



AMERICAN GATEWAYS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

April 2023

From the Desk of Rebecca Lightsey, Co-Executive Director

It's not election season right now, but with the Texas Legislature in session, we are seeing the results of our elections every day. A cornerstone of our country's values is the right to vote. And we at American Gateways are proud of our role in helping individuals who are eligible to become citizens gain that citizenship, and their right to vote!

According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, over 9 million Legal Permanent Residents (LPR) are eligible to become citizens. Over 1 million of these individuals live in Texas, and many have had their LPR status for at least ten years.

Applying for citizenship can be costly and fraught with anxiety. Private attorneys charge around \$1,500, plus the \$725 fee to the U.S. government to apply. Then, there is the requirement that an applicant passes a citizenship test and interview. It is not a simple process, but the benefits of citizenship are huge – including the right to have a say in our elections.

American Gateways is helping those eligible to become citizens here in Central Texas. With the help of our incredible partners - including the Cities of Austin and San Antonio, the TX AFL-CIO, and NALEO, pro bono attorneys, and volunteers, we are hosting **three Citizenship clinics** this spring in Austin, San Antonio and Waco.

Participants at our clinics get free legal assistance in filling out their applications; there are no attorney fees charged, AND the federal government's USCIS will be on-hand to do practice interviews with the applicants!

Last year, we helped more than 200 individuals become citizens. This year, we anticipate helping at least another 200.



San Antonio Naturalization Clinic, 2022



One of our Clinic participants who became a citizen last year!

Here's more info on our upcoming clinics in Austin, San Antonio and Waco.

Citizenship Clinic

• practice citizenship interviews with USCIS!



Asian American Resource Center
8401 Cameron Road, Austin, TX 78754
Saturday, April 22, 2023 @ 9AM

First 50 participants will receive free one-on-one assistance* to complete the N400 citizenship application.

Registration will take place the morning of April 22 from 9-10 AM.



Please come prepared & bring:

DOCUMENTS

- permanent resident card
- state ID or driver's license
- social security card
- current and expired passports
- if you have ever been arrested or received a traffic citation, bring court disposition & citation and arrest records
- if applying for a fee waiver, bring a verification of benefits letter and/or a copy of your most recent tax return

INFORMATION

- addresses, work, and schooling (5 year history)
- all trips outside of the U.S. (5 year history)
- addresses and date of birth of all children

**Please plan to attend an information session prior to the citizenship clinic. View the dates and times for the information sessions here: bit.ly/citizenship-ats*

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Reasonable accommodations and access to effective communication can be provided upon request. To make a request or if you have any questions, please contact: Rocio Villalobos, Voice: (512) 974-7972 - VRS: RelayTexas711



Free Citizenship Clinic

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2023
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Northeast Lakeview College
Paluxy Hall
1201 Kitty Hawk RD.
Universal City, TX 78148

Presented by:



ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT
Northeast Lakeview College



OFFICE OF THE IMMIGRATION LIAISON



RELACIONES EXTERIORES | MÉXICO

Are you a lawful permanent resident?
Become a citizen and exercise ALL your rights!

APPLY FOR CITIZENSHIP

FREE CITIZENSHIP CLINIC

STEP 1

PRE-CLINICS



Forum 1: Monday, April 17th at 6 p.m.
Forum 2: Monday, April 24th at 6 p.m.

Highland Baptist Church
3014 Maple Ave, Waco, TX 76707

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Jesus Perales
EMAIL: jesus@texasaflcio.org
PHONE: (512) 497-5772

APPLICANTS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND ONE PRE-CLINIC
SERVICES AVAILABLE TO FIRST 25 APPLICANTS

STEP 2

THE CLINIC

Saturday, May 27th at 9 AM

Highland Baptist Church
3014 Maple Ave, Waco, TX 76707

TEXAS
AFL-CIO

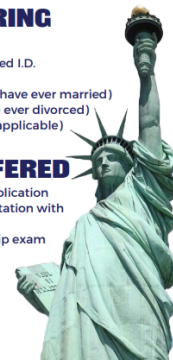


WHAT TO BRING

- Permanent Resident Card
- Driver's license or State issued I.D.
- Social Security Card
- Marriage certificates (if you have ever married)
- Divorce decrees (if you have ever divorced)
- Criminal history records (if applicable)

SERVICES OFFERED

- Fill out N-400 citizenship application
- Individual citizenship consultation with immigration lawyers
- Study materials for citizenship exam



Congratulations to Jonathan and his clients!

In March, Jonathan Levy, Senior Staff Attorney at American Gateways, won three complex asylum cases!! Over the course of several years Jon worked tirelessly & diligently on these cases which is not an easy task given the complexity of U.S. immigration policies.

Congratulations to your clients & you Jon!

1. A Haitian national was denied asylum in 2018 and he appealed his denial to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). The BIA held that he suffered past persecution on account of his political opinion and remanded the case. On remand, ICE agreed to a grant of asylum.
2. A Venezuelan national applied pro se (on his own, without an attorney) for asylum with USCIS but was denied & his case was referred to court. The judge granted his asylum based on his political opinion.
3. A Cameroonian national's claim for asylum was found to not be credible in 2015 by a now-retired judge. He appealed his case to the BIA; the BIA remanded the case, and after a series of pandemic-related postponements, she took the stand again and was found credible and granted asylum based on her political opinion.



Staff Anniversaries

Join us in celebrating our staff in their work anniversaries!

[Alicia Alvarado](#), Staff Attorney - 3 years

[Jessica Bautista](#), Legal Caseworker - 5 years

[Claudia Gonsalvez](#), Senior DOJ Accredited Representative - 13 years

[Anali Looper](#), Director of Waco Office - 8 years

[Rebecca Lightsey](#), Co-Executive Director - 6 years

[Ingrid Olarte](#), Legal Caseworker - 6 years

[Marco Rosas](#), Staff Attorney - 4 years

Want to know more about our work?

We invite you, or anyone you know to our Virtual Immigrant Justice 101 events, which take place quarterly. Our next event will be on June 9, 2023. You can register [here](#).

Want to donate?

Donate today to provide access to justice to immigrants. Your partnership allows us to provide critical legal services to individuals and families seeking safety, hope, and freedom.

Give Today



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