Citizenship “Greatest Hits”
Successes & Lessons Learned
Training Overview

Grant history and objectives

Successes and Lessons learned about:

- Recruiting Citizenship Students
- Curriculum
- Mock Interviews & other Volunteer Activities
- Assisting students with applications
- Federal Grants
Grant Objectives & History
Purpose of Grant

**Build capacity**
for “sub-applicant” ABE programs to implement successful citizenship education programs
Grant Timeline

- 2 year grant
- Started Oct 1, 2010
- Ends Sept 30, 2012
Who is involved?

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

SPONSOR

MLC

ADMINISTRATOR

Lincoln

Rochester

SW-ABE

Programs Building Capacity
Rural Town, Smaller City, and Large City

Sub-Applicants

Lincoln ABE (Mpls)

Rochester ABE

Worthington ABE
Overarching Goal #1

Increased number of Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) that become American Citizens

LPR= “Greencard”
Overarching Goal #2

Strong Curriculum and Instruction
Overarching Goal #3

Improve Data Management

Intake, outreach records, report training
Overarching Goal #4

Improve volunteer programs:

Recruitment, training, support, and evaluation
Citizenship Basics
Naturalization Eligibility

- 18+ years old and a lawful permanent resident (LPR or "green card" holder)
- LPR for 5 years (3 years if married to U.S. citizen)
- Demonstrated “good moral character”
- Knowledge of U.S. history and government*
- Ability to read, write, speak, & understand English*

*some exceptions, but very few
Contents of the Test

1) Review of Application Questions
   - Must ensure you are of “good moral character”
   - Truthful in application

2) Oath Requirements
   - Swear allegiance, will fight for U.S. (if needed)

3) Answer 10 of 100 Civics Questions

4) Reading Ability
   - Ex: What is the capital of the United States?

5) Writing Ability
   - Ex: George Washington is the father of our country.
Some really tough questions!!!

- Challenging language
- Very personal questions

Don’t usually know civics answers without studying

**Important Note:** $680 to apply for citizenship; only 2 chances to pass test
Benefits of Citizenship

- Right to vote
- Ability to reunite families
- Never Deported
- Easier Travel
- Children <18 automatic citizens
- Pride in being part of your new country
Topics of Interest
Important Lessons Learned:

• ALL content should relate to the 100 questions, other portions of the interview (reading, writing, vocabulary, N-400 applications)

• Dictation is a very important part of preparation

• It’s most helpful to integrate the interview and application information into each unit, rather than into one unit

• It’s important to have a process for orienting new students, so they won’t feel lost if they don’t start at the beginning of the curriculum

• Mock interviews are ESSENTIAL- not just 2 weeks before

Let’s take a look at how some of these resources were integrated into MLC’s Citizenship Curricula- A & B
Mock Interviews & other Volunteer Activities

- Important throughout the process
- If you have enough volunteers, very helpful as initial assessment tool
- “Pull outs” are helpful
- Videos available online for students and volunteers

Let’s check out some resources for volunteers!
Recruiting Citizenship Students

Important Lessons Learned:

- Internal promotion is the best place to start
  - Citizenship teachers doing presentations
  - Posters up all over- instruct how to find out info

- Word of mouth is still key

- Smaller town successes:
  - Mailings
  - Networking with immigrant leaders
  - Community Connectors
Assisting students with applications
Citizenship Resources for Educators

“Citizenship Instruction” on www.mnliteracy.org
- Curriculum
- Tons of classroom resources
- Citizenship Application info
- Legal resources

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