

**Jerome G. Grzeca** published an article, *“Immigrants Continue to Strengthen America”* which appeared in the September 18, 2002, Editorial Section of ***The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel***.

## **CITIZENSHIP DAY**

### Immigrants continue to strengthen America

For all its horror, one of the strengths of September 11<sup>th</sup> was that we were in it together. Immigrants were victims, heroes and re-builders alongside native-born Americans. People of all races and religions joined together and declared, “We stand united.”

While the terrorists hoped that this outrageous act would ignite a war of differences between faiths and civilizations, that has not happened. Nor can we allow it to happen. Americans cannot begin to devalue the positive aspects of our rich and diverse cultural background in the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>. To do so would give the terrorists a sense of righteousness and victory.

We are the world’s most successful nation, and one of the only nations in the world built by immigrants. Immigrants continue to bring new Ideas and skills that contribute to our economic and cultural growth. Our diversity is our strength--now more than ever. America must continue to stand for inclusiveness and turn its back on divisiveness.

September 17<sup>th</sup> was Citizenship Day. Let us honor our heritage and remember that immigrants have embraced America throughout our history and continue to do so today. Immigrants share the same values as native-born Americans.

Rather than treating immigrants as a security concern, America must continue to be strengthened and enriched by immigrants who come to our country to contribute their talents and skills, to unite with their families and seek protection from persecution. Immigrants come to America to build our country, unlike terrorists, who come to harm us.

Our laws, actions and policies must respect and reflect this important difference.