

## LETTER TO BOARD OF EDUCATION

(Date)

(Name)

(Address)

Dear (Name):

I am writing to follow up on our recent discussion about the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest sponsored by the American Immigration Law Foundation (AILF). Information about AILF and the Creative Writing Contest can be obtained by visiting [www.ailf.org/teach](http://www.ailf.org/teach).

As you may or may not know, the theme of the Contest is “Why I am Glad America is a Nation of Immigrants.” Numerous chapters of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) are sponsoring local contests around the country. The winning entry from each local contest will be submitted to the National Contest. Students are encouraged to be creative and can submit their entries in the form of an essay, poem, story, interview or any other written form. The deadline for submitting entries to the contest is (entry deadline – usually early February).

With the increasing need for awareness of immigration’s positive impact on American society, educators around the country have developed lesson plans dealing with a variety of immigration issues. On the AILF website, click on “Curriculum Center” to access immigration lesson plans. The “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest can be used as an introduction into a broader unit on immigration in America or can follow as a final project.

Additionally, I would be happy to arrange for (an) immigration attorney(s) to speak (at schools/to your class) about immigration. In the meantime, we hope the enclosed fact sheets will provide you with some useful background on immigration. Be sure to check out AILF’s [Immigration Policy Center](#) (IPC) for the latest on Immigration Information, News and Reports—especial [Immigration Myths](#).

(For school board) If you are interested in introducing the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest to the schools in your district, please contact me at your earliest convenience at (fill in your contact information) and we can discuss the next steps. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

(For teachers) If you are interested in participating in the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest, please complete the attached form and return it to me at your earliest convenience. I will follow up with more materials and details on the Contest upon receiving your reply. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (fill in your contact information).

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

(Your Contact Information)

**YES! I WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN  
THE “CELEBRATE AMERICA” CREATIVE  
WRITING CONTEST**

SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON (if not teacher): \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF STUDENTS EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE: \_\_\_\_

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN A GUEST SPEAKER?    YES    NO

**BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHERE YOUR STUDENTS ARE IN THEIR  
UNDREANDING OF IMMIGRATION:**

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Please return this form to:    (insert your name, address, telephone,  
fax and email)

**AILF "CELEBRATE AMERICA" CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST  
AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

# of words in entry (excluding title):

Thank you for submitting an entry to the "Celebrate America" Creative Writing Contest sponsored by the American Immigration Law Foundation (AILF).

Your entry may be published in the AILF Benefit Program Book, in the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) Annual Conference Program and in any publication of the AILA Chapter sponsoring your local Contest. In addition, your creative writing entry and photograph may be published in appropriate newspapers, journals, or other print media. Your name, address and telephone number may be released to such publications in the event that they wish to contact you in connection with your entry. It is understood that the use of these materials by AILF, AILA, or any other institution will not be for personal gain.

By signing this release, you are agreeing to transfer copyright and other rights for your creative writing entry to AILF, and to release AILF, AILA, and other participating organizations from any claims relating to the above-stated uses.

By signing this release, you are agreeing that the above-named student's entry is (word limit no greater than 500) words or less, and that if it is longer, it will not be eligible for National judging.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Author

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return this form to: (insert contact information)



## **American Immigration Law Foundation**

# **Facts on Immigration**

### **1. People Immigrate to Other Countries for Family, Work, and Freedom**

- **Family Reunification:** In 2006, more than 63% of immigrants who became legal permanent residents (LPRs) of the United States did so when they reunited with family members who were U.S. citizens or LPRs.
- **Work:** Nearly 13% of new LPRs in 2006 came to fill jobs, mostly high skilled, for which employers were unable to find U.S. workers.
- **Freedom:** About 17% of new LPRs in 2006 were asylees and refugees who fled wars or other disasters in their home countries.

### **2. Global Perspective on Immigration**

- Of the nearly 191 million people who lived outside their country of birth in 2005, about 20% lived in the United States.
- Of 13.5 million refugees worldwide in 2004, 421,000 were in the United States.

### **3. Immigrants in the United States**

- There were about 35 million foreign-born people living in the United States in 2005, amounting to more than 12% of the population.
- More than 30 million Americans, or 11% of the U.S. population, have at least one parent who is an immigrant.
- Some people claim that immigration is out of control. But, between 1860 and 1920, immigrants accounted for more than 13% of the U.S. population.

- There were about 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States in 2005, amounting to about 30% of all immigrants or 4% of the U.S. population.
- Immigrants accounted for more than 15% of the U.S. workforce in 2006 and filled both high-skilled and less-skilled jobs. For example, immigrants were more than 40% of all farm workers, a third of all building and grounds cleaning and maintenance workers, and a quarter of all physicians, engineers, and computer scientists.
- Immigrants are less likely than the native-born to commit crimes or to be in prison. Among men age 18-39, who comprise the vast majority of the prison population, the 3.5% incarceration rate of the native-born in 2000 was 5 times higher than the 0.7% incarceration rate of the foreign-born.

#### **4. From Where Do Immigrants in the United States Come?**

- In 2006, the top five countries of origin for new LPRs were Mexico (14%), China (6.9%), the Philippines (5.9%), India (4.8%), and Cuba (3.6%).

#### **5. Where Do Immigrants Settle?**

- In 2005, the states with the largest foreign-born populations were California (where immigrants were 27% of the state's population), New York (21%), New Jersey (20%), Florida (19%), and Nevada (17%).

#### **6. From Where Do Refugees and Asylees Come?**

- In 2006, one quarter of all refugees admitted into the United States were from Somalia, followed by Russia (15%), Cuba (8%), Vietnam (7%), and Iran (7%).
- Most people seeking asylum in the United States in 2006 were from China (21%), Haiti (12%), Colombia (11%), Venezuela (5%), and Ethiopia (3%).