

Senator Carlucci Helps Expedite Naturalization Ceremony

Father With Terminal Cancer Wishes To See His Adopted Daughters Become U.S. Citizens

Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Westchester) joined officials from United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for a very special naturalization ceremony in New City on Thursday. It was for 15-year-old Jade and 13-year-old Skylar Handsman. Both girls adopted from China by their parents, Alan and Tara Handsman in 2004 and 2006.

The girls had been trying for years to become U.S. citizens with their parents help, but sadly, in 2015 the girls' father, Alan, was diagnosed with a terminal blood cancer, known as multiple myeloma. Alan's wish was to see his girls become U.S. citizens before he dies. So his wife, Tara reached out to Senator Carlucci's office to see if there was anything he could do to help expedite the girls' naturalization ceremony. The girls were already green card holders and at the last stage in the process.

"The family had reached out to my office and we were able to contact USCIS and federal area lawmakers and play a small role in facilitating this today," **said Senator David Carlucci.**

Senator Carlucci wrote a letter to USCIS explaining the family's unique circumstances and continued calling the agency on the family's behalf. His office also reached out to Senator Kristen Gillibrand and Congresswoman Nita Lowey's offices. After a team effort, USCIS gave the family the good news that they would be able to come to their home to do the ceremony.

"It was very honoring to know someone of that high caliber [Senator Carlucci] would actually do that for us when we are just a normal family. It was very touching," **said 15-year-old Jade Handsman.**

USCIS' New York District Director, Tom Cioppa presided over the naturalization ceremony in the family's living room. A moment years in the making for the teens lasted all but 10 minutes, but their smiles said it all.

"It meant everything because this was like the final seal of the adoption process. You go through so much to adopt, it took several years and you go through re-adoption, and to just have that 'oh my God' they are American citizens. It's really final, it's a done deal. As a mother you can't get luckier," **said Tara Handsman.** "Thank you to Senator Carlucci, I did call him, and he stepped right up to the plate for my family and there is not enough thanks in the world."

Unfortunately, the girl's father wasn't able to attend the ceremony because he was in the hospital for treatment, but the family said it was bitter-sweet because Alan would be home later in the day after weeks at Hackensack University Medical Center.

"My dad coming home is a celebration, and I think he is going to be very proud," **said Jade.**

"This is such a wonderful ceremony, and it really represents who we are as Americans. We are 300 million people from every corner of the globe living and working together to make a better community, and to see Jade and Skylar naturalized in their home with their mother watching was very special and a privilege," **said Senator Carlucci.**