



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **L.A. LIBRARIES HELP LOCAL IMMIGRANTS PREPARE FOR CITIZENSHIP THROUGH “IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION INITIATIVE”**

**“Citizenship Corners” and new resources in 73 libraries  
bring USCIS program to L.A.**

**LOS ANGELES** (Sept. 19, 2012) — A new initiative that equips the city’s 73 public libraries with “citizenship corners,” new citizenship resources and training for library staff was announced today by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Alejandro Mayorkas, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and City Librarian John F. Szabo. The introduction of the Immigrant Integration Initiative in Los Angeles expands the USCIS and city’s partnership, announced in [January 2010](#), to strengthen and enhance local immigrant integration efforts.

“Today we take a further step to expand citizenship resources for immigrants in Los Angeles by providing information about the naturalization process in libraries,” said Mayorkas. “We are proud to yet again partner with Mayor Villaraigosa and the City of Los Angeles on this important initiative and to support immigrants on their journey to become American citizens.”

The library’s participation in the initiative include:

- Training library personnel on the naturalization process and available USCIS resources;
- Establishing a “citizenship corner” with citizenship materials and resources in all 73 libraries;
- Offering a list of local service providers available for referrals; and
- Providing access to library community rooms for citizenship and English language classes.

As the second largest city in the country, Los Angeles is home to immigrants from more than 140 countries who speak 224 languages. The State of California is home to nearly 3.4 million permanent residents, 2.5 million of whom are estimated to be eligible to apply for naturalization.

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**Peter Persic**, Public Relations & Marketing Director

“This joint initiative not only expands upon our effort to educate the city’s immigrant community about citizenship, but also establishes our libraries as local citizenship information centers,” Mayor Villaraigosa said. “We are excited about the opportunity to support the many immigrants and their families that hope to one day achieve their goal of U.S. citizenship.”

The Citizenship Corners feature the latest USCIS citizenship materials, including test books, DVDs, CDs, and a list of resources and local service providers available for referrals. Materials are available in a variety of languages including Spanish, Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese with limited number of materials available in Farsi, Russian and Japanese.

Libraries are hosting a variety of workshops about citizenship issues and literacy classes to build English language skills, which is an important issue for many citizenship seekers. These workshops and classes are provided by a variety of community partners, including Catholic Charities, Asian Pacific American Legal Committee and Los Angeles Law Library, among others.

“Our libraries are places that change peoples lives, whether it’s helping students succeed in school, helping the unemployed find jobs, or helping adults overcome illiteracy,” said City Librarian John Szabo. “Now, with the support of Mayor Villaraigosa and the USCIS, we have enhanced the library’s ability to help people take their first step on the path to becoming a citizen.”

For more information on USCIS and its programs, please visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or follow us on Twitter ([@uscis](https://twitter.com/uscis)), YouTube ([/uscis](https://www.youtube.com/user/uscis)) and the USCIS blog [The Beacon](http://www.uscis.gov/the-beacon).

For more information on the City of Los Angeles, visit [www.lacity.org](http://www.lacity.org). For more information about the Los Angeles Public Library, visit [www.lapl.org](http://www.lapl.org).

The Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest and most diverse population of any library in the nation. Its Central Library, 72 branch libraries, more than six million books, and state-of-the-art technology accessible at [www.lapl.org](http://www.lapl.org), provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for life-long learning.

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