

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

Principal Sharon Henry
Ralph R. McKee Career and Technical Education High School
290 ST MARKS PLACE
STATEN ISLAND, NY 10301

Dear Principal Henry,

The New-York Historical Society is excited to offer Ralph R. McKee Career and Technical Education High School a **free** program that helps adult green card holders become U.S. citizens! This year, we launched The Citizenship Project, a test-preparation course that uses our extensive museum collections to prepare permanent residents for their naturalization exam. **Thanks to generous grant funding, we have the ability to deliver this course at your school for free.** It is our hope that The Citizenship Project will not only reach immigrants in need of study support, but also contribute to your school's efforts to strengthen community and parent engagement.

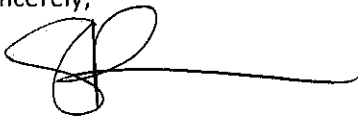
The 24-hour course covers all 100 civics questions that prospective citizens must be prepared to answer during the naturalization interview. Our interactive approach uses artifacts, paintings, and documents from our collections to make history engaging to all and is accessible to all levels of English Language Learners. Learn more about how the program works and hear past participants describe the power of their experience in the class in the enclosed *New York Times* article.

We are actively seeking partners who wish to offer The Citizenship Project course in their communities. The New-York Historical Society will provide trained educators, study materials, and marketing materials and advice to help spread the word. All we require is a classroom space and a minimum of 15 registered participants. Educators can deliver courses during the school day, after school, and/or on weekends, depending on the needs of your parents. The 24 instructional hours can be divided into 12 two-hour lessons or however will work best for your community. We also encourage you to consider teaming up with other nearby schools or community organizations to open registration to a wider audience.

When parents become U.S. citizens, their children do, too. I hope that you are interested in bringing this important program into your community and helping us serve as many future United States citizens as possible.

I can be reached at 212-873-3400 ext. 511 or samantha.rijkers@nyhistory.org. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,



Samantha Rijkers
Citizenship Project Manager
New-York Historical Society



THE CITIZENSHIP PROJECT

FREE CIVICS CLASSES FOR GREEN CARD HOLDERS

Prepare for the civics test



CONTACT US:

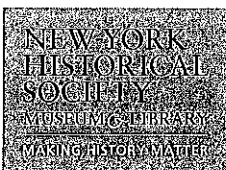
www.nyhistory.org/citizenship

(212) 873-3400 ext. 511

thecitizenshipproject@nyhistory.org

Please note that at this time we offer this program only for permanent residents who are eligible for citizenship.

The New-York Historical Society offers a FREE program to prepare permanent residents for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) naturalization exam. Engage parents and strengthen community ties by bringing this grant-funded program into your school. The 24-hour interactive program covers all 100 civics questions and includes preparation for the naturalization exam.



New-York Historical Society
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(212) 873-3400
www.nyhistory.org

Provided in partnership with



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The New York Times

An Artistic Approach to Becoming a U.S. Citizen

By CHRISTOPH FUHRMANS and SCOTT BLUMENTHAL OCT. 25, 2017

What does a painting of a mob pulling down a statue of King George III teach you about American history? The answer could help green card holders become United States citizens.

To become a naturalized citizen, a person has to be a green card holder, submit a 20-page application, be fingerprinted and pass an oral exam that requires deep knowledge of American history. The process can take six months or longer and costs about \$700.

So when Karen Moore — a nanny from Jamaica who became a permanent resident in 2010 — applied for citizenship in January, she knew she needed help. “I didn’t know anything about New York history. I had been on the Circle Line, but that’s about all I knew,” she said with a laugh referring to the city’s sightseeing cruises.

At the suggestion of her employer, Ms. Moore became the first person to sign up for the Citizenship Project, a free class at the New-York Historical Society that helps green card holders prepare for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services naturalization test.

The historical society’s leadership decided to take an active role in helping permanent residents become citizens after President Trump in January called for travel restrictions on Muslims entering the United States. The classes started in July, and the historical society has a goal of helping 750 to 1,000 people prepare for the citizenship exam.

The project is a 32-hour interactive program that uses artifacts, documents and art from the museum’s permanent collection and covers all the questions used in the test.

“For many of them English is not their first language and so they’re really eager to get any assistance they can to make this test easier,” said Jennifer Schantz, the historical society’s executive vice president and chief operating officer.

The historical society’s teaching methods are enhanced by using physical objects. The program is so unique that citizenship and immigration services has invited the museum to host a seminar showing other museums across the country how to establish similar programs. Students spend time at the historical society both in a classroom and also walking through the gallery, observing and discussing the paintings and objects as they pertain to American history.

“We can easily spend 10 or even 20 minutes just looking at one painting,” said Samantha Rijkers, the manager of the Citizenship Project who developed the program’s curriculum and oversees six part-time instructors. So, to prepare for test questions about the Declaration of Independence and Independence Day, students observed the painting “Pulling Down the Statue of King George III, New York City,” by Johannes Adam Simon Ortel.

“Some people might say I see a statue, others might make connections to protests that are going on today where people are taking down statues of Confederate soldiers,” Ms. Rijkers said. “What