



**Woodrow Wilson
International
Center
for Scholars**

Mexico Institute

Mobilizing Latino Immigrant Integration: From IRCA to the *Ya Es Hora* Citizenship Campaign, 1987-2007

David R. Ayón

Leavy Center for the Study of Los Angeles
Loyola Marymount University
Los Angeles, CA

Research Paper Series on Latino Immigrant Civic
and Political Participation, No. 1

January 2009

www.wilsoncenter.org/migrantparticipation

Mobilizing Latino Immigrant Integration: From IRCA to the *Ya Es Hora* Citizenship Campaign, 1987-2007

David R. Ayón
Leavy Center for the Study of Los Angeles
Loyola Marymount University

The *Ya Es Hora* (“It’s Time”) campaign, launched in Los Angeles in January 2007, marked the advent of a sustained and comprehensive strategy with national reach aimed at mobilizing Latin American immigrants and leading them to civic participation in the United States. As such, YEH can be seen in concept not only as an extension but even as something of a culmination of two decades of mass immigrant integration and Latino empowerment efforts.

The experience of the first phase of this campaign underscores how both national and local advocacy and service organizations have come to critically interact with Spanish-language communications media as well as with government in efforts to integrate immigrants. This paper examines that first phase of YEH, focused on naturalization and known as *Ya Es Hora: Ciudadanía*, against the backdrop of previous efforts to mobilize Latino immigrants. Some of the most significant of these efforts originated in the *migrante* gateway city of Los Angeles.

The modern era of primarily Latino immigrant mobilization can be dated to the legalization programs of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which gave legal status to over 2.5 million (predominantly Mexican) undocumented migrants. Hundreds of mainly uncoordinated non-governmental entities were authorized in 1987-88 to assist migrants with the legalization process.

Since that time, a number of major campaigns have been undertaken by shifting but often-related coalitions for the purpose of encouraging immigrant naturalization, cooperation with the census, voter registration, voting, and resistance to anti-immigrant policy initiatives. *Ya Es Hora* is the first instance of a strategic plan to pursue several of these objectives in a single, “layered” series of phases under the umbrella of a branded national communications campaign.¹

I. The IRCA Big Bang

Regular governmental functions, such as elections and the decennial census, as well as new and proposed policies have repeatedly provided the occasion for the mobilization of Latino immigrants. YEH was conceived at a meeting in late 2006 in Los Angeles

¹ In 2008, *Ya Es Hora: Regístrate* and *Ya Es Hora: Ve y Vota* followed the 2007 naturalization phase. This paper does not examine these subsequent phases or the transitions to them. An expanded coalition of national partners is planned move on to a YEH Census participation campaign in 2009-10.

between these two sorts of detonators. Preceding it in the spring of that year was the unprecedented series of mass street marches that literally swept the county in protest of an anti-immigrant House bill.² That mobilization developed into a grassroots effort to encourage immigrant participation in the 2006 congressional elections, known by the slogan “Hoy marchamos, mañana votamos.”³ Latino leaders and Hispanic media conceived of YEH as a professionally managed follow-up to these decentralized 2006 efforts, initially in anticipation of the 2008 presidential election.

Large-scale immigrant mobilization in our time, however, was inaugurated two decades earlier by the passage of IRCA in 1986. The long legislative battle over that law resulted in a package of provisions that included a key role for non-governmental bodies in the legalization process. Even though the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) of that time opened over 100 special offices across the country to process legalization applications, it also authorized nearly 1000 non-governmental “Qualified Designated Entities” to process and forward applications to the INS. Such QDEs were modestly compensated for each completed application they submitted.⁴ Faith-based programs and the Catholic Church in particular played a critical role in every phase of IRCA.⁵

Congress also appropriated funds to publicize the amnesty provisions of IRCA, and many community-based organizations fielded their own outreach efforts in cooperation with local media – mainly in Spanish. The appropriated funds primarily went to hire a single national marketing firm, but unlike other immigrant-directed campaigns since then, this outreach program apparently was not branded with a unified slogan, nor did it direct

² See Xóchitl Bada, Jonathan Fox, and Andrew Selee, eds. 2006. *Invisible No More: Mexican Migrant Civic Participation in the United States*. Mexico Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

³ The decentralized, grassroots nature of this effort remains apparent in any internet search of this slogan, which produces thousands of hits but leads to no coordinating organization or sponsoring coalition.

⁴ “QDEs were supposed to receive \$15 from the INS for every legalization application they submitted (\$16 if they were operating under a national umbrella organization).” “The Case for Legalization, Lessons from 1986, Recommendations for the Future” by Donald Kerwin and Charles Wheeler (p. 17): www.cliniclegal.org/Publications/ArticlesbyCLINIC/wheelerandkerwinlegal1986.pdf. Originally appeared in *Issues in Immigration*, Vol. 1 (Center for Migration Studies, 2004); reprinted by *Bender’s Immigration Bulletin*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Feb. 1, 2007). According to Wheeler and Kerwin, most QDEs also charged migrant applicants a fee of \$100.

⁵ Kerwin and Wheeler (ibid, p. 14): “Unfortunately, Congress failed to establish firm standards for the designation of QDE status, resulting in “notarios” and other for-profit consultants obtaining designation. Ultimately, a total of 977 QDEs were designated, many of which were not BIA-recognized, attorney-staffed, or even nonprofit. The INS should have limited QDE status to those nonprofit agencies that had evidenced a capacity, in both experience and expertise, to run a successful and high-volume legalization program. It should then have advertised the names of those QDEs and encouraged applicants to contact them.”

A great deal of fraud was and continues to be committed by unscrupulous notaries public who take advantage of the common meaning of “notario público” in some Latin American countries, where unlike the case in the United States the term designates an attorney at law. See the warnings to this effect provided by the National Notary Association, Legal Services of New Jersey, and the American Immigration Lawyers Association: www.nationalnotary.org/media/index.cfm?Text=mediaReleases&newsID=378, www.lsnjlaw.org/english/immigration/notarios/index.cfm and www.aila.org/content/default.aspx?docid=26749.

migrants to the assisting community organizations. In Los Angeles, this task was taken up by an informal “amnesty coalition” strongly supported by the Church and the daily newspaper *La Opinión*.

IRCA formally provided for six-months preparation prior to the start of the application-filing period in 1987. There were in fact two IRCA legalization programs, a “general amnesty” and a “special” program for agricultural workers, which together received over three million applications.⁶ That so many undocumented migrants stepped forward and were processed in a span of 18 months – about 2.7 million of which achieved legal status – was a remarkable instance of state-driven immigrant mobilization, in spite of the many problems that attended it.

Only about 18% of all the applications filed with the INS were submitted by QDEs, but for a number of reasons this figure greatly understates the role of community-based organizations, churches and ethnic media in the mobilization, as well as the role of immigrant advocates in the ten-year struggle to fashion the legislation. This network focused on the over 1.7 million long-term undocumented resident applicants for general amnesty, and not the nearly 1.3 million agricultural worker applicants.⁷ Furthermore, as Kerwin and Wheeler note, CBOs, churches and ethnic media raised the level of awareness and trust, disseminated information and even assisted with applications that in many cases were then filed directly with INS legalization offices to avoid the QDEs’ charges.⁸

II. *Hágase Contar to No Te Dejes*

The IRCA legalization mobilization of 1987-88 was followed the next year by a formally and explicitly Latino effort to encourage cooperation with the 1990 Census. The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) led the *Hágase Contar* (“Make Yourself Count”) campaign. HC was closely coordinated with the U.S. Census

⁶ “The 1992 Legalization Summary Public Use Tape (LSPUT) file of IRCA LAWs and SAWs, processed through August 12, 1992 consists of 3,040,948 applications (1,763,434 LAWs and 1,277,514 SAWs).” “Evaluating Components of International Migration: The Residual Foreign Born” DAPE Task Team #5 - Unauthorized Migration Evaluation Team. Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census (December 2001) Working Paper Series No. 61: www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0061.html

⁷ The Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) legalization program was introduced as an amendment to the previously negotiated IRCA legislation by then California Sen. Pete Wilson. While the main Legal Authorized Worker (LAW) program required applicants to show 5 or more years of continuous residence, SAW applicants did not have a residence requirement and could apply at INS offices set up along the border. (SAW applicants were required to show “Evidence or information which shows on its face that the applicant performed at least 90 man-days of qualifying employment in seasonal agricultural services during the twelve- month period from May 1, 1985 through May 1, 1986...” The text of this provision is available at http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2008/janqtr/pdf/8cfr210.1.pdf.)

⁸ Kerwin and Wheeler, op cit. The general amnesty program ran for one year, from May 5, 1987 to May 4, 1988, while the special agricultural workers program continued for an extra six months. The start date itself is indicative of the role played by immigrant advocates and Latino leaders in fashioning the bill, as well as the explosive launch of the processing period provided by linking it to *Cinco de Mayo*. The 18% figure alone would represent over 500,000 applications of the total, and would translate into a much higher proportion of the “general amnesty” applications.

Bureau itself, which adopted the slogan and devoted promotional resources to it. Beyond that, HC set a number of precedents replicated decades later by Ya Es Hora.

Hágase Contar, much like YEH, was conceived as a planned and professionally managed intermediate step between a largely uncoordinated mass mobilization (legalization in 1987-88, the marches in 2006) and regular governmental functions of great significance to Latino empowerment. Participation in 1990 Census was seen as a prelude to both the legislative reapportionment and redistricting of 1990-91 and the combined presidential and congressional elections of 1992. These impending occasions for Latino advancement powered the HC drive to be counted, much as the presidential election of 2008 motivated the first phase of the YEH drive to naturalize immigrants en masse in 2007.

Furthermore, the initiative for both campaigns came in the first instance from national Latino organizations headquartered in Los Angeles: MALDEF in the former case, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) in the latter (working closely with the Univision television station KMEX.) And in both cases a branded communications strategy was adopted as a central element of the campaign.⁹

In Los Angeles, in particular, the next major occasion for Latino immigrant mobilization came in response to the 1994 California legislative initiative known as Proposition 187.¹⁰ The countermovement to this referendum took a number of forms and marked a further advance in the repertoire of methods used in mobilizing immigrants and Latinos generally. An official “No on Prop. 187” campaign was organized and led by Latino politicians. Latino-led labor unions (primarily a local of the Service Employees International Union – SEIU) organized a massive street march that was the critical precedent for the many similar mobilizations across the country in 2006. Finally, the LA Spanish-language media acted in concert to propagate the tough-sounding resistance message “*No te dejes.*”¹¹

Rival television broadcasters, in particular, achieved a new level of unity in this effort. Public service announcements communicating the *No te dejes* slogan were scheduled to air simultaneously, so that no viewer of Spanish-language TV at those moments could avoid them. This communications tactic, known as “roadblocks,” anticipated similar joint messaging ventures by broadcasting competitors in both TV and radio leading up to the marches of 2006.¹²

⁹ It is also to be noted that the MALDEF coordinator of *Hágase Contar* in 1989 was Arturo Vargas, who subsequently became executive director of NALEO.

¹⁰ See Kitty Calavita, “The New Politics of Immigration: “Balanced-Budget Conservatism” and the Symbolism of Proposition 187,” *Social Problems* 43:3 (August 1996); Philip Martin, “Proposition 187 in California,” *International Migration Review* 29:1 (Spring, 1995).

¹¹ This is a common phrase in Spanish that can be rendered less effectively as “don’t let yourself get screwed.”

¹² These various historical experiences also demonstrate the sometimes decisive role of individual decisionmakers. The second most watched Spanish-language TV station in Los Angeles, KVEA of the Telemundo network, participated in the 1994 roadblocks, but not in the joint media messaging preceding the marches of 2006, by decision of the local station’s then general manager. By the time of the planning for Ya Es Hora later that same year, NALEO was happy to partner with a single network, Univision, primarily

Further mobilizations in connection with other issues took place in the 1990s, culminating in 1999 with another edition of *Hágase Contar* geared to the 2000 Census. The next significant breakthrough would not come, however, until 2005, and again in Los Angeles.

III. *Ahora es Cuando to Ya Es Hora*

Antonio Villaraigosa's first, failed campaign for mayor in the 2001 election in Los Angeles was not known for its closeness to the city's dominant Spanish-language television outlet and Univision affiliate, KMEX. His second bid in the 2005 election, however, played out differently. Two things had changed in the interim. Villaraigosa decided that he would pay more attention to Spanish-language media and the Latino community in his second run, and a new KMEX news director had brought with him a greater emphasis on advocacy for the community.

Jorge Mettey took over as KMEX news director in 2002, after having served in the same position at the Univision affiliate in Phoenix since 1999. In his Univision career, which began in 1996 in Dallas, Mettey had consistently emphasized what was generally known as "community service," and benefited from improved ratings and professional awards in each of his jobs.¹³ In particular, he brought to Los Angeles a service feature called "A Su Lado," which introduced a series of public information campaigns directly into the nightly news broadcast, visibly complemented by a substantial phone bank permanently installed in the newsroom to take viewer calls on each of the featured subjects in turn.¹⁴

News outlets of every sort commonly place wooden labels on their coverage of electoral cycles, such as "Decision 2008." Under Mettey's direction, KMEX's coverage of the 2005 mayoral election in Los Angeles was branded with the pointed and urgent slogan "*Ahora Es Cuando*" ("Now's the Time"). The station produced a series of public service announcements featuring its on-air talent, each in turn providing a reason for voting, such as "Para que te respeten" ("So that they will respect you"), followed by the slogan "*Ahora es Cuando*."

On the evening of the runoff election, the entire 6:00 pm KMEX News broadcast was devoted to urging viewers to go to the polls, or take others there who had not yet voted. The anchors conveyed a sense of urgency with frequent glances at the clock and reminders of the diminishing amount of time the polls would remain open, which shrank from two hours to 90 minutes. Commercial breaks were filled with the station's public

because of the extraordinary personal relationship that it had developed with its Los Angeles (KMEX) news director Jorge Mettey.

¹³ Mettey in fact disdains the term "community service," which in an interview he characterized as setting up an information table at community events. He was in his Univision career a champion of bold community advocacy by the news programs of the stations he was employed by (19 August 08).

¹⁴ See the "34 A Su Lado" web page at <http://www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml?chid=9450&schid=9451&secid=9456>. The "A Su Lado" feature has been adopted by a number of Univision affiliates. These occasional features are launched during the local evening newscast, and the phone bank remains operational for several hours into the night. Live, telethon-style announcements are made throughout the evening to encourage calls.

service announcements urging voter participation.¹⁵ The level of advocacy broadcasting reached in this experience – crowned that night by the news of Villaraigosa’s historic election -- marked a critical precedent for the campaigns to come.

The following year, when radio deejays took the lead in promoting participation in the first and largest of the immigrant rights demonstrations on March 25, KMEX organized a number of rival TV news personalities in doing the same. Anchors of news programs from different stations appeared in a single, stunning promotional spot, offering a series of reasons for participating in the upcoming mobilization and urging responsible and dignified behavior during the protest march, ending arm in arm intoning the slogan “*Unete, únete, únete*” (which translates literally as “unite, unite, unite,” but which also has the connotation of “join in, join in, join in”). Not to be outdone, the front page of *La Opinión* on the morning of the march featured an immense banner headline that read “*¡A las calles!*” (To the streets!) and a map of the march route.¹⁶

After this experience, it followed that actors such as NALEO, KMEX and *La Opinión* would sooner or later come together to consider what to do next. These three entities had collaborated during electoral cycles on voter education projects, and each had experience in promoting naturalization and voter participation. In October 2006, Marcelo Gaete and Efrain Escobedo of NALEO met over lunch with Mettey of KMEX and hatched the idea of a new campaign to promote immigrant naturalization in the Los Angeles area – a campaign that would enlist community based organizations and link citizenship acquisition in 2007 to voting in the open presidential election of 2008. *La Opinión* was soon brought on board, as well as SEIU shortly thereafter.

IV. Capacities and Relationships

The ease and speed with which the initial collaborators behind YEH launched what developed into a historic campaign of national significance can be related to their complementary individual capabilities, their prior experience working together, and their shared frame of understanding of the significance of the moment. All of these factors can be seen as having developed over two decades in the immigration politics crucible of Los Angeles. At the same time, however, each of these actors was structurally capable of national vision and action.

NALEO, for example, had long perfected a one-stop workshop method of assisting migrants with each of the components of the naturalization process (application, instruction and interview preparation). Organizing and staging such mass workshops at various times brought them into regular collaboration with media partners such as *La Opinión* and KMEX. Furthermore, since the 2000 electoral cycle NALEO had expanded its repertoire to include the promotion of Latino voter participation. Toward this end, it had devised a national educational campaign called “Voces del Pueblo” and in 2004 installed a toll-free, bilingual informational hotline at its headquarters (1-800-Ve-Y-Vota)

¹⁵ I was able to witness and participate in this broadcast live from within the station on May 17, 2005.

¹⁶ See Eduardo Stanley, “‘A las calles!’ To the Streets! Hispanic Media Drive Immigration Demonstrations,” *National Catholic Reporter* (7 April 2006): http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1141/is_ai_n16133474

and fielded get-out-the-vote campaigns in Los Angeles, Houston and New York City.¹⁷ These initiatives brought NALEO into partnerships with the Univision network, a number of the network's affiliated stations across the country, and the Washington, DC-based National Council of La Raza (NCLR), which has its own national affiliate network of nearly 300 community-based organizations.

La Opinión, for its part, had not only been a major actor in every previous immigrant mobilization and electoral cycle in Los Angeles, but had established a particular role for itself in voter registration and education. Starting in the mid-1990s, this was the only newspaper authorized by the California Secretary of State to include official, postpaid voter registration forms in its voter education supplements. After creating a national Spanish-language newspaper company called ImpreMedia in 2004, *La Opinión*'s approach to voter registration was extended to the other ImpreMedia newspapers and websites.¹⁸ Needless to say, the SEIU locals were pillars of get-out-the-vote field efforts in all their forms, and regularly coordinated with the national union in these campaigns.

As we have already seen, KMEX had institutionalized the community service feature “A Su Lado,” which had a constant need for public education causes to embrace, and the station had furthermore experienced great success with its approach to the 2005 mayoral election and the 2006 marches. Thus the standing practices, capabilities and relationships of all these organizations particularly lent themselves to developing a new partnership between them, especially in light of the historical moment of late 2006.

That moment was defined not only by the dramatic immigrant movement of the previous spring and the regular opportunity that would be presented for Latino empowerment by the presidential election in 2008. It should be noted that the media companies, as businesses, had a pecuniary motive as well. Every electoral cycle presented an opportunity to sell time and space for political advertising, but electoral campaigns and political parties have been slow to invest in Spanish-language media. NALEO was a trusted provider of hard data on Latino voters who follow these media. A visible expansion of the Spanish-dominant electorate would strengthen the appeal of the media companies to the campaigns and parties – but such an expansion in time for the whole 2008 national election cycle would require urgent action.¹⁹

In this atmosphere, Mettey had his KMEX news producers develop a list of potential names for the campaign. *Ya Es Hora*, which appeared last on the list, was picked by one

¹⁷ “Ve y vota” means “Go Vote.” The hotline also served as a means of reporting any irregularities experienced in the voting process. NALEO had established citizenship promotion field offices in Houston and New York City several years earlier.

¹⁸ At the time of the YEH campaign's launch in January 2007, ImpreMedia owned and operated the dailies *La Opinión* in Los Angeles and *El Diario La Prensa* in New York City, as well as weeklies in Chicago (*La Raza*), the San Francisco Bay Area (*El Mensajero*), and Orlando and Tampa (*La Prensa*), which all came to participate in the campaign.

¹⁹ California was among the various states in the process of moving up the date of their presidential primary to February 5. This was expected to draw the campaigns to the state and make it an early battleground, as in fact it ultimately did.

of the NALEO staffers on the way into the incipient coalition's first meeting with CBOs at KMEX in Los Angeles in December 2006, where it was immediately embraced.²⁰ By the end of January, the sense of urgency was considerably augmented by a proposed 69% increase in government fees for applying for naturalization that would come into effect in July.

The various participants and collaborators in the campaign had divergent understandings and intentions regarding its scope and extent. Some conceived of it as focused on naturalization in the LA area in early 2007.²¹ But both internal and external factors pulled the concept in a national and multi-phased direction. *La Opinión*, for example, wanted to be identified as a *national* media sponsor using its parent company logo (ImpreMedia), whose five newspapers at that time were distributed in eight different cities, including Chicago and New York. And Mettey was attracted to the public goal of either having the campaign generate a million new citizens and voters or at least pushing the number of citizenship applications for the year to over a million.²²

In addition to Los Angeles, NALEO was prepared to “go deep” in New York and Houston, where the organization has satellite offices devoted to promoting naturalization. However, when the campaign was presented as a KMEX project to a regularly scheduled conference call with the community affairs directors of Univision owned and operated stations, some moved quickly to begin organizing their own local meetings in cities such as Miami where NALEO lacked a presence on the ground.²³ NCLR joined the group of national sponsors, bringing access to its broad affiliate network, as well as the advance groundwork it was laying specifically in Miami where it was to have its 2007 annual convention.

V. Campaign Structure

There are at least two ways of defining the basic structure of the Ya Es Hora campaign. Following the original Los Angeles model, the core of YEH in each fully organized

²⁰ NALEO had conducted focus groups in 2005 that showed them that a key element that was lacking in their efforts to promote naturalization was that immigrants did not feel a sense of urgency. According to Marcelo Gaete, then of NALEO, up until they went into this meeting, the organizers had no name for the urgency that they felt themselves. Gaete has since moved to Entravision, a group of Univision affiliates which also joined as a YEH national media partner.

²¹ As of this writing in 2008, the Ya Es Hora website (www.yaeshora.info) still showed its original focus on Southern California on its page titled “Organizaciones” (www.yaeshora.info/organizaciones). However, its extensive directory of affiliated service providers showed that the campaign had been extended to 11 states and the District of Columbia (See Appendix 1).

²² Applications in fiscal year 2006 had amounted to 730,000 – but FY 2007 had already begun the previous October, a full quarter before the start of the campaign. Mettey wanted to announce and use the goal of one million, and in fact put a countdown ticker (starting at 1 million and counting backwards) onscreen during news stories on the campaign. The NALEO staffers opposed the idea of a publicly stated goal of a million new citizens.

²³ Univision has 17 owned and operated local stations from coast to coast, and two more in Puerto Rico. Entravision Communications, which also joined the YEH campaign as a national media sponsor, owns and operates another 18 Univision affiliates.

community joined a media campaign with a local CBO field structure, linked by the umbrella partnership of national organizations and media partners. Community-based organizations were required in two categories, information providers and naturalization assistance organizations that would operate “citizenship centers.”²⁴ From a ground-based point of view, mobilizing the latter in key markets was the “linchpin” of the operation: a group of separate organizations that would provide full-fledged naturalization assistance for a common fee, whether provided in special one-stop workshops or on a daily basis “through the door” at their “citizenship centers.”²⁵

“Going deep” in a community thus required a meeting to convene CBOs, determining which category each would fall into, negotiating a common fee for the citizenship centers and signing memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with all participants.²⁶ NALEO staffers conducted such meetings in an undetermined number of cities. Interviews with these staffers, however, also suggest a somewhat different structural logic to the campaign: that the presence of a Univision affiliate itself served as the starting point of organizing a community and as the backbone of a local campaign. In fact the first CBOs meeting in Los Angeles was held at KMEX, and at least one other metropolitan area (the San Francisco Bay Area) appears to have been independently organized by the Univision station there without with participation of NALEO.²⁷

In the fully organized communities, the participating CBOs would benefit from being promoted in the media campaign, display the YEH poster on-site certifying their membership, receive referrals from the national NALEO hotline and website (as well as the Univision stations’ own local websites,²⁸ and some “A Su Lado” phone banks on certain occasions), and the provision of literature and technical assistance. They would furthermore use their affiliation with the campaign in their own ongoing promotional activities and materials.

²⁴ The information providers primarily distributed “citizenship packets” assembled by NALEO, which enabled immigrants to apply on their own, assisted by the toll-free hotline and the series of special programs broadcast in a number of markets and also available on the YEH website. Some information providers also lent facilities and volunteers for workshops conducted by naturalization assistance organizations.

²⁵ This was especially the view of NCLR.

²⁶ See sample MOU in Appendix 2. Arriving at a common fee structure was in some cases a source of tension, as some number of CBOs relies on these fees as a major source of revenue. In Los Angeles and in most other communities, a \$25 fee was adopted for a specified period of time. In Washington, DC, however, Catholic Charities had been charging \$100 per application, and could not come down as low. In that case, up to a \$40 fee was allowed during the campaign (Lindsay Daniels interview, NCLR, 2 May 2008).

²⁷ As Appendix 3 listing Univision station websites indicates, the San Francisco station’s YEH web page was one of the more complete sources of information. Nevertheless, Bay Area CBOs do not appear on the Ya Es Hora website maintained by NALEO, and those listed on the station’s site did not file MOUs with NALEO.

²⁸ See Appendix 3 comparing local YEH pages on Univision station websites in seven cities, and snapshot of Houston station page in Appendix 4.

The NALEO hotline served as a feedback loop for quality control, fielding complaints as well as providing information.²⁹ NALEO staff generated daily reports indicating the calls' place of origin and subject matter. The calls from every city in the campaign were assigned to either NALEO, NCLR or SEIU for follow-up, if needed. These calls formed the basis for downgrading naturalization assistance organizations to information providers, if necessary.³⁰

This level of on-the-ground organization and national coordination, however, was predicated on a compelling media campaign. The local Univision affiliate would be central in every city, but having a print sponsor and support from radio were also key elements in achieving a comprehensive campaign in the more organized communities. These and other factors made Los Angeles, the first community organized, an exemplary case. The combination there of experienced CBOs with optimal buy-in from each form of media was especially effective.

In this case, NALEO worked with KMEX not only on public service announcements and some "A Su Lado" features, but also assisted with a series of 30-minute special programs covering each dimension of the naturalization process. The early morning local TV program also installed a "citizenship desk" that daily displayed an immigrant filling out naturalization forms, assisted by a campaign worker. The station's news programs furthermore incorporated the message of the need and value of acquiring citizenship and becoming voters into news stories of every type. And on every Friday for several months during the campaign, a reporter or one of the evening news anchors would be featured live from a citizenship workshop that was promoted on the air throughout the day. In most cases these workshops, coordinated by NALEO with a single CBO in each case, continued throughout the weekend.

La Opinión for its part covered the campaign as whole, guiding readers to both the hotline and campaign website both in its own pages and its own website; ran stories and announcements of citizenship workshops, and in a special feature reproduced a sample N-400 citizenship application with a guide to filling it out.³¹ At the same time that over 500,000 *La Opinión* readers passed around an annotated reproduction of the naturalization

²⁹ Toward this end, Univision Los Angeles produced a fast-moving 30-second PSA featuring 11 immigrant leaders that not only promoted the campaign, but also urged that any irregularity be reported to the hotline. Titled "Ya Es Hora: El Compromiso," this promo can also be seen on a number of local Univision YEH pages, such as at:

<http://www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml;jsessionid=3IFH4OLD5IFMOCWIAAPCFFIKZAADYIW C?chid=9450&schid=9451&secid=19107#p>

³⁰ Jorge Mettey saw the participation of local organization leaders in his professionally produced PSAs and on his news programs as a critical instrument in holding them personally accountable as well. He considered their on-camera statements and visibility a source of leverage in assuring faithful performance of the campaign's tenets, and was prepared to take them to task on the air if their organizations failed to deliver (Interview, 19 August 08).

³¹ All five ImpreMedia newspapers in 2007 (see fn. 19) carried the naturalization form feature at different points of the campaign. *La Opinión* also utilized its even higher circulation free weekly known as *Contigo* to promote the YEH campaign.

form, the host of the top Spanish-language radio program both in the Los Angeles market and in national syndication also promoted the campaign in a variety of ways.

Eddie Sotelo and his program “Piolín por la Mañana” on Univision Radio incessantly encouraged his listeners to apply for citizenship, engaged them with a mock game show that posed multiple-choice civics questions called “Who Wants to Be a Citizen?” and set a personal example by publicly applying for citizenship himself. Sotelo, a Mexican immigrant who originally entered without documents but achieved legal status, appeared at a citizenship workshop to initiate his application and was sworn in as a citizen in June of 2008. Both moments were covered by the Los Angeles media and recorded in photos and stories featured on a number of Univision station websites.³²

In some communities the local television partners were prepared to go further still. In Phoenix, for example, the Channel 33 Univision station staged a continuous 33-hour *Ya Es Hora: Ciudadanía* telethon. This level of motivation appears to reflect in multiple ways the effectiveness of the campaign and its slogan.

“Ya Es Hora” captured the sense of urgency awakened by the 2006 marches and the sense of an entire community acting together, the failure of comprehensive immigration reform, the proliferation of immigration raids and local crackdowns on the undocumented, the change in control of the Congress, the impending naturalization fee increase and the approaching 2008 presidential election. Some of the organizers feel that the slogan indeed resonated, but that its repetition (and repeatability) was even more important.

Therein lies the conviction, apparently held most strongly at NALEO and the Univision stations, that the branded communications strategy was the key element of the mobilization. The ease with which the slogan elicits an echo and can be endlessly repeated – both on camera and in private conversation -- may certainly have been key to pulling off a 33-hour telethon in its name. The central role assigned to the communications strategy is also indicative of both the degree of integration of media organizations into the top tier of national Latino leadership and many of these leaders’ assimilation of a mass-marketing ethos at least since the 1990 Census campaign.

VI. National Reach

Certain aspects of the media campaign automatically had national reach as soon as they were established or brought on board early in the first phase in Los Angeles: NALEO’s *Ya Es Hora* website and telephone hotline, Eddie Sotelo’s nationally syndicated program on Univision Radio, as well as coverage on the *La Opinión* website and the local KMEX web page. The Univision network also featured the campaign in its news coverage, ran national PSAs, and involved its news anchors in online features on the network website. The local depth or density of the campaign in markets beyond Los Angeles, however, varied greatly.

³² See, for example, the photo, story and audio links at: <http://www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml;jsessionid=3IFH4OLD5IFMOCWIAAPCFFIKZAADYIW C?chid=9450&schid=9451&secid=19107#p>

The participation of both media partners and CBOs in each community depended upon local conditions and the orientation and disposition of the actors to be found there. For example, the great exception nationally was the key market of Chicago and the state of Illinois. There, due to the success of immigrant advocates in winning state government support for naturalization, a different regime altogether operates, in the form of “a partnership between the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and the State of Illinois, launched with the support of Governor Rod Blagojevich.”³³

This partnership in Illinois is known as the “New Americans Initiative” with its own network of state-financed CBOs.³⁴ A selection of participating Illinois CBOs are listed in the Ya Es Hora website, but there appears to be no accompanying support from the Univision station in Chicago for YEH, nor does the separate Illinois initiative have the appearance of a campaign. A basic difference between this state-financed initiative and YEH is that the former is designed and managed non-ethnically in English, while the latter is branded and available exclusively in Spanish.³⁵

The Chicago exception appeared to be confirmed in 2008 when the mayors of Los Angeles, New York, Houston, Dallas, San Francisco and Miami, gathered at the U.S. Conference of Mayors, announced their participation in the follow-on phases of the Ya Es Hora campaign focused on voter participation in the 2008 elections. The absence of Chicago mayor Richard M. Daley from this initiative did not pass unnoticed back home.³⁶

VII. Measuring Results

One quantifiable measure of the internal success and strength of a national campaign such as YEH is its ability to recruit and formally engage a broad range of local community-based organizations. By the time of the peak of the naturalization phase in July 2007 (prior to the July 30 fee increase), over 300 organizations had been signed, operating more than 400 citizenship centers and conducting over 200 citizenship workshops. Furthermore, the entire campaign network had distributed over 100,000 citizenship packets or naturalization guides.³⁷

But before the campaign could directly assist immigrants in person with their naturalization applications, a common fee had to be negotiated in each community. And yet another source of tension presented itself in organizing and extending the campaign. Having CBOs of widely ranging sizes and capacities agree to participate required that no

³³ See www.yaeshora.info/centros/illinois.

³⁴ See www.becomeacitizennow.org

³⁵ The New Americans Initiative provides links, literature and services in both Korean and Spanish, but these must first be found on the English language site. The participating Illinois CBOs are compensated by the state for the naturalization services that they provide without a fee to the applicants. The Chicago Univision station refused to provide free support for YEH when the state-financed “New Americans Initiative” buys paid advertising to promote citizenship (Mettey Interview, 19 August 08).

³⁶ See <http://chicagoargus.blogspot.com/2008/06/where-have-you-gone-mayor-daley.html>

³⁷ NALEO, “Ya Es Hora: Ciudadanía.” Report presented to the We Are America Alliance, October 9, 2007. This report also detailed the numbers of calls received to the hotline and hits to the website.

numerical targets would be established nor would there be systematic reporting of the number of applications assisted with during the campaign.

Thus, assessing the ultimate impact of the YEH naturalization campaign depends largely upon the imperfect method of analyzing the numbers of applications officially reported as received by the US Customs and Immigration Service (CIS). This does not allow us to distinguish between the outreach of the media campaign and the service provided by the campaign-affiliated CBOs, on one hand, from the independent impact of the announced increase in naturalization fees on the other. Of course, even if we had an accounting of the applicants assisted by the CBOs, we would still not be able to weigh the role of the impending fee increase, awareness of which was in large part raised by the YEH campaign itself.

USCIS first announced on January 31 that it was proposing an increase in the basic fee from \$400 to \$675. Public comment on this proposal was allowed until April 2, and the official decision on the fee increase was taken at the end of May. The fee itself went up at the end of July. Thus the YEH citizenship campaign was launched in Los Angeles before the fee proposal was made public and carried out there for several months before the increase became official. The four-month public comment period, however, actually served the campaign's purposes in promoting the message that "It's Time" to file for citizenship.

During the first quarter of 2007, naturalization applications nationwide increased by 59% over 2006. But in Los Angeles the relative increase was 123%. Asked by *The Wall Street Journal* to comment on the campaign and its apparent impact, the Los Angeles USCIS district director Jane Arellano stated "I have never seen anything like it in my [39 year] career. It's big."³⁸

It is also worth noting that the Office of Immigration Statistics of the Department of Homeland Security acknowledged the role of the campaign in reporting on naturalization applications filed nationwide in fiscal year 2007 as compared to FY 2006:

*The number of naturalization applications filed with USCIS doubled from 730,000 in 2006 to 1,380,000 in 2007 due to several factors, including a fee increase and efforts by Hispanic media and grass-roots organizations to encourage eligible residents to apply for U.S. citizenship.*³⁹

This extraordinary increase would have severely challenged any agency. Exacerbating the problem, however, is that it came *after* a multi-year backlog elimination effort at USCIS had ended in 2006. This effort had contributed to steadily increasing naturalizations from 2003-2006, and apparently to the dip in actual naturalizations in FY 2007 as the backlog was diminished.

³⁸ Miriam Jordan, "Univision Gives Citizenship Drive An Unusual Lift: Broadcaster Uses Clout To Mobilize Latino Vote; Bloc May Alter '08 Race." *Wall Street Journal* May 10, 2007

³⁹ Nancy Rytina and Selena Caldera, "Annual Flow Report: Naturalizations in the United States: 2007." DHS Office of Immigration Statistics (July 2008), p. 2.
www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/natz_fr_07.pdf

Persons Naturalized, national total and from principal Latin American countries, Fiscal Years 2002-2007

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
National Total	660,477	702,589	604,280	537,151	463,204	573,708
Mexico	122,258	83,979	77,089	63,840	56,093	76,531
Dominican Republic	20,645	22,165	20,831	15,464	12,627	15,591
El Salvador	17,157	13,430	12,174	9,602	8,738	10,716
Cuba	15,394	21,481	11,227	11,236	7,727	10,889

Source: Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics⁴⁰

The number of completed naturalization applications pending a decision at the end of FY 2006 had stood at 470,000. The fee increase approved for mid-calendar year 2007 was justified in large part as providing the resources that would be needed to keep the backlog from growing again. Nevertheless, the backlog grew in 2007 even faster than the inflow of applications. At the end of FY 2007, the number of applications pending a decision had soared to 1,130,000.

VIII. Lessons

The success of *Ya Es Hora: Ciudadanía* is such that this campaign merits careful study on a number of levels. It might be supposed that due to the involvement of national organizations and media, the YEH case has little relevance for actors operating at the local level. Yet it must be remembered that the campaign began locally, albeit in the major market of Los Angeles.

There can be no doubt that the national reach and connections of the strategic partners were critical to projecting the campaign beyond Los Angeles and reproducing significant elements of it in other cities. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that the campaign would probably have not have been emulated elsewhere if not for its runaway local success. When NALEO representatives presented their concept in February of 2007 to the We Are America Alliance, for example, they were met with skepticism. But after the Los Angeles example became apparent, this alliance joined the YEH campaign as another national partner. What accounted for this success?

The fortuitousness of the moment cannot be discounted. Yet even this merits careful study. The immigrant rights movement of 2006 made history, but the mobilization soon

⁴⁰ Ibid., and Nancy Ryтина and Chunnong Saeger, “Annual Flow Report: Naturalizations in the United States: 2004.” DHS Office of Immigration Statistics (June 2005): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/NaturalizationFlowReport2004.pdf

phased out, and the effort to translate it into voter participation (“One Million New Voters”) was not perceived as a success. NALEO knew why – too many of the marchers were not citizens for a mass voter registration drive to succeed. But resources for naturalization efforts had become progressively harder to find, and internally the possibility had even been raised of closing NALEO’s citizenship department. Furthermore, many “movement” leaders and organizations lack the skills, patience or even the ideological inclination for the relatively slow, bureaucratic work of naturalization.

Nonetheless, the fact of an approaching presidential contest of great consequence provided a focal point for cooperation and invention. Given long delays in processing, naturalization of eligible immigrants could not wait. But in this sense, YEH had a great advantage over the organizers of the marches the year before who tried to shift their focus to the 2006 congressional elections: there was enough time in early 2007 to mount a naturalization campaign to create a significant number of new citizens who would be eligible to vote in 2008.

Estimated Legal Permanent Residents Eligible to Naturalize (millions), national total, and from principal Latin American countries, 2002-2006

	2006	2004	2003	2002
National Total	8 . 25	8 . 0	7 . 9	7 . 8
Mexico	2 . 65	2 . 4	2 . 4	2 . 4
Dominican Republic	. 31	. 3	. 3	. 32
El Salvador	. 22	. 2	. 2	. 18
Cuba	. 23	. 2	. 2	. 21

Source: Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics⁴¹

Another key factor that gave the concept legs, so to speak, has a dual character. Los Angeles presented a relative wealth of community organizations individually capable of providing naturalization assistance, on one hand, and a towering Spanish-language media

⁴¹ Nancy Rytina, “Population Estimates: Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population in 2006.” DHS Office of Immigration Statistics (February 2008): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/LPR_PE_2006.pdf; “Population Estimates: Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population and Population Eligible to Naturalize in 2004” (February 2006): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/LPRest2004.pdf; “Population Estimates: Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population and Population Eligible to Naturalize in 2003” (January 2005): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/EstimateLPR2003.pdf; “Population Estimates: Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population and Population Eligible to Naturalize in 2002” (May 2004): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/lprest2002.pdf

establishment, on the other.⁴² A compelling idea hatched at the right time brought these two broad sectors together.

At least as important were the experience and pre-existing relationships of the key actors involved. A fundamental component of this factor was the close working relationship between advocate-actors such as NALEO and media organizations such as KMEX and *La Opinión* (referred to in one interview as “the traditional partners.”) These relationships not only extended the potential effectiveness of the participants’ combined strengths; they were essential to their shared understanding of the role of communications and marketing.

These factors, however, might not have been operative without the conditions of a shared “mainstream” ethos on the part of the principal actors, as well as the impeccably mainstream character of the campaign’s original objective: the naturalization of *legal* immigrants. Not all immigrant advocates, needless to say, quite so emphatically share these commitments.

The principal partners’ synergistic convergence in this regard is strongly suggested by the “Ya Es Hora” slogan itself. Although a NALEO staffer picked it off of a list, this phrase more closely resembles KMEX’s “Ahora Es Cuando” than it does either NALEO’s “Voces del Pueblo” or “Ve y Vota,” or MALDEF’s “Hágase Contar.” YEH takes the earnest civic values conveyed by the latter slogans and charges them with urgency and passion, resulting in a sort of mainstream passionate earnestness as suitable for the community organizer as for evening news anchor.

Two decades of efforts to advance immigrant integration, pioneered to a significant extent in Los Angeles, manifest a number of lines of development. The Latino immigrant community has both ballooned locally and spread across the country to an unprecedented extent. Furthermore, this population’s willingness and ability to mobilize has been repeatedly demonstrated. CBOs geared to this population appear to have grown in number and capacity, such that the Church is somewhat less of a factor than it was in the 1980s. National Latino organizations have become stronger and more experienced in both dealing directly with immigrants and acquiring resources in their name.

Finally, the Spanish-language media has developed into an ethnic communications industry that is unique in American corporate history and in its voluntary commitment to public service. Taken together, these elements constitute a standing potential that can be activated at certain times by credible actors who have cultivated strategic relationships and share a common frame of reference. The final element is a compelling idea or vision that is rooted both in the strengths of the principal actors as well as a basic community need or potential for advancement.

On the other side of this dynamic, however, is the role of state policy, functions and capacity. While policy regularly motivates mobilization, it and inadequate state capacity

⁴² KMEX is the Spanish-language television with the largest audience in the country by far; similarly, *La Opinión* is the country’s largest Spanish-language daily. Los Angeles is also home of the Spanish-language radio program with the largest audience (*El Piolín por la Mañana*, on Univision Radio.)

often constrain immigrant integration as well. Jane Arellano, USCIS district director in Los Angeles, was by all accounts amply supportive of YEH. Arellano made it possible for NALEO to assemble and distribute over 100,000 citizenship packets containing N-400 naturalization applications across the country – when other district directors elsewhere would not even agree to meet with the organizers. Nevertheless, perhaps hundreds of thousands of migrants helped and motivated by the Ya Es Hora campaign were not processed in time to participate in the primary elections of 2008, and far too many of them were unable to achieve citizenship by the time of the November election.

Compared to the success of YEH itself, the still inadequate citizenship processing capacity of USCIS suggests both a target for popular mobilization and a significantly enhanced role for pro-immigrant legislators. With regard to advancing immigrant integration in the United States, neither the bureaucracy nor the legislative power it answers to appear to have developed their capabilities since IRCA in a fashion commensurate with that of civil society and the private sector.

SOURCES

Conversations with Marcelo Gaete of Entravision (and formerly of NALEO); Arturo Vargas, Efrain Escobedo, Javier Angulo and Erika Beltrán of NALEO; Lindsay Daniels of NCLR (now with the We Are America Alliance); Jorge Mettey, formerly of KMEX; Christina Sánchez-Camino of KMEX, Ivelisse Estrada of Univision, Ricardo Ramírez of USC, and my wife Monica Lozano of *La Opinión*/ImpreMedia were essential to writing this paper.

Bada, Xóchitl, Jonathan Fox, and Andrew Selee, eds. 2006. *Invisible No More: Mexican Migrant Civic Participation in the United States*. Mexico Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Calavita, Kitty, “The New Politics of Immigration: “Balanced-Budget Conservatism” and the Symbolism of Proposition 187,” *Social Problems* 43:3 (August 1996);

Gleason, Peggy “Will History Repeat Itself?: A Guide to Immigration Legalization Preparation.” Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC) *Legalization Project* www.cliniclegal.org June, 2006

Jordan, Miriam, “Univision Gives Citizenship Drive An Unusual Lift: Broadcaster Uses Clout To Mobilize Latino Vote; Bloc May Alter '08 Race.” *Wall Street Journal* May 10, 2007

Kerwin, Donald and Charles Wheeler, “The Case for Legalization, Lessons from 1986, Recommendations for the Future” by:
www.cliniclegal.org/Publications/ArticlesbyCLINIC/wheelerandkerwinlegal1986.pdf. Originally appeared in *Issues in Immigration*, Vol. 1 (Center for Migration Studies, 2004); reprinted by *Bender’s Immigration Bulletin*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Feb. 1, 2007)

Martin, Philip, “Proposition 187 in California,” *International Migration Review* 29:1 (Spring, 1995).

NALEO, “Ya Es Hora: Ciudadanía.” Report presented to the We Are America Alliance, October 9, 2007.

Pachon, Harry P., “Paying too much to be American: Increasing naturalization fees would alienate foreign-born residents from our political system.” *Los Angeles Times*. April 2, 2007: <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-oe-pachon2apr02,0,6819587.story?coll=la-news-comment-opinions>

Rytina, Nancy, “Population Estimates: Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population in 2006.” DHS Office of Immigration Statistics (February 2008): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/LPR_PE_2006.pdf; “Population Estimates: Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population and Population Eligible to Naturalize in 2004” (February 2006): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/LPRest2004.pdf; “Population Estimates: Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population and Population Eligible to Naturalize in 2003” (January 2005): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/EstimateLPR2003.pdf; “Population Estimates: Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population and Population Eligible to Naturalize in 2002” (May 2004): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/lprest2002.pdf

Rytina, Nancy and Selena Caldera, “Annual Flow Report: Naturalizations in the United States: 2007.” DHS Office of Immigration Statistics (July 2008)

Rytina, Nancy and Chunnong Saeger, “Annual Flow Report: Naturalizations in the United States: 2004.” DHS Office of Immigration Statistics (June 2005): www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/NaturalizationFlowReport2004.pdf

Rolph, Elizabeth and Abby Robyn, *A Window on Immigration Reform: Implementing IRCA in Los Angeles*. RAND and the Urban Institute, 1990. JRI-06: www.rand.org/pubs/joint_reports-immigration/JRI06

Stanley, Eduardo, “‘A las calles!’ To the Streets! Hispanic Media Drive Immigration Demonstrations,” *National Catholic Reporter* (7 April 2006): http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1141/is_/ai_n16133474

Task Team #5 - Unauthorized Migration Evaluation Team, “Evaluating Components of International Migration: The Residual Foreign Born.” Population Division, □U.S. Bureau of the Census (December 2001) Working Paper Series No. 61: www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0061.html

APPENDIX 1

YA ES HORA: CIUDADANIA HOME PAGE: www.yaeshora.info

(Snapshot 4 January 2009)



ya es hora
¡CIUDADANIA!
1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (1-888-839-8682)

HAZTE CIUDADANO ★ **ORGANIZACIONES** ★ **ELECTED OFFICIALS** ★ **SOBRE YA ES HORA**

PASOS PARA LA CIUDADANIA

1. [Completar la Solicitud](#)
2. [Reciba Confirmación](#)
3. [Las Huellas Digitales](#)
4. [La Entrevista](#)
5. [El Juramento](#)
6. [Regístrese para Votar](#)

NATIONAL COORDINATORS

REGIONAL PARTNERS

Ya es hora para un mejor futuro...
¡Mejores oportunidades de trabajo!
Y obtener tus derechos como ciudadano



Eventos

- ★ [Denton Citizenship Workshop](#)
01/17/2009
Denton, Texas
- ★ [Citizenship & Immigration Forum](#)
01/29/2009
Houston, Texas
- ★ [St. Luke's Workshop](#)
02/21/2009
Irving, Texas

[Mas Talleres](#)
[Add my workshop](#)

Centros de Ciudadanía

- ★ [Arizona](#)
- ★ [California](#)
- ★ [Colorado](#)
- ★ [District Of Columbia](#)
- ★ [Florida](#)
- ★ [Illinois](#)
- ★ [New England](#)
- ★ [New York](#)
- ★ [Oregon](#)
- ★ [Texas](#)

[more](#)

Documentos

- ★ [Guía para la Naturalización \(May 08\)](#)
- ★ [La Solicitud N-400](#)
- ★ [Preguntas Para El Examen](#)
- ★ [25 Preguntas Para Excepción 65/20](#)
- ★ [Preguntas - Examen Para Personas Que Aplican Despues de Oct. 1, 2008](#)
- ★ [Flash Cards](#)

| **DESIGNED AND MANAGED BY THE NALEO EDUCATIONAL FUND © 2007** | [VOLUNTEER](#) | [LATEST NEWS](#) [CONTACT Us](#)



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

I, on behalf of _____, as the authorized decision-making representative, make a commitment to join the *YA ES HORA ¡CIUDADANIA!* Campaign to promote U.S. Citizenship and assist eligible permanent residents in applying for naturalization. My organization is fully committed to serving as an official member of the *YA ES HORA ¡CIUDADANIA!* Campaign and in designating our office as a "*YA ES HORA Centro de Ciudadanía.*" We agree to:

- Be a participating member of the campaign from date of execution of this document until February 29, 2008.
- Promote the *YA ES HORA ¡CIUDADANIA!* Campaign
- Allow my organization/facility(ies) to be promoted as a *YA ES HORA Centro de Ciudadanía* in any public communication
- Make N-400 packets available to the community
- Assist applicants with inquiries related to U.S. Citizenship, including specific questions about the N-400 application. We will refer persons to (888) Ve-Y-Vota for inquiries that we cannot answer, or if there are legal questions that may make the applicant ineligible or jeopardize their legal status. A checklist of common legal questions will be provided
- We will join our campaign members on Saturday December 1, 2007, and January 26, 2008 to either assist applicants with questions about U.S. Citizenship and/or ESL, or the N-400 Naturalization Form, or participate/provide volunteers for a Citizenship Workshop.

Must select one of the following:

- My organization is not a Naturalization Form Assistance Provider:**
My organization does not have experience in helping applicants fill out the N-400. We will have staff (i.e. staff who have direct contact with applicants) attend a training to learn the basics of U.S. Citizenship and N-400's in order to assist or refer applicants who come to my office/classes with questions or inquiries to participating Naturalization Form Assistance Providers.

(Optional: Check all that apply)

- Our facility/ies can be made available for N-400 assistance workshops or events.
- We can recruit/provide volunteers for N-400 assistance workshops or events (with training provided by a local Naturalization Assistance organization).

- My organization is a Naturalization Form Assistance Provider:**
My organization has experience in helping applicants fill out the N-400 form. We agree to assist applicants by reviewing applications, make corrections, and submit to the USCIS. We will make a copy of the completed N-400 forms for our organization's records and agree to report number of applications completed, if and when requested.

FEES: My organization may provide N-400 services free of charge. However, in accordance with the *YA ES HORA ¡CIUDADANIA!* Campaign alliance, my organization has the option to charge no more than \$25.00 to assist persons in filling the N-400 application. The \$25.00 fee must include 1) review and completion (print or computer-generated) of the N-400 application; 2) at least two copies of the N-400 (copy for applicant, copy for organization). The \$25.00 fee does not include envelope, postage, and passport photos. My organization may assess an additional maximum fee of \$10.00 for passport photos. The \$25.00 fee does not include services for applicants who have been screened out as having legal issues that would require additional legal counsel.

We enter this agreement with our fellow campaign members in the spirit of collaboration for the common goal of empowering the community by facilitating the naturalization process of eligible permanent residents. I understand that the *YA ES HORA ¡CIUDADANIA!* Campaign steering committee may revoke our status as a campaign member if any of the provisions above are violated.

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

APPENDIX 3:
Ya Es Hora campaign on local Univision Station web pages (accessed July 2008)

City - Channel	Naturalization Guide	20 Exam Questions Link	Link to Forms	Locations Directory (#Info/#Full)	Workshops Calendar	NALEO Hotline	Video
Dallas ¹ - 23		Complete new (2008) exam only				In video	Local launch & 30 minute Special Documentaries ²
Houston ³ - 45	X	X	X	Local directory (16/4) <i>with maps</i>	X	X	Local launch & naturalization stories
Los Angeles ⁴ - 34	X	X (and new exam)	X			X	Promo & segment; 4 Documentaries
Miami ⁵ - 23	X	X (and new exam)	X	Local directory (11/8) with contact persons list	X (in directory)	X	
NYC ⁶ - 41		X	X	YEH (13/33)		X	Link to LA segment & documentaries
San Antonio ⁷ - 41	(Story on needed documents & info)	X (and new exam)		List of 4 full-service providers			
San Francisco ⁸ - 14	X	X	X	X	X	X	LA promo & segment

¹ Dallas: www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml?chid=9683&schid=9684&secid=20414

² Documentaries: www.univision.com/content/content.jhtml?cid=1099646

³ Houston: www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml?chid=9655&schid=9656&secid=20271#p

⁴ LA: www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml;jsessionid=3IFH4OLD5IFMOCWIAAPCFFIKZAADYIWC?chid=9450&schid=9451&secid=19107

⁵ Miami: www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml?chid=9514&schid=9515&secid=20438

⁶ NYC: www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml?chid=9486&schid=9487&secid=20415#p

⁷ San Antonio: www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml?chid=9711&schid=9712&secid=20684

⁸ San Francisco: www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml?chid=9598&schid=9599&secid=21723#p

UNIVISION Channel 45 (Houston) *YA ES HORA: CIUDADANIA* Web Page:
www.univision.com/content/channel.jhtml?chid=9655&schid=9656&secid=20271#p

(Accessed 4 January 2009)

Houston > Univision 45 > Ya es hora ¡Ciudadanía!

Univision 45	Estéreo Latino 102.9 FM	Recuerdo 106.5 FM	104.9 Tu Música	Party 93.3 FM	Puro Tejano 980 AM
La Tremenda 1010 AM	Foros	Chat			

4 ENERO 2009

- Escucha tus radios
- ▶ Agenda comunitaria
- ▶ Gánate Algo
- ▶ Horóscopos
- ▶ Loterías
- ▶ Newsletter
- ▶ Entretenimiento
- ▶ Salud
- ▶ Televisión Digital

OFERTAS
EN TU CIUDAD

Entérate las condiciones de **tráfico en Houston** en tiempo real GRATIS aquí

Ofertas Especiales

¡Buscar pareja o conocer nuevos amigos aquí!

Buscar

match.com

BUSCAR

- ♥ Amor y Amigos
- 🔍 Apartamentos ¡NUEVO!
- 🚗 Autos
- 👉 Ayuda Legal
- ★ Clasificados
- 🔍 Empleo
- 🍽️ Restaurantes y Bares
- 🎫 Ticketmaster

ECONOMIA EN CRISIS

Sobrevive a

YA ES HORA ¡CIUDADANIA!

Es esencial. El convertir nuestra creciente voz en votos es algo que sólo la ciudadanía puede brindarnos. Logar reunimos con nuestras familias es lo que la naturalización hace posible. Por esto y mucho más, ya es hora ¡CIUDADANÍA! Déjate ayudar y ayuda a los tuyos ayudándote. Aquí te decimos cómo.

Piolín se naturalizó
La estrella radial jura por la bandera estadounidense

Demandan por demoras en ciudadanía
La verificación de nombres genera retrasos

Renzo y su experiencia como ciudadano
"¡Al fin! se realiza el sueño americano"

Centros de Ciudadanía en Houston
Organizaciones locales se unen a Ya es Hora..Ciudadanía

¿Qué documentos necesito?
Revisa esta lista antes de ir a centros de ciudadanía

Foro

▶ ¿Qué te motiva a quedarte como residente o a convertirte en ciudadano?

Enlaces esenciales

- ▶ Guía de naturalización de NALEO
- ▶ Examen para la ciudadanía
- ▶ Formularios del USCIS:

Números clave

- ▶ **1-888-839-8682** información sobre ciudadanía.
- ▶ **5,500,000** personas que podrían naturalizarse en EU.
- ▶ **80,000** número de latinos que se naturalizan por año.
- ▶ **<10%** promedio de solicitantes rechazados en la entrevista

Videos

"Ya es hora...Ciudadanía" se lanza en Houston

▶ Dos historias únicas se unen en ceremonia de ciudadanía

Encuesta

¿Qué es lo que más te motiva para hacerte ciudadano?

- 👉 Mejores oportunidades de empleo y educación
- 👉 Poder votar
- 👉 Asegurar mi residencia en EU
- 👉 La reunificación familiar
- 👉 Integramme a la sociedad de EU

VOTAR
RESULTADOS

Eventos en tu ciudad

▶ Entérate de la agenda comunitaria

Enlaces Patrocinados

▶ "Adelgaza Su Estomago"

Publicidad

ATENCIÓN VICTIMAS del Huracan Ike

Tu Compañía de Seguros NO te ha pagado lo suficiente para arreglar tu casa o negocio?

MERLIN

LAW GROUP

Click aquí para más información >>

New Americans Initiative (Illinois) home page: www.becomeacitizennow.org

(Snapshot 6 January 2009)

NEW Americans INITIATIVE
ILLINOIS COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE RIGHTS

Search

Who We Are | **What We Do** | The Issues | Press Room

Immigrant Integration | New Americans Democracy Project | **New Americans Initiative** | Outreach & Interpretation | Training | Service Directory

Home → What We Do

New Americans Initiative

- About the Program
- Become a Citizen
- Blog
- FAQ
- Get Involved
- Resources

CITIZENSHIP WORKSHOPS

Waukegan
17 Jan 2009 9:00am - 12:00pm
847-775-0858
Holy Family Immigrant Center
510 10th St.
[more](#)

Welcome to the New Americans Initiative, a non-profit partnership between the [State of Illinois](#) and the [Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights](#) to help you through the process of becoming a U.S. citizen, with **FREE** assistance.

Dear Friend,

U.S. citizenship is the path to full participation in our nation. You can vote, travel freely, protect yourself and your family members from the possibility of deportation, petition to unite with other family members, hold a wider range of jobs, and have access to all of the rights, benefits, and responsibilities of a full member of the United States of America.

We can answer your questions about:

- Who is [eligible for citizenship](#) and who is not?
- How much does it [cost](#) and how long does it take?
- [Do I need to speak English?](#) How well?
- What is on the Citizenship Test? How do I prepare?
- [What are the benefits](#) of U.S. citizenship?

We can assist with your citizenship application with:

- Citizenship workshops, for application assistance and legal advice.
- A checklist of the documents you must submit.
- Referral to qualified attorneys, if necessary.
- Referral to [citizenship and English classes](#), if necessary.
- Help with materials to prepare you for the [citizenship test](#).
- Help with [financing](#) the citizenship process.

If you are considering becoming a U.S. citizen, we strongly urge you to do it now. The cost of citizenship is increasing every year, and there are many efforts in Washington to make the test much more difficult and the process even more bureaucratic.

We also encourage you to [volunteer](#) with the New Americans Initiative, assisting others to become U.S. citizens and participate in our Democracy.

So...for yourself, for your family, and for your community, take the step to become a U.S. citizen. Continue your American Dream. The Opportunity is Now! Participate. Become A Citizen. Vote.

On Citizenship Day, "No Gold Card Citizenship!"

Wed, 09/17/2008 - 23:27

On National Citizenship Day, ICIRR got out the bling. Why? To take a symbolic stand against skyrocketing fees and tougher tests that have put citizenship [out of reach](#) of the average immigrant. Under the banner of ["No Gold Card Citizenship,"](#) advocates and would-be citizens marched- with some big-time bling- to the Chicago citizenship headquarters. There they delivered a giant, golden credit card petition to highlight the question, "Is US citizenship going to be just for the rich?"

[Read more...](#)

[ShareThis](#)

Is U.S. Citizenship a Privilege Only for the Rich?
09/10/2008 - 09:30

New American Loan Program
07/10/2008 - 14:53

Would-be Citizens Fight