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***Mayor Fulop Announces Free Naturalization Information Session & Citizenship Clinic as Administration Continues to Create Pathways for the American Dream***

***Nearly 60 Individuals Already Naturalized as Part of Office of Diversity & Inclusion Community Outreach and Citizenship Classes, Continuing to Expand Services for All Residents***

**JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven M. Fulop** announced today that the Jersey City **Office of Diversity & Inclusion**, in partnership with the **Office of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**, will host a **Naturalization Information Session** at 6 p.m. on **Thursday, April 23, 2015** in **City Hall’s Council Chambers, 280 Grove Street**, as the administration continues to expand programs and services for all residents.

“Jersey City is the most diverse city in America, and has always been a home to immigrants of all backgrounds, languages and cultures,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “Each community adds to the diversity and uniqueness of our city, and it is our goal to help our immigrant community succeed and prosper by providing them all the necessary tools to fulfill their dreams of becoming American citizens.”

In the past eighteen months, nearly 60 individuals have become citizens during naturalization ceremonies held at City Hall, as part of the Fulop Administration’s outreach to the community, providing immigration services and citizenship opportunities. Information sessions and citizenship clinics are essential to the citizenship process, and serve as useful tool to guide applicants through the process.

Miriam Monterrosa, 71, a Jersey City resident who was assisted by the Office of Diversity & Inclusion with naturalization paperwork, attended a naturalization information session hosted by the City, and successfully took her oath to become an American citizen in February, said she feels she has “accomplished a great dream.”

“Since I came to this office, I knew I would achieve my goal, because I felt the professionalism, the human quality, and positivity, and the best part is that my dream came true at my 71 years of age,” said **Ms. Monterrosa**. “I thank you Mayor Fulop for thinking of the immigrant community because today I am American.”

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For a second year, the **Naturalization Information Session** will be conducted by a USCIS representative in both English and Spanish for legal permanent residents (“Green Card” holders) and others interested in the official naturalization and citizenship process with an expected attendance of nearly 75 immigrants. Topics that will be discussed at this session include naturalization eligibility requirements, how to apply for naturalization, the naturalization exam and interview, and the rights and responsibilities of a U.S. citizen.

During the information sessions, study materials to assist the naturalization candidates in preparing for the naturalization exam and interview will be provided on a first come, first serve basis. Attendees will also be able to register for a citizenship consultation appointment with the **Office of Diversity and Inclusion**, where we will assist the candidate through the naturalization application process from beginning to end.

Building off the Naturalization Information Session, the **City of Jersey City**, in partnership with the **National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO)** and the **New Americans Campaign**, will be hosting their first ever **FREE Citizenship Clinic**, from **11 a.m. to 3 p.m.** on **Saturday, May 9, 2015** at **Frank R. Conwell School**, at **111 Bright Street**.

Services provided at this **FREE** clinic include:

- Completion of the N-400 Application for Naturalization
- Review of application by an immigration attorney
- Passport photographs and photocopies of documents
- ESL and Adult Education provider listings will be available
- Citizenship study materials will be provided while supplies last

In order to apply for U.S. citizenship, the applicant must meet the following eligibility requirements: be at least 18 years of age; be a Legal Permanent Resident for at least five years, or, if you are married to a U.S. citizen, you must have been a Legal Permanent Resident for at least three years; must have basic knowledge of U.S. government and history; must be able to read, write, speak and understand basic English; and must be a person of good moral character.

The **Office of Diversity and Inclusion** was established by Mayor Fulop shortly after taking office to serve Jersey City’s diverse immigrant community. Located in the Resident Response Center, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion works to empower, integrate, and celebrate the immigrant community of Jersey City, while ensuring and enhancing access to City services and guiding immigrants through the citizenship application process from beginning to end. It is here that residents can find free access to immigration information, assistance with filling out forms, resources to prepare for the citizenship exam and interview, and information on how to lead a happy and healthy life in Jersey City.

**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** is the government agency that oversees lawful immigration to the United States. USCIS regularly holds naturalization information sessions for the public. These sessions will help permanent residents and others interested in naturalization learn about naturalization eligibility, testing, and citizenship rights and responsibilities. Each session is free of charge and open to the public.

Pre-registration is required for the May 9th event. To register, applicants may call the NALEO hotline at 1-888-839-8682 or the Office of Diversity & Inclusion at (201) 547-5555.

**All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.////**