

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Constitution Day 2015: Naturalizations to Provide ‘Living Civics Lessons’ for Students**

St. Louis, MO, Thursday, September 17, 2015: Federal courts in every Circuit are conducting more than 50 naturalization ceremonies in September to observe Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, which is officially celebrated on Sept. 17.

The ceremonies are living civics lessons in citizenship that engage students taking part in many of the naturalization programs. Students are leading The Pledge of Allegiance, singing the U.S. National Anthem, or writing welcome letters to give to the new citizens they meet at the event.

Some of the well-known sites are the National Archives in Washington, D.C.; Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site in Topeka, KS; USS Missouri battleship in Honolulu, Hawaii; and Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest home in Forest, VA.

***In St. Louis, twenty new citizens will take the oath of allegiance to the United States. The ceremony will be held at the historic Old Courthouse at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial downtown. U.S. District Judge Henry E. Autrey will preside over the ceremony, and the DeSmet High School Black Robe Choir will perform. The ceremony is open to the public, and begins at 1:00 pm on Thursday, Sept. 17.***

“This year, student participation is the focus of the federal courts' observance of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day at naturalization ceremonies across the nation,” said U.S. District Court Judge Rodney W. Sippel, of the Eastern District of Missouri. “Students are a central part of these living civics lessons.”

“At ceremonies in every Circuit of the federal judiciary, young people will participate in these community-building events in significant and visible ways. Through this real-life involvement in the citizenship process, students will come to a greater appreciation of what it means to be an American citizen.”

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day is observed nationally every September 17, marking the date that delegates to the Constitutional Convention signed the nation's founding document in 1787. In 2004, Congress mandated that schools receiving federal funding provide education about the Constitution to commemorate its principles on the anniversary day.

In 2014, the federal courts began what is a growing tradition of linking Constitution Day and Citizenship Day to a nationally organized series of naturalizations. An estimated 8,500 new citizens were naturalized last year in nearly 30 federal court ceremonies.

The highlight is the oath ceremony, during which immigrants swear their allegiance to the United States and receive their naturalization certificate. This is the final step in becoming a U.S. citizen. Those naturalized will be able to vote, serve on juries, apply for a U.S. passport, and enjoy all the other rights and privileges of U.S. citizens.

To learn more about the judiciary's commemoration, see the U.S. Courts Educational Resources page here: <http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources> ,and this page on Constitution and Citizenship Day: <http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/annual-observances/constitution-day-and-citizenship-day>

### **List of Naturalization Sites Nationwide**

(current as of Sept. 14, 2015; events are scheduled for Sept. 17, unless otherwise listed)

Anchorage, Alaska  
Birmingham, Alabama  
Los Angeles, California (Sept. 22, two ceremonies)  
Sacramento, California (two ceremonies)  
Denver, Colorado (Sept. 25)  
Hartford, Connecticut (Sept. 24, two ceremonies)  
Washington, D.C.  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida (Sept. 18)  
Jacksonville, Florida (Sept. 24)  
Miami, Florida (Sept. 11)  
West Palm Beach, Florida (Sept. 11 and 25)  
Columbus, Georgia (Sept. 8)  
Atlanta, Georgia (Sept. 11)  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
Nampa, Idaho  
Chicago, Illinois  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
South Bend, Indiana (Sept. 18)  
Des Moines, Iowa  
West Branch, Iowa  
Topeka, Kansas  
Portland, Maine

St. Paul, Minnesota (two ceremonies)  
Oxford, Mississippi  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Greenbelt, Maryland  
Four Corners, New Mexico (Sept. 15)  
Las Cruces, New Mexico (Sept. 25)  
Santa Fe, New Mexico (Sept. 3)  
Manhattan, New York (Sept. 24)  
Asheville, North Carolina  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
Moorhead, Minnesota (District of North Dakota)  
Mentor, Ohio  
Toledo, Ohio  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Scranton, Pennsylvania  
Providence, Rhode Island  
Charleston, South Carolina  
Knoxville, Tennessee (Sept. 15)  
Dallas, Texas (Sept. 24)  
San Antonio, Texas  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
Forest, Virginia  
Spokane, Washington  
Richland, Washington  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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