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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

Mayor Fulop: “Immigrants Are Part of Our Fabric”

Nationally Touted Division Hosts New Citizens

JERSEY CITY - Mayor Steven M. Fulop and **Department of Health and Human Services** officials will host the **3rd annual Immigrant Affairs Symposium on Friday, September 17th, 1-4 p.m.**, during National Citizenship Day ceremonies at Liberty State Park.

The City’s nationally recognized Immigrant Affairs Division hosts the symposium to celebrate the shared efforts of community organizations, nonprofits, and City services throughout 2020 and 2021, the third such since the office’s formation. During that span, the Division has been celebrated for its policies as second in the nation for welcoming and integrating immigrants, according to New American Economy Index.

“Being proud of the diversity of your given communities just can’t be a slogan; it has to mean something,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “In Jersey City, we have structured services to ensure immigrants are provided the types of services enabling them to become living and functional members of our community - so much so that their day-to-day lives become indistinguishable to those who were born and raised here.”

Today’s symposium followed the official oath-taking of 40 citizenship applicants hailing from 19 countries. Symposium speakers include Doaa Hussein, a Qatari asylee mother, and Reverend Hilario Crispin. Reverend Crispin began his time in the United States as a new immigrant construction worker from the Dominican Republic to becoming a naturalized citizen who leads the Mercy for the Homeless mission at Fountain of Salvation Church in Jersey City.

“I have been blessed to be able to care for my loved ones in my adopted country,” stated **Rev. Crispin** in his bilingual memoir, *Turning Stones to Bread*.

Over the past three years, the Division of Immigrant Affairs has achieved national acclaim by setting many milestones:

- Jersey City is the only city in the nation to have a municipal office that provides free federally accredited immigration legal services to its immigrant residents.
- Jersey City is the only city in the nation to have a city clinic that provides Civil Surgeon medical exams to refugees and asylees applying for their Green Cards.
- Jersey City was awarded as one of 12 cities best at integrating immigrants in Covid-19 response.
- The Division's legal services focus is on citizenship applications and Green Card applications for lawfully admitted refugees and asylees
- The Division is currently preparing immigration applications for some of Jersey City's Afghan residents seeking a safe passage for their family in Afghanistan to the United States.
- National notoriety for placing immigrant integration in the context of public health.

“The pandemic hasn't just shown us that immigrants are overexposed and underserved, but it has brought to light just how those health disparities are devastating for all of us,” said **HHS Director Stacey Flanagan**.

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