



NEWS FROM

THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS

The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

Mayor Karl F. Dean

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A Message from Mayor Dean



As I come to the end of my time as mayor, I want to take a moment to celebrate all we've done together. This is not the Nashville of 50 or 20 or even eight years ago when I took office, and that's a good thing. This is a city that's both more diverse and more accepting of diversity than ever before.

Whenever an individual who was born in another country uproots his or her life to come to the United States and make Nashville home, that's the highest compliment anyone can pay us. And with that praise and honor comes great responsibility to welcome that person, to make him or her feel safe and secure and capable of finding opportunity here.

I'm proud of all we've done these past eight years to live up to that responsibility. I'm proud that, when we opened the Mayor's Office of New Americans last year, it was one of the first of its kind in the South. And I'm proud of all the programs we've started to empower immigrants and refugees. Some of them have become national models. All of them have helped create a knowledgeable, connected community.

Together, we've worked to ensure that Nashville is an open, welcoming place that respects and embraces the differences among us. We've made Nashville one of the most welcoming cities in the country. And I know that, no matter who the next mayor is, this city will keep welcoming people of all colors and nationalities into our community, because it's the right thing to do.

It's also the smart thing to do. Cities of the future will look like the city Nashville is becoming. Diverse communities are the ones that have the best chance to thrive in today's world, and Nashville is proud to be one.

MyCity Academy Graduates 33 Community Leaders from 20 Countries



The 2015 class of MyCity Academy graduated on Friday, August 21 in a ceremony at the Parthenon in Centennial Park. The graduating class included 33 community leaders from 20 countries.

Nashville's Youth Poet Laureate, Lagnajita Mukhopadhyay, a senior at Hume-Fogg Magnet High School, began the evening with a poem, "Ten Old Ideas for New Americans," which she wrote for the occasion.

Mayor Dean then addressed the graduates, noting that, no matter where they came from and no matter who they are, they have a voice in a government that is here to serve them. He urged them to stay engaged, not only in our government but in our community as a whole.

Mayor Dean and the Mayor's New Americans Advisory Council launched MyCity Academy in 2012. The first program of its kind in the nation and a model for other cities, MyCity empowers New Americans to understand and participate in Nashville's government.

Over the course of six months, participants met with leaders from Metro departments and toured Metro facilities, gaining a better understanding of how their government works and learning how to resolve issues and obtain information.



In all, 110 participants from 33 countries have graduated from MyCity Academy.

MyCity Connect Participants Visit First Tennessee Park and the Grand Ole Opry

August's MyCity Connect event brought more than 80 New Americans and members of the receiving community to First Tennessee Park to hear from Mayor Dean and watch the Nashville Sounds take on the El Paso Chihuahuas. Participants enjoyed dinner under the giant, guitar-shaped scoreboard and then settled in to get to know each other and watch the game. They left with smiles, even despite the Sounds' 5-1 loss.



In July, 75 MyCity Connect participants went backstage at the Grand Ole Opry and then watched an Opry performance, many for the first time. These representatives of new Nashville certainly enjoyed one of Tennessee's oldest traditions!

You're Invited to the September 3 Small Business Expo



The Mayor's Office of New Americans, in partnership with the Tennessee Latin American Chamber of Commerce, the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, Conexion Americas, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and several other Metro agencies and New American organizations, is hosting a Small Business Expo on September 3 at the Music City Center.

Join us to learn more about how you can start or grow your small business in Nashville. Sessions will include content specific to Nashville and its expanding immigrant and refugee population. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

Admission is \$25, but the Mayor's Office of New Americans is providing free registration for up to 150 participants. [Register here now](#) to claim your spot.

Parent Ambassadors Needed to Assist New American Families in Metro Schools



The Mayor's Office of New Americans and Metro Schools are seeking volunteer [Parent Ambassadors](#) for the upcoming school year. Parent Ambassadors mentor New American families new to Metro Schools on how to understand, navigate and succeed in the school system. They receive extensive training, and they share their wisdom and experience with parents from backgrounds similar to their own.

For the 2015-2016 school year, we are expanding the program and need to include parents who speak Burmese, Nepali, Somali, Spanish, Swahili or Vietnamese and whose children have attended Metro Schools are invited to apply to become Parent Ambassadors by 5:00 p.m. September 4. Please email ruben.depena@mnps.org for an application.

Remember to Vote!

Early voting is underway in the Metro runoff elections for Mayor, Council-at-Large and some district Council seats. Mayor Dean encourages you to cast your ballot and make your voice heard! Prepare to vote by reviewing [a sample ballot](#). Early voting is available at [these locations](#), which include Casa Azafran.

Election Day is September 10, and early voting continues through September 5. To find your Election Day polling place, [go here](#).

