



## A MESSAGE FROM USCIS DIRECTOR EMILIO T. GONZÁLEZ

On July 4, 1776 the Declaration of Independence was ratified by the thirteen colonies, signifying our Independence from Great Britain. This document starts with one of the most well known phrases in American history, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

These words started a revolution and gave birth to a nation that would rise to champion individual rights and liberty. Reflecting a concept that inspired countless other movements for freedom and justice across the world, these words became the international rallying cry for those moved to fight against oppression. Such equality, as later affirmed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, assures that regardless of birthplace, race, or religion, color or creed, every American citizen is afforded the same rights and liberties under our laws.

USCIS celebrated America's 231st birthday by welcoming more than 4,000 new citizens during naturalization ceremonies held around the world and throughout the United States. Citizenship is the most precious gift that our country can bestow upon anyone. We celebrate the fact that in the United States you can enter the country as an immigrant and in time become as fully an American citizen as the most direct descendants of our founding fathers. This year, our weeklong celebration of the American dream was highlighted by various special events, including a ceremony to naturalize 1,000 new citizens in Orlando, Florida at Walt Disney World.

But did you know that every day, USCIS naturalizes 3,200 new citizens, welcomes 3,300 new permanent residents, admits 240 refugees and asylees, and helps 125 families adopt foreign born orphans? I share these statistics to put things into perspective. Our workload is significant, and it continues to increase, steadily, every day forward.

Moving forward, we'll be able to handle an expected increase in applications with increased resources and manpower made available through an updated fee structure for our services. Additional revenue generated from the new fees will be reinvested to improve customer service, accelerate processing, enhance security, expand our offices, hire additional personnel, train those personnel, and create new business processes to decrease the time it takes to process applications.

If we're going to charge 21<sup>st</sup> century fees for our services, we need to make sure that we create an immigration experience for our customers that is a reflection of the very best that our Nation represents. The future face of our national immigration service will be more convenient and more secure through the introduction of new electronic filing procedures that allow individuals to create an electronic profile and online account with USCIS.

Our work to create an immigration system for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is critically important to the future of our Nation. As the gatekeepers and facilitators of U.S. Citizenship, we appreciate the unique freedoms and liberties every American holds dear, knowing that there are countless others across this world who wish to share in the peace and prosperity our nation provides by becoming citizens of our great republic. On our 231<sup>st</sup> year, let us renew our pledge to keep America's doors open, but well guarded.

## JULY 2007

### "USCIS: Celebrating Citizenship"

[A Message from USCIS Director Emilio González](#)

[USCIS Breaks Ground on Raleigh Durham Office](#)

[Secretary Chertoff and Deputy Director Scharfen](#)

[Attend USCIS EEV Demonstration](#)

[Outstanding Americans by Choice](#)

[Adopted Valor: Immigrant Heroes](#)

[How Do I...? Frequently Asked Questions at USCIS](#)

[Recognizing USCIS Excellence:  
The 2007 Director's Awards](#)

[News from the Task Force on New Americans](#)



**NEW FEE INFORMATION  
AVAILABLE ON USCIS.GOV:**

[Press Release: USCIS Sets Final Fee Schedule to Build an Immigration Service for the 21st Century](#)

[Questions and Answers on the Final Fee Schedule](#)

[Full Listing of the New Fee Schedule](#)

[New Application and Petition Fees Go Into Effect on July 30, 2007.](#) Applications or petitions postmarked or otherwise filed on or after that date must include the new fee. New forms listing the updated fees will be available online at [uscis.gov](http://uscis.gov) after the effective date or through your local USCIS office.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE... FROM USCIS [COMMUNICATIONS](#)

[Fact Sheet: Expanded Special Immigrant Status for Afghan and Iraqi Translators and Interpreters](#) - 07/02/2007

[USCIS Issues Service Center Receipting Update](#) - 06/28/2007

[USCIS Announces Temporary Suspension of Premium Processing Service for Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker](#) - 06/27/2007

[USCIS Issues Reminder to Hondurans and Nicaraguans Eligible for Temporary Protected Status \(TPS\)](#) - 06/22/2007

[USCIS Issues Service Center Receipting Update](#) - 06/22/2007

[Update: USCIS Modifies Participation Requirement in District Office Rapid Adjudication \(DORA\) Pilot Program](#) - 06/21/2007

[Fact Sheet: Naturalization Through Military Service](#) - 06/21/2007

[Fact Sheet: Status of Citizens of the Republic of Palau](#) - 06/21/2007

[USCIS Announces Direct Filing Instructions for Forms I-129F, I-131, I-140, I-360, I-485, I-765, and I-907](#) - 06/21/2007

[USCIS Continues Temporary Suspension of Premium Processing Service for Religious Workers \(R-1\) Nonimmigrant Visa Classification](#) - 06/18/2007

[Task Force on New Americans Reports First Year Initiatives](#) - 06/12/2007

[Fact Sheet: Task Force on New Americans](#) - 06/12/2007

[USCIS Begins Review of Ombudsman's 2007 Annual Report](#) - 06/11/2007

[Update: USCIS Reminds Customers of Correct Customer Service Phone Number \(800-375-5283\)](#) - 06/08/2007

[USCIS Issues Service Center Receipting Update](#) - 06/08/2007



**USCIS: ENHANCING NATIONAL SECURITY**

---

# USCIS CELEBRATES RALEIGH DURHAM OFFICE GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY



In response to a growing need for immigration services and benefits in eastern North Carolina, USCIS has announced the construction of a new field office location in Raleigh-Durham. The 22,000 square foot facility will allow USCIS to provide the most efficient customer service possible to more than four hundred individuals each day. The USCIS Raleigh facility is a fully customized building with an Information Counter, Adjustment of Status and Naturalization Units and spacious, comfortable waiting areas for the applicants. Naturalization ceremonies will also be done on site.

Director González was on hand to participate in the official ground breaking ceremony for the new office and marked the occasion with brief remarks, "These new buildings are more than just bricks and mortar. They are a tangible symbol of USCIS' commitment to modernize our efforts to bring our national immigration system into the 21st century. We're moving from old offices to newer ones, retiring our paper based processes for a secure electronic system, and reengineering basic procedures to improve efficiency and customer service. This is more than just a new office announcement, this is a groundbreaking ceremony for the future of our agency."

The new office is located at 201 Roycroft Drive in Durham, NC and is scheduled to open to the public in March 2008. Please see the [Raleigh-Durham Fact Sheet](#) for more information.

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK AT USCIS?

USCIS has a variety of positions available including several unique immigration-related core positions. See the links below to find out if a career at USCIS is right for you!

[USCIS Career Descriptions](#)  
[Sample Test for Adjudication Officers](#)  
[Special Programs at USCIS](#)  
[Federal Employment Benefits at USCIS](#)  
[Current job openings at USCIS](#)

---

## SECRETARY CHERTOFF AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR SCHARFEN ATTEND EEV DEMO

DHS Secretary Chertoff and USCIS Deputy Director Scharfen attended an Employment Eligibility Verification (EEV) presentation on June 15 hosted by the Fort Myer Construction Corporation (FMCC). Mike Caro, the company's Human Resource Director, and Carla Schmidt, an HR Generalist, provided a live demonstration of the EEV system used for verifying the employment eligibility of newly hired employees. The Fort Myer Construction Corporation enrolled in the Employment Eligibility Verification program in early 2006 and has since run a total of 289 queries for their new hires.

Nationwide, over 92 percent of employer queries processed through the Basic Pilot system are confirmed within seconds and more than 17,000 American employers use the Basic Pilot system. Any company, anywhere in America can try it and use it for free over an easy to use federal website. Please see the [EEV Frequently Asked Questions](#) page for more information about the USCIS EEV system.



---

**DON'T WAIT IN LINE, GO ONLINE AT [WWW.USCIS.GOV](http://WWW.USCIS.GOV)**



# 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.



## DR. VARTAN GREGORIAN

Born in Tabriz, Iran to Armenian Christian parents, Vartan Gregorian is a distinguished American academic, currently serving as the president of Carnegie Corporation of New York. After receiving his dual Ph.D. in history and humanities from Stanford University in 1964, Gregorian served on the faculties at several American universities before joining the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, where he became the founding dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 1974, and the provost in 1981. From 1981 to 1989, Gregorian served as president of the New York Public Library, an eight-year tenure which would prove one of his most lasting legacies.

In 1989, he was chosen to become president of Brown University, where he served until 1997. In 1995, he was offered the presidency of Columbia University, which he declined due to his commitment to Brown's capital campaign. In 1997, he was selected as president of the philanthropic Carnegie Corporation of New York, his current position as of 2006. He is also a trustee of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.



Dr. Gregorian has received the National Humanities Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States. He is also on the advisory board of USC Center on Public Diplomacy and is a member of the editorial board of the Encyclopedia Britannica.

A Phi Beta Kappa and a Ford Foundation Foreign Area Training Fellow, he is a recipient of numerous fellowships, including those from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council and the American Philosophical Society. He is also a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and has received honorary degrees from fifty-six academic institutions.





# ADOPTED VALOR: IMMIGRANT HEROES

## FOREIGN BORN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

### COMBAT MEDIC ALFRED RASCON - VIETNAM

Born in Chihuahua, Mexico, Alfred Rascon immigrated with his family to California, where he attended school and grew up thinking he was an American. It was not until after he enlisted in the Army in 1963 that he discovered he was not a U.S. citizen. When asked why he volunteered to enlist and go to Vietnam when he was not obligated to by law, Alfred answered, "I was always an American in my heart." He later officially became a citizen while on Active Duty.

By age 21, Specialist Rascon was serving as a Combat Medic in Vietnam when on March 16, 1966, his unit was attacked by North Vietnamese troops. Ignoring directions to take cover from small arms fire and exploding grenades Rascon jumped to his feet and scrambled through the streets reach a severely wounded soldier lying exposed to enemy fire. To protect him from further wounds, he intentionally placed his body between the soldier and enemy machine guns, sustaining numerous shrapnel injuries and a serious wound to the hip. Disregarding his own wound he dragged the larger soldier from the fire-raked trail.

Severely wounded himself, he remained on the battlefield and went on to provide life saving first-aid and medical care to his comrades, inspiring his fellow soldiers to continue the battle. After the enemy broke contact, he disregarded aid for himself, instead treating the wounded and directing their evacuation. Only after being placed on the evacuation helicopter did he allow aid to be given to him.

Following Vietnam, Rascon returned to school earning a college degree. In 1969, he applied for Officer Candidate School and earned a commission as an Infantry Officer. He later graduated from the Special Forces Qualification course and the Defense Language Institute. Rascon then received orders transferring him to the Military Intelligence Branch. After leaving the Army in 1984, Rascon continued serving his country for several years, by holding various positions within the Justice Department, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and Legacy INS. Later he found himself serving as the Director of the Selective Service Administration.



**Name: Alfred Rascon**  
**Rank: Specialist 4<sup>th</sup> class**  
**Branch: U.S. Army**  
**Nation of Birth: Mexico**



Spec. Rascon being helped off the battlefield (Center)

Recently, Rascon gave up his high level government position to return to the Army on Active Duty. He visited both Afghanistan and Iraq motivating and supporting Soldiers in the field. Rascon is quoted as saying, "The only difference between today and yesterday's military is the advantage of technology. The Soldier, Marine, Airman, and Sailor of today have the same heart and spirit of troops from 30 years ago. The way wars are fought may change, but the character of the individuals who fight them, remains the same."

After a paperwork mix-up, Rascon finally received the Medal of Honor on February 8, 2000, almost 24 years after his heroic actions.

**715 OF THE 3,410 CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS IN AMERICA'S HISTORY--MORE THAN 20 PERCENT--HAVE BEEN IMMIGRANTS TO THIS NATION.**



## “HOW DO I...?”

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AT USCIS

## HOW DO I... USE USCIS PREMIUM PROCESSING SERVICES?

### **What is Premium Processing?**

Premium Processing Service provides faster processing of certain employment-based petitions and applications. Specifically, USCIS provides 15 calendar day processing to those who choose to use this service or USCIS will refund the Premium Processing fee and the relating case will continue to receive faster processing.

The processing period that is used to determine whether or not USCIS meets the 15 calendar day period will begin when the current version of Form I-907, Request for Premium Processing Service, is received by USCIS at the correct filing address noted on the form. Within the 15 day calendar period USCIS will issue an approval notice, or where appropriate, a notice of intent to deny, a request for evidence or open an investigation for fraud or misrepresentation. If the notice requires the submission of additional evidence or of a response to intent to deny, a new 15 calendar day period will begin upon the delivery to USCIS of a complete response to the request for evidence or notice of intent to deny.

### **Who is eligible to apply for Premium Processing?**

Certain applicants for I-129 and I-140 form types. Please see the [Premium Processing Eligibility Listing](#) available on [uscis.gov](#).

### **How do I file a request for Premium Processing?**

You must complete and sign Form I-907, Request for Premium Processing Service, in accordance with the instructions on the current version of the form. You must file the concurrently filed Form I-907 with Form I-129 or Form I-140 at the Service Center designated as the appropriate filing location on the instructions to the Form I-907. If you filed Form I-129 or the Form I-140 and you now wish to request Premium Processing Service, file Form I-907 with the Service Center where the Form I-129 or Form I-140 is currently pending. Submit a copy of the Form I-129 or Form I-140 filing receipt. If you received a transfer notice, it is very important that you include a copy of it and that you submit your filing to the transfer location.

### **What is the fee for this service?**

The fee for this service is \$1,000. The Premium Processing Service fee may not be waived. In addition to the Premium Processing Service fee, all other filing fees

relating to the specific form(s) for which you are requesting Premium Processing Service must also be submitted. The Premium Processing Service fee must be submitted in a separate check or money order. The petitioner, attorney or representative, or beneficiary may pay the \$1,000 Premium Processing Service fee, but the beneficiary cannot sign or file the Form I-907. If e-filed, USCIS accepts credit card, debit card, or electronic transfer of funds from a checking or savings account from a U.S. bank.

### **Are there any additional benefits to the program?**

Yes. USCIS has provided not only a unique mailing address for its Premium Processing Service customers, but it has also established a special phone number and e-mail address for each of the Service Centers. These special communication channels will be available only to Premium Processing Service customers.

USCIS is also collecting, on the Form I-907, your phone number, fax number and e-mail address so that we can send you (the petitioner or attorney) an automatic e-mail notifying you of the receipt of your Form I-907, Request For Premium Processing Service. If the underlying form for which you requested Premium Processing Service is approved, we will send an automatic e-mail notifying you of the approval. It is important that you provide this information so that USCIS may correspond with you in the most appropriate manner.

In addition and at no additional cost, USCIS will strive to provide faster processing of Form I-539 applications filed by or on behalf of dependents of the principal beneficiary of a petition for which Premium Processing Service has been requested if the Form I-539 is filed at the same time. USCIS provides this service as a courtesy. Consequently, it cannot guarantee faster processing of the Form I-539.

### **How will the USCIS manage those categories that have an annual limit in relation to this faster processing?**

USCIS does not believe that individuals who pay for Premium Processing Service on petitions filed for nonimmigrant classifications that are subject to annual limitations will have an unfair access to these limited immigration programs.



---

# RECOGNIZING EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

## THE 2007 USCIS DIRECTOR'S AWARDS

On June 5, Director González hosted the 2007 Director's Award Ceremony at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, D.C. The event celebrated the outstanding work and dedication of this year's award recipients, who provided innovative solutions to complex challenges and demonstrated commitment and determination in addressing USCIS national security, customer service and organizational excellence goals. Along with Deputy Director Scharfen and Chief of Staff and Master of Ceremonies Tom Paar, Director González handed out 26 awards in 12 categories to various individuals and groups within USCIS.



Recognizing this year's winners, Director González stated, "We celebrate seasoned veterans, some new faces and future leaders - but every award recipient has been singled out for their inherent talents, decision making ability and willingness to think outside the box - they are strategic thinkers who come up with strategies for implementing new policies that aren't in the agency handbook, and those who take risks with potential for positive gain. Take pride in the knowledge that the example you set for others will continue to lead USCIS to the levels of excellence we all seek."

**The Manager of the Year Award:** This award is presented to recognize a manager who excels in their managerial duties, leads by example, and encourages efficiency and innovation through communication, leadership, and teamwork. **Diane Cejka**, Director of the National Records Center, has transformed the Missouri office into a model USCIS facility where she and her employees take great pride in performing a monumental, but vital task in keeping the USCIS records nerve center operating efficiently.



**The Securing America's Promise Award:** the Director's Exceptional Service award, highest and most prestigious award granted within USCIS for sustained overall contribution by an individual to USCIS and its mission, went to **Paul L. Schlesinger**, Chief, Budget Division at HQ, who readily accepted the challenge of conducting USCIS' first comprehensive fee review in almost ten years. Paul took a new and forward looking approach this massive accounting audit, and produced a final report that was able to pre-plan for an adequate and sustainable level of investment in staff, infrastructure and future processes.



# TASK FORCE ON NEW AMERICANS REPORTS FIRST-YEAR INITIATIVES

Director González was joined by Anna Escobedo Cabral, Treasurer of the United States, and other members of the *Task Force on New Americans*, to formally introduce the Task Force's first major initiatives and officially launch the federal government's new website for new immigrants, [www.WelcometoUSA.gov](http://www.WelcometoUSA.gov).

During the event, the *Task Force on New Americans* announced the completion of three major programs and initiatives to help legal immigrants embrace the common core of American civic culture, learn English, and fully become American.

The Task Force is also providing public libraries, adult educators, volunteers, and others who work with immigrants with better training and increased resources. Two examples are the [Civics and Citizenship Toolkit](#), which contains a variety of educational tools for immigrants and will be distributed for free to public libraries, and a series of web-based and regional training courses for volunteers and adult educators.

In February 2007, the Task Force began holding a series of roundtable discussions across the United States to learn more about successful immigrant integration practices. These roundtables will gather input from immigrant-serving organizations, businesses, state and local governments, academia, community and faith-based organizations, adult educators, public libraries, foundations, and traditional civic organizations. The Task Force will present its findings and recommendations in a formal report to the President and updates will be included in future issues of USCIS Monthly.

The Task Force on New Americans, a federal inter-agency partnership was established by President George W. Bush through Executive Order on June 7, 2006. This federal effort focuses government resources to strengthen and coordinate federal efforts and resources to help immigrants embrace American civic culture, learn English, and fully become American. The Task Force works to develop a more cooperative federal approach to assimilation, one of the five pillars of the President's comprehensive immigration reform plan.

Established within DHS, Secretary Chertoff serves as Chair of the Task Force and Director González serves as Executive Secretary. Task Force membership includes representatives from 12 Cabinet-level departments and a technical working committee of eight additional federal agencies.



Other participating *Task Force* members include: James Williams, Commissioner, Federal Acquisition Service, General Services Administration; Martha Newton, Director, Office of Refugee Resettlement, Department of Health and Human Services; William Turri, Acting Public Printer, Government Printing Office; Desiree Sayle, Special Assistant to the President and Director, USA Freedom Corps; and Alfonso Aguilar, Chief, Office of Citizenship, USCIS.

A USCIS [Fact Sheet](#) is available online with more information about the Task Force on New Americans.



---

# USCIS CELEBRATES INDEPENDENCE DAY

## MORE THAN 4,000 SWORN-IN AS AMERICANS

During Fourth of July week, USCIS personnel in conjunction with the Department of Defense naturalized more than 425 active-duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces in Iraq, Guam, Germany, Kuwait and South Korea.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, USCIS introduced a new film, *A Promise of Freedom: An Introduction to Civics and U.S. History for Immigrants*, during a naturalization ceremony at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. During the ceremony, USCIS welcomed more than 100 new citizens.

Director Emilio Gonzalez naturalized 1,000 new citizens during a special event held at Walt Disney World in Orlando on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Singers Gloria Estefan and Lee Greenwood performed for the new citizens and the crowd was part of a special new citizens parade.

Also on July 4, USCIS welcomed ten new citizens onboard the USS Constitution during the ship's annual cruise in Boston harbor. The USS Constitution is the oldest U.S. Navy warship still in active service.

USCIS naturalizes nearly 700,000 individuals a year. More information about the [naturalization](#) process is available on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).



U.S. Air Force jets fly over a new citizen parade at Walt Disney World (above) Director Gonzalez and Gloria Estefan (below)

