

Court Information Release



United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

Release Date:
December 7, 2022

Contact: Julie Hodek, Public Information Officer
United States District Court for
the Northern District of Illinois
219 S. Dearborn St., #2514A
Chicago, IL 60604
312-435-5693

1,984 Citizenship Candidates Sworn in at Wintrust Arena in District Court's Largest Ever Naturalization Ceremony

Chicago, Ill. - Today the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois hosted its largest ever citizenship ceremony at Wintrust Arena, home of the Chicago Sky and DePaul Basketball. 1,984 citizens from 120 countries were sworn in as new U.S. Citizens.

"Here in Illinois, we live up to our values—opening our doors and lending a hand to all who need it," said Governor JB Pritzker. "While we are a nation still striving to live up to our brightest ideals, we also are a nation that provides protection, opportunity, and hope for the two thousand new citizens who we welcome here all around the world. On behalf of the state of Illinois, welcome home. Together, we will make this state and country stronger by living up to our promises."

"Congratulations and welcome to our new citizens. We are living in a moment of deep division within our country. We are counting on you, our newest citizens, to take an active role in our community and nation. Help us live up to the American ideal of equality and justice for all," said Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer.

Illinois Governor JB Pritzker; Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois; Dr. David L. Manuel, President of DePaul University; and Carissa Sheffler, Deputy District Director, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, all welcomed the new citizens. Circuit Judge Diane P. Wood of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit administered the Oath of Allegiance.

Every year thousands of immigrants visit the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois to be sworn in as U.S. citizens at naturalization ceremonies. The district's judges preside over these ceremonies, which take place in both of the district's courthouses and throughout

the district. Family and friends gather to watch as new citizens take the Oath of Allegiance to the United States, a sworn declaration that every citizenship applicant must recite during a formal ceremony in order to become a naturalized American citizen. When taking the Oath, the new citizen promises to support and defend the U.S. Constitution and the laws of the U.S.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Court has conducted several naturalization ceremonies outdoors and in large public spaces at cultural and civic institutions throughout the district. The Court also continued to conduct ceremonies in the courthouse but was required to limit the number of new citizens at each courthouse ceremony to allow for social distancing and to comply with health guidelines.

##



