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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY AT CANTIGNY PRODUCES 95 NEW AMERICANS**

**Wheaton, Ill., September 17, 2014** — Le Jardin in Cantigny Park’s Visitor Center was transformed into a federal courtroom this morning as 95 local residents took the United States Oath of Allegiance and became American citizens.

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) conducted the one-hour “naturalization ceremony,” the final step for those seeking U.S. citizenship. The successful applicants at Cantigny represented 25 countries of origin.

Today’s ceremony, not coincidentally, took place on Constitution Day. Among the requirements for citizenship is that applicants learn the fundamental concepts of American democracy. They must also demonstrate English language proficiency, plus an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The Honorable John W. Darrah, U.S. District Court Judge for the Northern District of Illinois, presided over the ceremony and administered the Oath of Allegiance. The Master of Ceremonies was Ed Lewis, USCIS Supervisory Immigration Services Officer.

David Hiller, president and CEO of the Robert R. McCormick Foundation (Cantigny’s parent organization), delivered the keynote address.

Students from Marmion Academy in Aurora posted and retired the colors. Navy Band Great Lakes (North Chicago) performed The Star-Spangled Banner, America the Beautiful and other patriotic selections. President Obama, in a recorded video address, congratulated the new citizens and thanked them for their commitment.

After the ceremony, 55 of the new American citizens took advantage of on-site voter registration, provided by the McCormick Foundation.

Today’s event was streamed live by Cantigny for the benefit of the new citizens and their family members who were unable to attend. The ceremony may be viewed here:

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/mccormick-foundation>.

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**About Cantigny Park**

Cantigny Park, part of the Chicago-based Robert R. McCormick Foundation, is the 500-acre Wheaton (Illinois) estate of Robert R. McCormick (1880-1955), longtime editor and publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*. It is home to 30 acres of spectacular gardens, the Robert R. McCormick Museum, the First Division Museum and a 27-hole championship golf course. All are open to the public. Cantigny also is a favorite destination for special events, weddings, concerts, lectures, workshops and other recreation and learning opportunities for all ages. Full-service banquet and dining facilities are on site. More information, including hours, directions and a calendar of upcoming events is online at [Cantigny.org](http://Cantigny.org). For details about Cantigny Golf, including the Cantigny Golf Academy and 9-hole Cantigny Youth Links, please visit [CantignyGolf.com](http://CantignyGolf.com).