Volunteer with the New York State Office For New Americans

We encourage English-proficient New Yorkers to volunteer at the Office for New Americans Opportunity Centers to assist New Americans to learn English and prepare for naturalization exams. Volunteer opportunities include:

- Helping a New American use a computer or tablet device to practice English using a computer teaching program in an in-class or computer lab language laboratory setting.
- Conducting or participating in a one-on-one or a group conversation practice session based on classroom instruction.
- Holding mock testing for New Americans on the U.S. civics component of the naturalization exam.
- Placing our U.S. Naturalization Preparation mobile phone application on a client's cell phone.
- Providing logistical support during naturalization drives.

To Find an Opportunity Center Near You, Check Out Our Website:

www.newamericans.ny.gov

New Americans Hotline

Information and referrals are available through the toll-free, multilingual New York State New Americans Hotline at:

1-800-566-7636

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NEW YORK STATE OFFICE for NEW AMERICANS

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"We are a state of immigrants…while other states build walls to keep people out, we open our arms and we invite people in."

- Governor Andrew M. Cuomo

Serve the Growing New York Immigrant Population

The New York State Office for New Americans (ONA) is the first statewide office with a sole focus on harnessing the talents and entrepreneurial spirit of New Americans to reinvigorate the State's economy. ONA established a network of 27 neighborhood-based Opportunity Centers, which work with community organizations, educational institutions, government agencies and the private sector to undertake a major campaign to teach English; dramatically increase the number of naturalized citizens; harness entrepreneurial spirit to start businesses; tap New Americans' underutilized professional skills; and, reduce the exploitation of New Americans.

"I thank Governor Cuomo, who understands that diversity is New York's biggest strength and that immigrants are vital to its success. We are proud to stand with our immigrant communities and provide economic opportunities that benefit all New Yorkers."

- Secretary of State Rossana Rosado

New York Population	Native Born	New American
Year 2000	15,108,324	3,868,133
Year 2010	15,080,490	4,297,612
% Increase	-0.18%	11.10%

Improve English Language Abilities

More than one million New Yorkers have limited English proficiency. That represents 28% of the foreign-born population of New York State. Each ONA Opportunity Center provides at least 200 hours of ESOL instruction to more than 200 Limited English Proficiency clients per year, thereby dramatically expanding New Americans' access to English language instruction in our State.

Increase the Number of Naturalized Citizens

We encourage and enable those foreign-born New Yorkers who yearn to be citizens to achieve their American dream. Each ONA Opportunity Center will assist at least 100 New Americans through the naturalization application process and provides direct access to exam preparation training.

ONA Opportunity Centers are supported by a team of attorneys who are experts in immigration law. ONA Legal Counsels are also located within existing community-based organizations and their work is assigned based on their location in the State. These ONA Legal Counsels review U.S. naturalization applications; oversee citizenship drives at ONA Opportunity Centers; meet with and advise New Americans with immigration law questions during designated immigration law consultation days; and support the State's effort to respond to changes in federal immigration policy (i.e. DACA, comprehensive immigration reform).

Empower New Americans to Open Small Businesses

Immigrants are vital to the sustained economic growth of New York State. In 2012, the Fiscal Policy Institute confirmed what many people instinctively knew about immigrants: that they are an entrepreneurial people. Nearly half of all small business owners in New York City are immigrants, totaling more than 69,000 businesses.

Each ONA Opportunity Center hosts at least four "starting your own business seminars" per year. After the seminar, each New American client sits with a business coach to assess the level of business development assistance needed. Those with a business background from their home countries meet between five and nine times with a business coach. New budding entrepreneurs are tracked via an intensive multi-week business class. The New American clients produce a business plan at the end of either track and subsequently have access to capital through a variety of State and private sources.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

ONA is providing Deferred Action eligible youth with an alternative to fraudulent immigration services. We have a team of experienced immigration lawyers available to provide immigration law consultations to young people and legal technical assistance to immigrant service providers across New York State.