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## NEWS: Federal Ceremony Room Built to Embrace Oath Takers and Represent their Journey to Citizenship.

*Proud US Citizens sworn in at grand opening of new facility for Citizenship and Immigration Services in Irving, Texas.*



*The facility, which has the stature of a government building, is designed to be welcoming to immigrants.*



Dallas [Irving], TX and Chicago, IL, March 26, 2009

“It’s incredibly rewarding to witness the space we designed kindle the spirit and emotion” expressed Robert Benson, Design Director for Chicago’s 4240 Architecture, “of not only those achieving citizenship, but of their loved ones and the Federal employees who aided their progress.”

Benson warmly reflects on the February 25<sup>th</sup> Grand Opening of the new Citizenship and Immigration Services [USCIS] Building for the Department of Homeland Security [DHS] in Irving, Texas. “The light of that room was parallel to the emotions that washed over all of us in attendance. It was exciting. ”



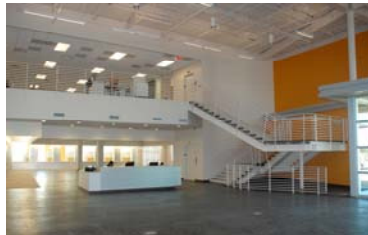
*The architecture embodies the rich citizenship process with its gracious, light-filled environment with **surprising shifts in mass and contour.***

Besides improving the USCIS’s ability to provide full-service immigration and benefits services, the design of the Irving building (to achieve LEED Silver Certification) celebrates the experience of becoming an American Citizen. The architecture, standing as a beacon along Highway 114, embodies the rich citizenship process with its gracious, light-filled environment and surprising shifts in mass and contour.

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*The centerpiece of the building is the Ceremony Room. New Americans take the oath of citizenship in this soaring space that is filled with light.*



*The Dallas district office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services replaces two USCIS offices that were formerly separate.*

The focal point of the building is the Ceremony Room, a light-filled, double-height glass space that is visible from adjacent Highway 114. The rest of the building has candidate interview rooms and administrative offices for 140 employees.

The location and L-shape layout of the office enables USCIS to improve its level of service. “We are very excited about the new building and how it supports the agency’s mission,” said Lisa Kehl, USCIS’s Dallas District Director, “our customers are greeted by a friendly building and our employees enjoy their light filled offices. The Ceremony Room’s grandeur reflects the importance of the naturalization ceremonies. The functionality of the building has been beneficial in making our operation run smoother.”

The new facility, designed by **4240 Architecture**, houses the USCIS’ Dallas office. Located in a growing office district, the two-story, 56,000-sf building replaces two separate USCIS offices. In 2003, the Department of Homeland Security absorbed USCIS, which is in the process of relocating or updating most of its approximately 250 headquarters and field offices around the world. The Irving facility’s lease was procured under the U.S. General Services Administration’s leasing program. This project is one of five DHS buildings to be completed or under construction by developer JDL Castle Corporation of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

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The design is consistent with federal sustainability policies and a candidate for LEED™ Silver Certification. Energy-efficient features of the building include architectural overhangs and sun shades to provide protection from the Texas sun. A pergola with sun-shading louvers protects the Ceremony Room and public lobby. Many materials, including brick, came from local manufacturers. Building systems and fixtures conserve energy and natural resources.

Background: *4240 Architecture is an award-winning team of architects, planners and interior designers. 4240 designs sustainable, high performance buildings, community frameworks, and spaces ranging from entire neighborhoods, resorts, public and commercial architecture to interiors and private homes. Established in 2003, the firm's studios in Chicago [located at 42° latitude] and Denver [located at 40° latitude] comprise "4240." In nearly six years, the firm has grown into an effective, visionary team of professionals who are equally fluent in designing for urban settings and high-mountain properties – and for just about every context in between. For more information, please visit 4240 Architecture's Web sites at [www.4240architecture.com](http://www.4240architecture.com) and [www.listenresearchdraw.com](http://www.listenresearchdraw.com).*

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