 new citizens during naturalization ceremonies across the United States. That number includes nearly 7,000 members of the armed forces who naturalize both in the U.S. and abroad through an expedited process based on their military service.



Service members take the Oath of Allegiance at the Sustainer Theater at LSA Anaconda on Nov. 12. (Photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Murray, 411 Engineer Battalion)



Salina Jimenez with her late husband's photo and naturalization certificate in Frankfurt, Germany



Service members take the Oath of Allegiance in one of Saddam Hussein's old palaces at Camp Victory on Veterans Day

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# USCIS: PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES



## OFFICERS IN SAN DIEGO APPREHEND FUGITIVE

A man wanted for child molestation was arrested Monday, November 13, at the Chula Vista Customer Service Center where he was seeking an immigration benefit. The arrest of Eddie Juan Estrada came after a USCIS officer discovered an outstanding arrest warrant during routine criminal history checks conducted for every applicant requesting an immigration benefit. Officers from the Federal Protective Service took Estrada, a native of Mexico, into custody for extradition to Utah.

"It is our duty to the American public to maintain the integrity of the immigration system and help ensure public safety, and we work closely with our law enforcement partners to achieve these goals," said District Director Paul M. Pierre. "I am proud of the quick and thorough job done by my staff; there is now one less sexual predator on the street."

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## NEWS YOU CAN USE... FROM USCIS COMMUNICATIONS



### [USCIS Announces Realignment of Regional, District and Field Offices](#) - 11/03/2006

USCIS Director Emilio González announced the realignment of the management structure of the agency's regional, district, and field offices to better balance workload and personnel among USCIS field offices. See the [Realignment Fact Sheet](#) for more information.

### [USCIS To Expand Premium Processing Service](#) - 11/08/2006

USCIS announced the addition of a new visa category - the EB-1 Aliens with Extraordinary Ability - available for requesting Premium Processing Service. Premium Processing Service allows U.S. businesses to pay a \$1,000 Premium Processing fee in exchange for 15-calendar-day processing of their case.

### [Fact Sheet: Special Immigrant Status for Civilian Translators](#) - 11/08/2006

USCIS has received sufficient petitions from applicants requesting special immigrant status under this program for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2007. Any petitions received before the November 17, 2006 cut-off date will be held for the next available visa cycle.

### [USCIS Announces Transfer of Form I-129F \(K-3-spouse of U.S. Citizens only\), Petition for Alien Fiance](#) - 11/14/2006

Beginning October 23, 2006, USCIS National Benefits Center began transferring certain Form I-129Fs to the California Service Center and the Vermont Service Center, depending on the location of the related Form I-130.

### [Public Notice: USCIS Announces Temporary Suspension of Premium Processing Service for Religious Workers \(R-1\) Nonimmigrant Classification](#) - 11/28/2006

Due to the complexities of the USCIS adjudication processes at this time, the agency can not reasonably ensure this level of processing service for the R-1 petitions within 15 calendar days. Therefore, USCIS is temporarily suspending Premium Processing Service for Aliens in a Religious Occupation which is filed on Form I-129, along with the Q-1 and R-1 Classifications Supplement.

### [USCIS Reaches H-2B Cap For First Half of Fiscal Year 2007](#) - 12/05/2006

USCIS announced that it has received a sufficient number of petitions to reach the congressionally mandated H-2B cap for the first six months of Fiscal Year 2007 (FY 2007). USCIS is hereby notifying the public that November 28, 2006 is the "final receipt date" for new H-2B worker petitions requesting employment start dates prior to April 1, 2007.

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## USCIS: ENHANCING NATIONAL SECURITY



# OUTSTANDING AMERICANS BY CHOICE

The newly launched *Outstanding American by Choice* initiative recognizes the outstanding 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.



## DR. ZALMAY KHALILZAD

### U.S. AMBASSADOR TO IRAQ

In recognition of his outstanding achievements and contributions to the United States, USCIS Director Emilio González, presented Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, with USCIS' "Outstanding American by Choice" certificate, at a special ceremony in the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad on Friday, November 10, 2006.

Dr. Khalilzad was born in Afghanistan and became a U.S. citizen in 1984. He was nominated U.S. Ambassador to Iraq by President Bush on April 5, 2005 and sworn in on June 21, 2005 in Baghdad. Dr. Khalilzad has a deep personal commitment to democracy and freedom. His life and his work reflect the best of America's traditions of diversity, opportunity and selfless service to his adopted nation. From his early childhood in Kabul, through earning his doctorate in political science at the University of Chicago, to his work as a professor, defense analyst, and now as the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq – his is a remarkable record.

From November 2003 to June 2005, Dr. Khalilzad served as Ambassador to Afghanistan. For his service in Afghanistan, Secretary Donald Rumsfeld awarded him the Defense Department medal for outstanding public service. President Karzai awarded him the King Ghazi Ammanullah Medal, Afghanistan's highest medal. Earlier he served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Islamic Outreach and Southwest Asia Initiatives at the National Security Council. Prior to that, Dr. Khalilzad was Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Southwest Asia, Near East, and North African Affairs at the National Security Council. He was also a Special Presidential Envoy and Ambassador at Large for the Free Iraqis.

Between 1993 and 1999, Dr. Khalilzad was Director of the Strategy, Doctrine and Force Structure program for RAND's Project Air Force. While with RAND, he founded the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Between 1991 and 1992, Dr. Khalilzad served as Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Planning. Recognized as an outstanding scholar, Dr. Khalilzad is the author of more than 200 books, articles, studies and reports. His work has been translated in many languages including Arabic, Chinese, German, Japanese and Turkish.



## THE NEW AND IMPROVED [USCIS.GOV](http://www.uscis.gov)

One of the most trafficked websites in the Federal government has a fresh new look. USCIS has replaced its old website with a new, more effective, redesigned Web Portal available at the same Internet address, [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). The improved Web Portal will serve as a "one stop shop" for all immigration information needs. View and listen to a [quick message](#) from Director González introducing the new and improved U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services web portal.

Visitors to the "new" USCIS.gov will find it easier to download petitions and applications, file forms electronically using our [E-Filing Online Application Center](#), and sign up online for appointments at their local district offices using [INFOPASS](#). The new web portal and other electronic media have improved our ability to help applicants in a timely manner and better manage the agency's workload. Please refer to the [USCIS.gov Fact Sheet](#), for new links to your favorite USCIS online services. Don't wait in line...Go online!

[WWW.USCIS.GOV](http://www.uscis.gov)



# ADOPTED VALOR: IMMIGRANT HEROES

## FOREIGN BORN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

### THE VOLUNTEER STORMING PARTY

William Archinal	William Campbell	David Dickie	Joseph Frantz	William Frazier	Franz Frey
Nicholas Geschwind	James Jardine	William John	Joseph S. Labill	John O'Dea	Frederick Rock
Andrew Schmauch	George Stockman	Jacob Swegheimer	William Toomer	Edward Welsh	

In late May of 1863, as spring turned into summer, General Ulysses S. Grant of the Union Army was in the midst of besieging Vicksburg, Mississippi, site of the last Confederate fort still standing along the Mississippi River and the best-defended Southern city outside Richmond. Surrounded by rifle pits and deep trenches on three sides, Confederate marksmen lined the walls of Vicksburg, and Rebel cannon were ready to rain down hellfire on anyone who dared approach.



Union soldiers storm the embattlements at Vicksburg

By May 22, Grant had the city surrounded and the general who would later become President, decided to attack. He called for a 150-member volunteer party to lead the Union charge into the Confederate positions. As those who volunteered were expected to be killed, married men were not accepted for this dangerous mission. Despite these overwhelming odds – more than 300 men answered Grant’s call, and he took the first 150.

Among these heroes were seventeen honorable immigrant soldiers, young men from Germany, Ireland, Scotland and France. They were all in their twenties, without families, and they were new to the country, but these seventeen men were ready to sacrifice everything to defend their adopted nation, a land that had given them the hope of a brighter future and a better tomorrow.

A battle plan was formulated. The volunteers were to rush the Confederate defenses, carrying logs and wooden planks to build a makeshift bridge over the deep trenches surrounding the fort and get close enough to plant ladders against the walls. The volunteers would lead the way, and the rest of the Union soldiers would follow, use the ladders to scale the walls, and enter the fort.

The next morning, the volunteer storming party gathered in a ravine out of sight of the Confederate forces. As dawn broke, a thundering artillery barrage opened on the city trying to soften the defenses and demoralize the defenders. Shortly before 10 a.m., the firing stopped and the unarmed volunteers began their charge over approximately 500 yards of open ground, with just as much wood as they could carry at a dead sprint. Their path to the fort would later become known as Graveyard Road.

Enemy fire was so heavy as they ran forward, that about half of the 150 men were immediately shot down and the area was thick with smoke. When the storming party arrived at the trenches, so many logs and pieces of lumber had been dropped or splintered by the withering Confederate fire that the volunteers were unable to carry out their planned bridging maneuver. The assault had failed. Unable either to retreat or advance, the volunteers had no choice but to stand and fight.

Desperate to accomplish their mission and reach the fort, the remaining men managed to cross the trenches at great cost of life, only to find that the regular Army units behind them did not follow their lead. Some of the volunteers made it all the way to Vicksburg’s hardened clay walls, but could do little more than plant their flag in the ground, find cover, and wait for reinforcements that would never come. They held their position for another twelve hours under constant fire until nightfall, when the cover of darkness allowed them to return to their lines.

Of the 150 strong volunteer storming party, a majority were killed or suffered casualties. Among them, seventeen immigrants earned their rightful place in America’s Hall of Heroes for their actions that day. Their Medal of Honor citations read simply, heroism captured in one sentence, “For gallantry in the charge of the volunteer storming party.” These seventeen men came to this country as immigrants, and on the battlefields outside of Vicksburg, Mississippi, they became Americans, proving their allegiance through heroism in the face of certain death.



## “HOW DO I...?”

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AT USCIS

## HOW DO I... LEGALLY EXTEND MY STAY IN THE U.S.?

### How do I extend my stay?

A nonimmigrant temporarily enters the United States for a specific purpose such as business, study, or pleasure. When you entered the country as a nonimmigrant, a U.S. immigration inspector examined your passport and visa and then gave you a Form I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record). This record should tell you (in the lower right-hand corner) when you must leave the United States. You can prove you did not violate U.S. laws by turning in your Form I-94 to the proper authorities when you leave the country. If you want to extend your stay in the United States, then you must ask for permission from the USCIS before your authorized stay expires.

Proof that you are willing to obey U.S. immigration laws will be important if you want to travel to the United States as an immigrant or nonimmigrant in the future. If you break immigration laws, you may also become subject to removal.

### Who is Eligible?

You may apply to extend your stay if you were lawfully admitted into the United States with a nonimmigrant visa, your nonimmigrant visa status remains valid, and you have not committed any crimes that would make you ineligible. You must apply to extend your status if you wish to stay longer than the date indicated in the lower right-hand corner of your Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record). Please note, you must submit the application for an extension of stay BEFORE your current authorized stay expires. You must also keep your passport valid for your entire stay in the United States.

You may not apply to extend your stay if you were admitted to the United States in the following visa categories: VWP, D, C, K, S

### How Do I Apply?

If you are the recipient of an E, H, L, O, P, Q, R or TN employment visa, your employer should carefully read and file a CIS Form I-129 (Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker) and any supporting documentation with USCIS.

If you are in the following nonimmigrant categories - A, B, F, G, I, J, M, N - you should carefully read and complete USCIS Form I-539 (Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status) and submit any required supporting documents with USCIS.

The application and correct fee should be mailed to the USCIS Service Center that serves the area where you are temporarily staying. If your nonimmigrant category is work-related, then the application and correct fee should be mailed to the USCIS Service Center that serves the area where you will work. Forms are [available online](#), by calling 1-800-870-3676, or obtained through a request through our forms by mail system.

### How Do My Spouse and Child Apply to Extend Their Stay in the United States?

If your employer files USCIS Form I-129 (Petition for Alien Worker) for you, then your spouse and child must carefully read and complete USCIS Form I-539 (Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status) and submit any required supporting documents to extend their stay. It is best to submit both forms at the same time.

If you are filing USCIS Form I-539 for your own extension, you may include your spouse and any unmarried children under the age of 21 in your application if you are all in the same nonimmigrant category. You may also include your spouse or children in your application if they were given derivative nonimmigrant status.

### What If My Authorized Stay Has Already Expired?

If you are late filing for an extension and your authorized stay has already expired, you must prove:

- The delay was due to extraordinary circumstances beyond your control;
- The length of the delay was reasonable;
- You have not done anything else to violate your nonimmigrant status;
- You are still a nonimmigrant; and
- You are not in formal proceedings to remove (deport) you from the country.

### How can I get help?

If advice is needed, you may contact the USCIS District 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 CIS offices.





## COMMUNITY RELATIONS CORNER

### OUTREACH FOR THE NATURALIZATION TEST PILOT: ENCOURAGING IMMIGRANTS TO PARTICIPATE

The Community Relations program is gearing up for targeted outreach on the naturalization test pilot. To ensure that the new naturalization exam is appropriate for naturalization applicants and also for District Adjudication Officers that will administer and score the new test, USCIS needs to pilot 5,000 tests across the country. The pilot will be held in Albany, NY, Boston, MA, Charleston, SC, Denver, CO, El Paso, TX, Kansas City, MO, Miami, FL, San Antonio, TX, Tucson, AZ and Yakima, WA. Applicants that are scheduled for naturalization interviews in these cities will receive their interview notice with a letter asking them to volunteer in the pilot and the new set of questions and answers for study.

Participation in the pilot is voluntary, so targeted outreach to immigrant communities in the pilot sites is an important part of the participant recruitment strategy. The Community Relations program is holding meetings in all 10 pilot sites throughout the month of December to discuss the pilot with local community-based organizations (CBOs) and to gain CBO support to encourage immigrants to take the pilot test. At these meetings, Community Relations Officers (CROs) are giving out flyers about the pilot test for local distribution and sharing the test questions and answers. All CROs will be giving a presentation about the format of the draft test and the structure of the pilot.

Naturalization applicants are encouraged to take the pilot to help make the naturalization test a better experience for future generations of immigrants. CROs are also spreading the message that participation in the pilot gives prospective citizens an opportunity to participate directly in public policy making. Another incentive for naturalization applicants to participate in the pilot is that they can immediately take the current exam if they fail a portion of the pilot, thus giving them an additional opportunity to pass the naturalization exam during their interview. At the first CBO meeting about the pilot in Miami on December 1, Miami CRO Berta Cassidy observed that "there was a good turnout of various groups, such as adult educators, attorneys, congressional staff, and CBOs and we were able to make the process more transparent for a large constituency."

If your district office is interested in learning more about the naturalization test pilot or would like to receive copies of the pilot materials, please contact Sally Blauvelt at [Sally.Blauvelt@dhs.gov](mailto:Sally.Blauvelt@dhs.gov) or (202) 272-1301.

## USCIS COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICERS:

### **Sally Blauvelt - Program Director**

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San Diego - John Ramirez  
San Francisco - Rosemarie Fan  
Laguna Niguel - Jorge Swank  
Los Angeles - Rico Cabrera  
Phoenix - Rudy Bustamante  
Portland - Ed Sale

### **Central Region - Christine Pool**

Denver - Barbara Melton  
San Antonio - Jacque Crouse  
Chicago - Val Obregon

### **Eastern Region - Ted Albers**

Washington - Gloria Williams-Brevard  
Philadelphia - Carol Hallstrom  
Miami - Berta Cassidy  
New York - Shyconia Burden-Noten  
Detroit - Hiwatha Greene-Janvier

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK AT USCIS?

Visit [USAJOBS Online](https://www.usajobs.gov) for more information on openings and opportunities at USCIS and other federal agencies.

**OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE, APPLY NOW!**



# FACES OF AMERICA

NEW CITIZENS... UNIQUE STORIES

## MARGARET GODFREY - AUSTRIA

Since she was a young woman in Austria, Ms. Godfrey has been helping immigrants and refugees for over 50 years of her life. Margaret Godfrey's work with the immigrant population began right after World War II. Due to Margaret's ability to speak, read, and write English, she began translating for the British, working with the military court system, as well as interviewing refugees displaced by the war.

Once this process was complete, Margaret became involved in helping displaced persons emigrate, working with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the International Refugee Organization (IRO). In 1949, she moved to Salzburg and began working with the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC) in helping displaced persons from Camp Hellbrunn resettle. She assisted refugees of many nationalities, and personally escorted many of them to Bremerhaven, the port in northern Germany where refugees would leave for new lives.

ARE YOU ONE OF THE  
FACES OF AMERICA?  
[SHARE YOUR STORY](#)  
[WITH USCIS](#)

It was in Salzburg that Ms. Godfrey met her future husband, a sergeant with the U.S. Army 11<sup>th</sup> Triple A Battalion. On July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1953 they were married and three days later John's tour of duty ended and he was returned to the U.S. Four months later, Margaret joined her husband in Portland, Oregon. Within months of her arrival in Portland, Ms. Godfrey continued her refugee work by joining Catholic Family Services, Inc. She helped displaced immigrants from Europe resettle in Portland, while also assisting the local Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) in aiding and resettling Holocaust survivors.

In 1995, Margaret began working with a new group of immigrants; families of mixed races and mixed marriages that had been expected from Indonesia. In 1978, after the peak of the Southeast Asian immigration, Ms. Godfrey, along with colleagues in the immigrant aid community, founded the Immigration Counseling Service (ICS). ICS was initially founded to help meet the legal immigrant needs of low-income Latino's living in Oregon. Since its founding, ICS has provided legal assistance for thousands of refugees and immigrants, from countries throughout the world.

## ON ANY GIVEN DAY AT USCIS...

...the **15,000** federal and contract employees of USCIS accomplish the following at our **250** offices worldwide:

- Answer phone inquiries from **82,000** calls to our toll-free customer service phone line
- Process **30,000** applications for immigrant benefits
- Naturalize **20** individuals serving in the United States military

Check the next issue of [USCIS Today](#) or the [USCIS Day in the Life](#) profile for more statistics on what we do every day to effectively and efficiently administer our nation's immigration system.

**USCIS AND DHS: SECURING OUR HOMELAND**