

# Rutgers to Assist Eligible Green Card Holders Attain U.S. Citizenship

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Written by **Steven Manas**  
Reader Submitted

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. - In its first year, Citizenship Rutgers aided almost 300 New Jersey green card holders from nearly 30 countries across six continents.

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Now the program, part of the Eagleton Institute of Politics' Program on Immigration and Democracy (EPID), hopes to repeat that success with two new events in Newark and New Brunswick. Citizenship Rutgers will provide free application assistance on April 14 in Newark and on April 29 in New Brunswick.

"New Jersey is rich with immigrants who, like generations before them, come in search of their own American dream," said EIPD Director Anastasia Mann.

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The program, which has partners on all three Rutgers campuses, is also seeking volunteers for the events, particularly experienced immigration lawyers and Board of Immigration Appeals representatives. Potential volunteers can get more information by sending an e-mail to [huertandrea@gmail.com](mailto:huertandrea@gmail.com). Training will be provided prior to each event. To date, Citizenship Rutgers has trained more than 200 volunteers to offer application assistance.

Last November, Rutgers joined with the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service to hold its first naturalization ceremony for 34 new American citizens.

"Research shows that naturalized citizens pay higher taxes, earn higher wages and participate in their communities at higher rates

than noncitizens," Mann said. "Citizenship Rutgers meets individuals' needs for application assistance, while advancing our shared interests as a nation."

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, nearly one of every five residents, almost 1.8 million immigrants, live in New Jersey. Nationally, one of every eight residents is an immigrant. Only four states have more Legal Permanent Residents than New Jersey, which has 600,000 who come from all over the world.

Mann noted that at the naturalization assistance events, participants will meet individually with an immigration professional to determine their eligibility. They will receive free photos and copies of paperwork, which are required for the naturalization process.

To be eligible to apply for citizenship, participants must have resided in the country as a permanent resident for five years (three years if living with and married to the same U.S. citizen). They must have lived here for half of the five- or three-year period and be at least 18 years old.

Applicants must bring their green card and all passports since obtaining their green card; home address information for the last five or three years; children's information (birth date, "A" number, addresses); employment history for the past five or three years, if applicable; and marital and criminal histories, if applicable.

The Saturday, April 14 event will be held 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Rutgers School of Law-Newark, 123 Washington Street. The Sunday, April 29 event is scheduled from noon to 3 p.m. at the Rutgers Student Center, 126 College Avenue in New Brunswick. To register for either, call 732-932-9384, ext. 330. Those interested can also register online for the Newark event at <http://conta.cc/cr-newark>; those interested in the New Brunswick event can register at <http://conta.cc/cr-nb>.

Citizenship Rutgers is funded principally by the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Additional funding is sought. Interested parties can reach Mann at [amann@rutgers.edu](mailto:amann@rutgers.edu).

Other partners include the Rutgers Schools of Law-Newark and Camden, the Center for Migration and the Global City-Newark, the School of Management and Labor Relations, the Office of Academic and Public Partnerships in the Arts and Humanities, Jewish Family and Vocational Services and the Bonner Foundation.

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