



USCIS Office of Communications

June 16, 2009

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World Refugee Week

Officer Spotlight - Naureen Rahman



Naureen Rahman feeds a Giraffe while on assignment in East Africa

Before joining the U.S. Government, I had worked in various arenas, yet, none of my work within the corporate, non-profit, or legal realms led to attaining the professional satisfaction I desired. After completing an LLM in International Human Rights Law, I joined the Arlington Asylum Office where I enhanced my understanding of asylum and human rights law and enjoyed learning the ways of the newly established USCIS.

The mission of the Refugee, Asylum and International Operations Directorate: to provide protection, humanitarian and other immigration benefits and services throughout the world, while combating fraud and protecting national security. Eager to use my grant stamp, while gaining the tools to recognize fraud patterns and credibility issues, I joined the Refugee Corps – the entity that seemed to epitomize the complexity of this mission.

My most significant event as a Refugee Officer was during a circuit ride to East Africa. Upon arrival at the Kakuma Refugee Camp located in Kenya near the Sudanese border, I was welcomed with no air conditioning due to power rationing, poisonous snakes on my door step, local tribesman rioting, and fires set to the UNHCR compound. Yet, our team rose daily, met the desert sun, and embarked upon our worksite journey to interview our six refugee cases.

During one particular case, I interviewed a family of nine; they consisted of a father, mother, and seven children. The family fled Somalia in 1991 because they belonged to the minority Asharaf clan and were persecuted by members of the United Somali Congress, most of whom belonged to the Hawiye majority clan.

The children entered the interview room and arranged themselves along a long bench. Next, the husband walked in carrying his wife. Her legs had been amputated by the USC during the brutal raid on their family home which took the lives of the principal applicant's parents and siblings. After the gunshots, rape and murder, the applicant fled with his remaining family by boat. He landed in Kenya, seeking temporary protection while awaiting the anticipated interview with USCIS.

The sorrow of their story poured through their words and tears, yet, they still emulated humility and appreciation for being given a chance to be a part of the 80,000 refugees that may be granted to the U.S. for refugee resettlement this year. It was now their turn to tell the persecution story they faced and explain to me their fear of return in the future. They had waited almost eighteen years to meet me. After we completed the interview, each family member humbly thanked me while exiting the room.

At that pivotal moment, I truly grasped and appreciated my decision to join the Refugee Corps. In no other office have I experienced such personal and professional satisfaction. I thank everyone who has led me to this moment and hope for continued support for the work of our officers and the mission of RAIO as a whole.

Naureen Rahman earned a degree in International Affairs, History, and Global Systems from George Mason University, a law degree from Catholic University, and an LLM from George Washington University, School of Law, in International and Comparative Law. She clerked for Chief Judge Eugene Hamilton at the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and worked at the Institute for Human Rights and Development in the Gambia, West Africa. Thereafter, she served at corporate counsel for U.S. Bioservices Pharmaceutical company. In 2002, she opened Millennium Attorneys, focusing on property,

trusts, immigration, corporate and family law. In 2007, Ms. Rahman joined the Arlington Asylum Office and transferred to the Refugee Affairs Division in 2008. Ms. Rahman speaks Urdu, Hindi, and literate Arabic.

[World Refugee Day is June 20](#) and USCIS

Today is commemorating this event by spotlighting the work of the USCIS Refugee Corps within the Refugee Asylum and International Operations Directorate (RAIO). Check upcoming issues of USCIS Today throughout the week for more information on the USCIS Refugee Corps and World Refugee Week.

Military Naturalization

San Diego Field Office



New U.S. Citizen Gilles Idrissa Kone, is congratulated by Admiral Mac McLaughlin after receiving his naturalization certificate.

Ninety-three military personnel from 33 countries became new U.S. citizens aboard the USS Midway Museum on May 28, as part of "Legacy Week" celebrations in San Diego, Calif. USCIS welcomed members of the U.S. Air Force, Army, Marine Corps and Navy on the same flight deck where more than 225,000 American veterans served during the ship's 47-year career. "Legacy Week" is the USS Midway Museum's annual salute to the men and women in uniform who serve and sacrifice for America.

The San Diego District Office hosts this annual ceremony aboard the retired aircraft carrier in partnership with Navy Region Southwest/ Region Legal Service Office Southwest and the USS Midway Museum.



Ninety-three members of the Armed Forces take the Oath of Allegiance aboard the USS Midway Museum.

The flight deck was awash with military decorum; Navy Band Southwest performed and the Naval Base Coronado Color Guard posted the colors. Vice Admiral Samuel J. Locklear, III, Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet, the highest-ranking military officer ever to speak at a military naturalization ceremony in the Navy Region Southwest, was the keynote speaker. Admiral Mac McLaughlin, President of the Museum, and San Diego District Director Paul Pierre welcomed the service members, their families, and the public. U.S. District Court Judge Dana M. Sabraw administered the *Oath of Allegiance*.

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Washington District Office

The Washington District Office was proud to host Tram-Tiara Ngo, Chief, USCIS Office of Equal Opportunity and Inclusion, as the guest speaker for its Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month celebration on May 22. As part of the event, the office put together a commemorative recipe booklet featuring recipes submitted by co-workers.



Tram-Tiara Ngo, Chief, USCIS Office of Equal Opportunity and Inclusion was the guest speaker at the Washington District Office Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Event.

In addition, the program included written articles submitted by sons and daughters of Washington District employees on what it meant to grow up as an Asian-American. The program was followed by a food-tasting and a display of cultural artifacts brought in by coworkers from various countries within the Asian Pacific area.

Children's Naturalization Ceremony *Des Moines Field Office*



Des Moines Field Office employees "Take it on the road in Iowa"

A group of 28 children and young adults representing 14 countries attended a special ceremony at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum in West Branch, Iowa, on June 5. Friends and family joined to help celebrate the citizenship of these young Iowans. Along with the ceremony the guests were allowed to tour and enjoy the history and education of the library and museum that represents our past President, Herbert Hoover.

This followed past children's ceremonies held at the Des Moines Botanical Center and the Boone Scenic Valley Railroad. There are many more stops to follow in the "On the Road in Iowa" project for the Des Moines Field Office.

Executive Memoranda

On June 12, Michael Aytes, USCIS Acting Deputy Director, issued a memorandum entitled, [USCIS Implementation of DHS Efficiency Review 60-Day Initiatives](#). This memorandum begins:

"On February 17, 2009, Secretary Napolitano announced the DHS-wide Efficiency Review initiative to improve efficiency and streamline decision-making... On May 26, 2009, Secretary Napolitano announced the "60-Day" efficiency review initiatives that focus on the following areas:

- Leverage buying power to acquire software licenses for department-wide use;
- Eliminate new contracts for branding related merchandise and new logos;
- Implement an electronic tracking tool for fleet usage data to identify opportunities for alternative fuel usage and to heighten vigilance for abuse and fraud;
- Conduct an assessment of the number of full-time employees, part-time employees and contractors to better manage our workforce; and
- Utilize refurbished IT equipment and redeploy the current inventory throughout DHS."

The full text of the [USCIS Implementation of DHS Efficiency Review 60-Day Initiatives](#) memorandum is available online.

Mandatory Travel Card Training

Due to the connectivity issues encountered by employees attempting to complete the DHS mandatory travel card training through Skillsoft, cardholders who have not taken the training by June 15 will not have their travel cards suspended as originally broadcasted. The timeframe for completion has been extended by DHS until June 30.

The Financial Management Division (FMD) has received a number of e-mails and phone calls regarding employees who are experiencing problems with the mandatory DHS Online Travel Card Training Course. In response, FMD has compiled a [Frequently Asked Questions Document](#) featuring the most common questions submitted to the USCIS-Travel-Card mailbox along with the corresponding answers. Employees are encouraged to contact their local travel card [Organizational Program Coordinator \(OPC\)](#) or email USCIS-Travel-Card@dhs.gov for assistance.

The user ID for all employees is their DHS e-mail address and the password is "travelcard". Once logged in, select the "DHS Travel Card Training" learning event; select "DHS Travel Card Training" link on the Information page; and then click the "Play" button. A passing score of 80% or better is required to complete this requirement.

For issues relating to the User ID, please send an e-mail to USCIS-Travel-Card@dhs.gov. For all other issues, contact the online [Skillsoft's customer support group](#) or at (877) 775-7071.

Rental Car & Global Positioning System (GPS) Rental Options

Employees on official travel are reminded that all costs associated with car rental upgrades or extras (e.g., full size vehicle, GPS devices, insurance, etc) are not reimbursable by the Government and as such should not be paid for using the Government travel card. USCIS has set the standard for rental vehicles by a single traveler at the compact or mid-size categories. Travelers who are approved the use of a large rental car for three or more passengers may be reimbursed for the costs of larger size vehicles.

USCIS Academy Executive Leadership Program

The USCIS Academy Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program is pleased to offer long-term leadership development programs sponsored by the USDA Graduate School. As a reminder, the Academy is now accepting applications for the September 2009 session of the [Executive Leadership Program](#). The September session begins September 13, 2009 and ends June 11, 2010. Application deadline: June 30, 2009.

Today on Mass Ave

World Refugee Day on June 20

In honor of World Refugee Day on June 20, the Refugee Affairs Division (RAD) is hosting an event from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. on June 17, to highlight the role of USCIS in the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. A 40-minute video of last year's World Refugee Day event at the White House will be viewed which includes remarks from the former First Lady, Laura Bush, as well as three refugees recently resettled to the United States. Light appetizers will be served and all are welcome to attend. The event will take place at 111 Massachusetts Avenue on the 8th floor near conference room 8006. We hope that many of you will be able to come and learn more about the plight of

millions of refugees around the globe and the work of the Refugee Affairs Division and Refugee Officer Corps.

Today's Headlines

[U.S. citizen detained for 11 months](#)

KVOA TV 06/16/2009

[Is Obama holding up E-Verify?](#)

News Observer 06/16/2009

[For immigrants, living the dream is getting tougher](#)

USA Today 06/16/2009

[Post WWII immigration files opened to public](#)

Washington Post 06/16/2009

For a comprehensive listing of all DHS relevant news items from the current news cycle, see <http://www.bulletinnews.com/dhs/>, on DHS Online.

USCIS Office of Communications
[Internal Communications Division](#)

Editor-in-Chief: Matthew Ash

Content Manager: Lillian Prince

Visual Info Manager: Harry SJ Metellus