



*A project of Napa Valley Community Foundation*

## **Background**

The One Napa Valley Initiative (ONVI) is a campaign to create new citizens and a stronger community. It stems from a 2012 study on immigration in Napa County, which pointed to a significant citizenship gap in our region: many foreign-born residents are eligible to become citizens, but they haven't done so nearly as often as their peers around the state (30% in Napa vs. 37% in CA overall). Citizenship is correlated with:

- Higher family income
- Increased proficiency in English
- More active community involvement
- Better school outcomes for citizens' kids.

The scarcity of legally-based, affordable services in Napa Valley is a key driver behind the citizenship gap.

## **Progress to Date**

In the summer of 2013, Napa Valley Community Foundation (NVCF) brought four nonprofit partners together to close the citizenship gap. These nonprofits collaborate as the direct service arm of ONVI. Since then:

- 60,000 people have received information about the benefits and requirements of citizenship
- 3,012 unduplicated clients have received legal consultations, a number that represents more than 33% of the County's population of Legal Permanent Residents
- 310 unduplicated clients have enrolled in new ESL for civics/citizenship classes
- 1,406 people have submitted citizenship or other applications to the US Government
- 595 people have actually become US Citizens (vs. 2 people the year before this project began).

Behind the numbers, there are hundreds of compelling stories about hard work, perseverance and opportunity. About people putting a stake in the ground and building a brighter future for their kids. Many new citizens in Napa Valley talk about hoped-for improvements to employment and family life.

*Jessica Zaragoza* (right) became a US Citizen last year. Since that time, she's moved from being a receptionist to a Human Resources Administrator at a luxury resort up Valley. Among other changes she's proud of: "I can vote and be a role model for my family," she says.

Through NVCF, 150 donors contributed more than \$1.5 million to launch this project and support it for four years. Because of its success (and the increasingly hostile climate for immigrants in America), we wish to keep it going for a fifth year, and possibly beyond that.

## **How You Can Help**

NVCF is seeking donations to fully fund a fifth year of this highly effective initiative, and welcomes financial support at any level. Volunteers are also needed to assist with ESL classes and at monthly citizenship workshops. Please join us to help create a stronger, more cohesive community in which there is more neighborly conversation and more upward mobility. Visit [www.napavalleycf.org](http://www.napavalleycf.org) to learn more or make a gift.

