

Court Information Release



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

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172 New American Citizens Take Oath at Wrigley Field

CHICAGO, Ill. – Today at Wrigley Field, 172 individuals from 45 countries were sworn in as U.S. citizens. In a first-of-its-kind Independence Day weekend naturalization ceremony, Wrigley Field, home of the Chicago Cubs, hosted the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the new citizens, and their families.

“What better place to welcome new citizens than Wrigley Field – known affectionately as the ‘Friendly Confines.’ We are thrilled to conduct this ceremony here, where we can extend a warm, friendly, and deeply sincere congratulations to 172 newcomers, who will celebrate Independence Day with us for the first time as U. S. Citizens, and work with all of us to form a more perfect union” said Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer.

Judge Pallmeyer; Thomas S. Ricketts, Executive Chairman of the Chicago Cubs; Illinois Governor JB Pritzker; and Congressman Mike Quigley all welcomed the new citizens. U.S. District Judge John Z. Lee, who is a naturalized citizen and is the first Korean American ever to serve as an Article III judge in the Northern District of Illinois, 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 naturalization ceremonies outdoors and has had to limit the number of citizens at each ceremony to allow for social distancing and to comply with health guidelines.

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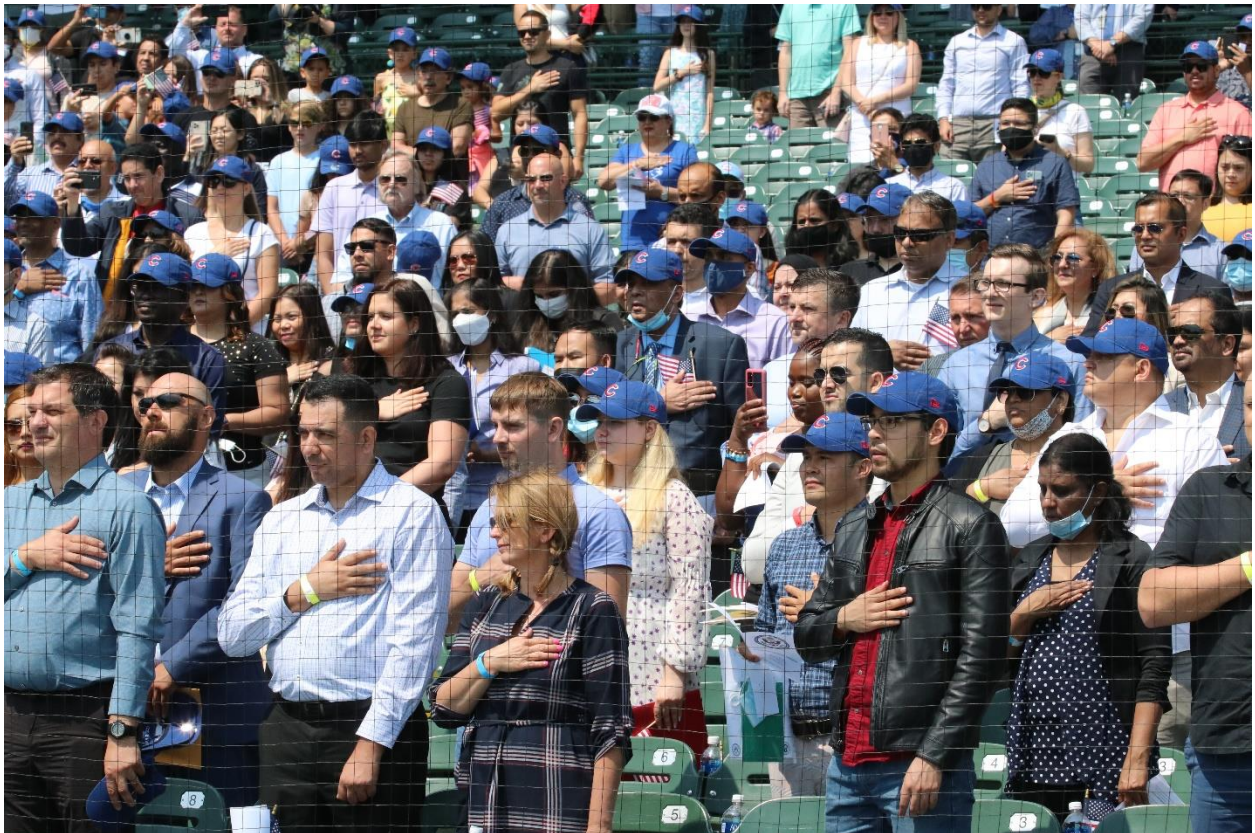
Above: Governor Pritzker; Below: Chief Judge Pallmeyer





Above: Judge Lee administers the Oath of Allegiance.





Photos by Jim Slonoff