



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 our community based events. We also coordinate community, educational, and volunteer initiatives to help expand opportunities for New York City's immigrant population. Our services are available to the community in several 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 more than 30 New York City Council Members and designated community-based organizations, thanks to funding provided by the City Council.

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 143,000 callers. We receive questions from multilingual 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 to services and information about other resources. Our overall capacity has more than doubled since the event started. At the 2015 call-in, more than 300 volunteers assisted 7,395 callers in more than 45 languages.

CUNY/NY City Council Citizenship Plus Program

Since its inception, the CUNY/New York City Council Citizenship Plus program has developed into a resounding success. This unique and innovative program provides services at more than 30 Council Member offices and designated community-based organizations. At Citizenship Plus sites, CUNY attorneys provide free and confidential

assistance completing applications for citizenship, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and family-based petitions. We also provide free consultations and referrals on other immigration matters. The program also includes application assistance events in communities throughout New York City. In the last three years, we have helped more than 13,000 New Yorkers navigate our country's complicated citizenship and immigration laws.

CUNY Citizenship Now! Citizenship Events



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

Utilizing trained volunteers from the NYC/CUNY Citizenship Now! Volunteer Corps, Citizenship Now! partners with New York City Council members, the New Americans Campaign (NAC), the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund 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.

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 their application 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.

To register for the Volunteer Corps and start receiving e-mails, including our monthly volunteer newsletter, visit www.cuny.edu/citizenshipnow/volunteer.

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. Open five days a week and located in the heart of this immigrant community, the center provides immigration legal assistance, English classes, seminars on how to start and grow small businesses, and workshops on college admission and immigrant labor rights.



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