

Arkadiy's Story

Originating Country: Ukraine; Belarus

Immigrated to the U.S.: December 2005

City: Chicago

State: Illinois

I lived in Belarus from 1973-2005 and in Ukraine from February 16, 1947 through July 1973.

At my high school graduation I was awarded with the silver medal for my academic achievements.

I worked at the University of Radio Technology for 32 years. There I was an electrical engineer doing telephone communication. I have had two jobs in my life-the other in Ukraine where I worked my way up in the company all the way to an electrical engineer. I had this job from 1962-1973.

I lived in Minsk, Belarus before moving to the United States. In December 2005, I came to the United States to be near my first daughter in Chicago. I also longed to live in a free country without persecution and discrimination against me because of my Jewish identity. Belarus had a totalitarian government that was no longer acceptable for me to live in.

In Chicago, I have been taking ESL classes to improve my English skills and to get better acquainted with the U.S. I have also taken two Citizenship Classes from HIAS Chicago. My teacher came to my Oath Ceremony!

A few weeks before my Citizenship Interview, my tutor, Harriet, met with me to do a Practice Interview. She really helped ease my anxiety and helped me feel more confident and prepared for the actual interview. Because of her I knew what to do and what to say and I established a good contact with the interviewing officer. This avoided additional questions because I volunteered information about my application.

Today is a holiday for me. I am now a U.S. Citizen!