



HMONG CULTURAL CENTER

Multicultural Resources, Adult Education, Cultural Education

995 University Avenue West - Suite 214, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104

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HMONG CULTURAL CENTER OFFERS FREE CITIZENSHIP CLASSES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OLDER AND DISABLED HMONG IN OBTAINING NATURALIZATION AS U.S. CITIZENS



Hmong Cultural Center in Saint Paul provides free Citizenship classes targeted towards the needs of the community. Hmong Cultural Center is currently accepting enrollment into its medical waiver citizenship classes for older and disabled Hmong refugees who have documentation from a medical doctor to take the Citizenship test from USCIS in their native Hmong language. Hmong Cultural Center will also provide translation assistance for naturalization interviews at the USCIS for enrolled students in the medical waiver classes. The medical waiver citizenship classes are offered Monday and Tuesdays from 12-2 PM and Wednesday and Thursdays from 12-2.

Since 1996, hundreds of Hmong Americans eligible for medical waivers from USCIS due to physical disabilities, depression or other medical conditions have earned U.S. Citizenship after taking Citizenship classes at the Hmong Cultural Center which has been the primary local agency offering assistance to this special needs population with Citizenship-related services and classes. For more than 15 years, Hmong Cultural Center has had a strong identity as the “Go-to” site for Citizenship-related services in the local Hmong community including test preparation classes, assistance to the refugee elderly in filling out medical waiver forms and transportation and translation at the local USCIS office in Bloomington, MN.

Mee’s Story (Translated from Hmong to English)

“My name is **Mee**. I am a 49 year old woman of the Hmong ancestry. I am divorced and have 7 children of my own. I came to the United States in September of 2005. Before that, I use to live

in a refugee camp in Thailand called Wat Tham Krabok. In that camp, the refugees were treated unfairly because we had no Thai citizenship. When the Thai government officially closed the camp down in 2003, I decided to settle here in Minnesota, because it is all where my relatives reside. After living here for a couple of months, I started to develop major depressive disorders. This prevented me from learning new things. It meant that I could not read, write, or speak in the English language. When I found out that the Hmong Cultural Center helps clients with their U.S. citizenship process, I called and registered to take classes with them. I attended the Monday and Tuesday classes, which started from 10 A.M. and ended at 2 P.M. After several months of trying to learn the basic U.S. history and questions, I was helped by my citizenship instructor with my naturalization process and the fee waiver.

In 2011, I tested and passed the U.S. citizenship test in the Hmong language. From now on, I can forget about the unequal treatments and harassments from Thai nationals in the refugee camp. Right now, I am looking forward to being a hard working U.S. citizen, who is willing to take an oath to the United States and the constitution. Last year, I was sworn in at Arden Hills, MN as a U.S. citizen. With the help of the Hmong Cultural Center, I was able to get the help I needed to become a U.S. citizen.”

Hmong Cultural Center also provides free English language Citizenship Classes open to all community members. English language Citizenship Classes are offered Monday through Thursday 10 AM – Noon and Tuesdays and Thursdays 4-6 PM. English as a Second Language Classes for Immigrant and Refugee Adults are provided at the center Monday through Friday 10 AM – 2 PM and Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 4 – 6 PM. A flyer listing all of HCC’s Citizenship and ESL Classes may be viewed online at:

<http://hmongcc.org/CitizenshipESLflyer.jpg>

For more information and/or to register for a free Citizenship or ESL class, please stop by Hmong Cultural Center at 995 University, Suite 214 in Saint Paul (Sunrise Market Building), call 651-917-9937, visit the Hmong Cultural Center website at <http://www.hmongcc.org> or e-mail cher@hmongcc.org