

Prayer of a New Citizen

Written by Sophia Hlen Rahlan



(Sophia translates in her national senator's office in Washington, D.C. at left, and at right becomes a citizen in N.C. just two days later!)

Dear Father in Heaven,

Thank you for bringing my family to the U.S.A. so we can live in freedom in this country. Thank you for giving me the strength and knowledge to pass the naturalization test.

I am feeling so incredible to be a full Asian-American now—but I won't forget where I came from! Thank you for the freedom to vote in a democracy. It's also my first time to vote. Please help me to vote for the best person in a particular position.

In Jesus' name I pray, AMEN.

Sophia entered the U.S. as a Montagnard refugee from the Central Highlands of Vietnam. Now 22 years old and studying in her second year of community college, Sophia recently served as a translator with a Montagnard group which travelled from First Christian Church of Charlotte, N.C. to Washington, D.C. to make legislative visits and fight for human rights for her community still in Vietnam. After that "practice" in civic engagement, Sophia returned to her home in Charlotte, N.C. to become a U.S. citizen—just two days after her time in D.C.!

(Compiled by Refugee & Immigration Ministries, Christian Church, Disciples of Christ; sstanley@dhm.disciples.org)