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For Immediate Publication

Benefits of Becoming an American Citizen

This new year of 2008 is filled with hopes and dreams for immigrants in the United States. The year 2007 was frustrating as it showed just how anti-immigrant a country can be. Regardless, we should begin this year with lots of faith and most of all with lots of information to be aware of what is happening in our laws and government. On the subject of positive thinking in this new year and the laws that still currently exist to benefit and protect immigrants, let's discuss the importance of becoming a US citizen today.

At this moment, the best move that many people who are lucky enough to qualify should make this year is to become U.S. citizens. Naturalizing and thereby becoming a US citizen brings many benefits to the successful applicant and his or her family. For example:

1. American citizens can vote at a federal, state, and local level and in that way make a positive difference in the government.
2. American citizens can enter and leave the U.S. and even live in another country for an unlimited amount of time without risking the loss of the US citizenship and benefits.
3. American citizens may petition family members from abroad. Once the family member qualifies, he or she is then able to enter the United States with a visa or a Green Card.
4. American citizens may never be deported. Even if the person commits a crime or is arrested, he or she can never be deported from the U.S.
5. American citizens may retire with full Social Security benefits and will receive them whether they live in the US or not. Even if the American citizen moves to live in another country, he or she will still receive full Social Security benefits. Permanent Residents (Green Card holders) only receive half of the Social Security benefits they have earned and they must reside in the US.
6. American citizens may receive governmental aid such as supplemental Social Security benefits, food stamps, and several available grants and financial benefits for college students.
7. Minor children of American citizens may qualify to become US citizens automatically through the parent's naturalization.

8. American citizens have more and better tax benefits and they have an easier time qualifying for residential mortgage loans as they have more financial loan options available to them.

Begin this year on the right foot by being and staying informed. If you qualify to apply for US citizenship do not wait any longer. Your family will appreciate it.

About the Author:

Attorney Sonia M. Muñoz is the President of Immigration Legal Council, LLC. (ILC), a South Florida-based law firm, handling cases in all 50 states. The firm is very active in protecting the rights of Immigrants and in assisting foreign professionals to legally enter and work in the United States. You can find more information about ILC and different methods of entry into the US on their website at www.ilclawfirm.com, or by calling 1-866-482-VISA(8472). Initial Consultation is FREE.

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