



**Address at the U.S Naturalization Ceremony and Statue of Liberty
Unveiling**

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on July 6, 2015**



This speech was presented to the attendees of the U.S Naturalization Ceremony and Statue of Liberty Unveiling on July 6, 2015.

Welcome and thank you all for joining us today! I want to thank all of the elected officials who are here!

- Congresswoman Ileana Ros Lehtinen
- Congressman Carlos Curbelo
- State Senator Dwight Bullard
- State Rep. Bryan Avila
- Vice Chair County Commission and my former student Esteban Bovo
- Officers from US Citizen and Immigration Services
- District Director Linda Swacina
- Staff from Congressional Offices
- Ysmelio Lopez – our benefactor

Fresh from a beautiful holiday to celebrate the Independence of this great country – we are here to reconfirm that hope and opportunity live. That we can be patriots and love our country in this 21st century. That we can celebrate the idea of an America and a university that opens its arms. An America and a university that opens its arms to hope and opportunity with individuals who chose to be Americans – to live their version of the American Dream. Today we celebrate new citizens to this country. We do so as we dedicate this Gift and replica of our beloved Statue of Liberty, originally given to the United States by the people of France and dedicated in New York Harbor on October 28, 1886. It is fitting that we have with us France’s Consul General Philippe Letrilliart with us today. He has a long and distinguished career representing his country – one of the earliest allies of the United States in our country’s long battle for independence. Please join me with a warm welcome to Consul General Letrilliart. You have just taken an oath of allegiance to the United States of America! Congratulations – you are now American Citizens. Most of us in this assembly have some experience with recent citizenship.

My mother Laura Rosenberg, became a US citizen in 1946 – she was a refugee of World War II. No doubt, she first saw Lady Liberty when she arrived that hopeful day in early 1946. How fitting that she came to the US. How fitting that you are here today. Your presence today lifts us! We will enter your names onto a plaque that will be placed at this site – you honor us by wanting to be US citizens, and by sharing this special day with us at FIU! We have hopes for all who come to FIU! How fitting that Congresswoman Ros Lehtinen herself and at least two of our State legislators here today studied at FIU! Look at what they have accomplished.

New Citizens – we know that one day you or your family members will study here at FIU and when they do, they will be able to visit this site and rejoice that you made the right choice to become a citizen of the United States of America. To quote Richard Blanco – an FIU graduate whose parents arrived here as refugees – we now share One Ground – Our Ground. We now share one country, our Country. One university, our university! Your commitment to our country gives us strength, hope, and cause for celebration. You make us proud to be Americans.

Congratulations!