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**Services Now Available to Legal Permanent Residents
Who Wish to Become Citizens in Napa County**

Napa, CA – July 18, 2013 – With funding from Napa Valley Community Foundation (NVCF), a group of local nonprofits is now offering services to Legal Permanent Residents in Napa County that wish to become citizens. The first citizenship workshop to be conducted by the group of nonprofits will take place on July 30th, starting at 4 pm at the McPherson Elementary School's Multi-Use Room, in Napa. People who would like to attend are encouraged to reserve a space by contacting one of the following public charities: Puertas Abiertas Community Resource Center, Blanca Huijon, Intake Specialist/Case Mentor at (707) 224-1786; or McPherson Family Resource Center, Fabiola Osorio, Parent Leadership Coordinator at (707) 363-3798. Those who would like to volunteer at workshops or in other capacities should contact Laura Lopez at (707) 363-3798.

Two other agencies, International Institute of the Bay Area and Legal Aid of Napa Valley are partnering with Puertas Abiertas and McPherson Family Resource Center. The group is offering services under the name "Citizenship Legal Services" (CLS). Madeline Feldon was recently hired as lead immigration attorney, and Laura P. Lopez as outreach coordinator. Feldon previously worked as a legal fellow at the Katharine & George Alexander Community Law Center at Santa Clara University. She has a BA in Psychology from UC Davis and a JD from University of Santa Clara School of Law. Feldon is admitted to practice law in the state of California. Lopez, who was born in Mexico but grew up in Napa, previously worked with Educators for Fair Consideration and Legal Aid of Napa. She has a bachelor's degree from UC Santa Cruz.

A 2012 study underwritten by NVCF on the economic and fiscal impact of immigration in Napa County noted that only 30 percent of Napa County's foreign-born population have become citizens, versus 37 percent in California overall. "We have a citizenship gap in Napa Valley," said NVCF President Terence Mulligan. "This gap is associated with other educational and economic disparities, and closing it will be good for the whole community." Today, there are nearly 9,000 Legal Permanent Residents in Napa County who are eligible to become citizens. If a comprehensive immigration bill is passed, the pool of citizenship-eligible residents could expand by an additional 10,000 people.

To accommodate citizenship-seekers, the nonprofit agencies above have adopted a best-practices model that's been used in other parts of California to naturalize large numbers of people in a cost-effective manner. "Our goal is to help up to 2,000 people become citizens in the next three years," said Feldon. "One lawyer sitting alone in an office can't do that. But group processing workshops, where you invite several dozen people to the church hall or the school auditorium, and pair an immigration attorney like me with volunteers and BIA-accredited representatives, definitely can." BIA-accredited representatives are authorized by the Board of Immigration Appeals to provide legal advice to immigrants. They can only be employed by nonprofits which have been recognized by the BIA. The US Department of Justice and the US Citizenship and Immigration Services Department recommend that people seeking assistance to naturalize, or seeking assistance with other legal questions related to immigration, work with an immigration attorney or a BIA-accredited representative.

Citizenship is correlated with higher family income, higher educational attainment for the children of immigrants that naturalize, higher proficiency in English and more active engagement in community affairs. More than 80 individuals, families, companies and foundations have contributed \$1 million to NVCF in recent months to make this project possible. NVCF still needs to raise \$100,000 to fully fund the 3-year effort, and welcomes contributions of any size. To learn more or make a gift, visit www.napavalleycf.org or call (707) 254-9565.

About Napa Valley Community Foundation

Napa Valley Community Foundation works to multiply the impact of individual givers, pooling resources and investing in charitable projects that make a lasting difference. Since 1994, NVCF has served as a bridge between philanthropic families and hard-working nonprofit agencies, bringing people, ideas and resources together to enhance the quality of life in the Napa Valley community. From American Canyon to Calistoga, NVCF has distributed nearly \$30 million in grants since it was founded, and currently serves as the philanthropic partner to 100 individuals, families, nonprofit agencies and corporations in Napa Valley. According to a survey of several thousand donors conducted by the nonprofit Center for Effective Philanthropy, NVCF is the top-rated community foundation in the US on more than half of the key measures related to donor satisfaction and impact. In 2011, NVCF was ranked as the 13th most active grantmaker among more than 750 community foundations across the country, and its innovative programs have served as a model for other foundations across California and the US. To learn more, call 707.254.9565 or visit www.napavalleycf.org. A Profile of Immigrants in Napa County, the 2012 Napa County immigration study conducted by the Migration Policy Institute, is also available on the NVCF website.