



ABOUT CUNY CITIZENSHIP NOW!

CUNY Citizenship Now! is the largest university-based legal assistance program in the nation. We provide free, high quality, and confidential citizenship and immigration law services to all New Yorkers. Under the leadership of Professor Allan Wernick, CUNY Citizenship Now's attorneys and paralegals assist more than 10,000 individuals each year at our centers and more than 2,100 at citizenship events. We also coordinate community, educational, and volunteer initiatives to help expand opportunities for New York City's immigrant population. We serve the community in many languages, including Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Polish, French, and Italian.

Our History

In 1997, the City University of New York (CUNY) established CUNY Citizenship Now! to address the growing need for free citizenship and immigration services among CUNY's foreign-born students, faculty, and staff. We quickly expanded to serve all immigrant New Yorkers. We now operate six immigration centers recognized by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) and one part-time center, providing a broad range of immigration law services. We also provide services in the offices of 30 New York City Council Members thanks to funding provided by the New York City Council.



A participant on path to citizenship at one of our application assistance events.

CUNY/Daily News Citizenship NOW! Call-in

Since 2004, CUNY Citizenship Now!, in partnership with the New York Daily News, has convened annual phone banks providing free citizenship and immigration law information to more than 133,000 callers. We receive questions from multi-lingual callers on a variety of immigration topics such as how to obtain U.S. citizenship and how to petition for family members. Held for one week each spring, we provide callers with referrals for services and information about other resources. Our overall capacity has more than doubled since the event started. At the 2014 call-in, over 300

volunteers assisted 12,738 callers in more than 45 languages.

NYC/CUNY Citizenship Now! Volunteer Corps

Key to Citizenship Now's ability to provide high quality, free legal services is our unique NYC/CUNY Citizenship Now! Volunteer Corps. A partnership with the New York Mayor's Office for Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), the Corps is made up of attorneys, students, community activists and retirees from the diverse communities of New York City. Presently, the Corps has more than 400 active members trained to assist individuals with applying for U.S. citizenship, TPS and deferred action. Under the supervision of attorneys, volunteers assist in all facets of our application assistance events and annual call-in. Engaging volunteers allows Citizenship Now! to maximize resources while empowering New Yorkers with an enhanced understanding of U.S. citizenship and immigration laws.

CUNY Citizenship Now! Citizenship Events

Utilizing trained volunteers from the NYC/CUNY Citizenship Now! Volunteer Corps, Citizenship Now! partners with New York City Council members, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), the New Americans Campaign (NAC) and other elected officials to provide free application assistance at schools, and community centers across the five boroughs of New York City. Yearly, we assist more than 2,100 individuals at these events.

NYCitizenship Initiative

A partnership with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), NYCitizenship is part of a national initiative to reduce to reduce economic equality and improve immigrant integration by helping New Yorker's naturalize. The program provides free naturalization application assistance and financial counseling to permanent residents ready to become U.S. citizens.

NYS Office of New Americans Immigrant Opportunity Center

The NYS Office of New Americans (ONA) has designated Citizenship Now's CUNY Xpress office in Washington Heights as an Immigrant Opportunity Center to provide legal assistance, language classes and entrepreneurial education in the heart of the community's immigrant population.

DHS/USCIS Citizenship Initiative


CUNY Citizenship Now! is honored to be a grant recipient from the DHS Citizenship and Integration Direct Services program to provide representation for naturalization applicants and citizenship exam preparation.

Campus Swearing-in Ceremonies

We collaborate with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to make CUNY campuses available for citizenship swearing-in ceremonies.



Corps volunteers and CUNY Citizenship Now! staff assisting participants at one of our many application assistance events held throughout New York City.

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