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NEWS RELEASE

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Immigration Judge Takes Oath of Office In New York

NEW YORK - Javier E. Balasquide was sworn in today as an immigration judge for the New York Immigration Court during an investiture ceremony at 1:30 p.m. at the Court of International Trade. Acting Chief Immigration Judge David L. Neal, from the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) in Falls Church, Va., administered the oath of office.

Judge Balasquide joins the ranks of more than 200 immigration judges located in 54 immigration courts throughout the nation. Immigration judges are responsible for conducting formal administrative proceedings to determine whether foreign-born individuals who are charged with violations of federal immigration law should be removed from the United States or may be granted relief from removal. Immigration judges decide each case independently and their decisions are final unless appealed or certified to the Board of Immigration Appeals. In the past year, immigration judges completed more than 300,000 matters. They also are authorized to administer oaths of citizenship to candidates for naturalization.

Javier E. Balasquide was appointed as an immigration judge in July 2006. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1988 from the University of Delaware and a juris doctorate in 1991 from the Interamerican University School of Law. From March 2003 to July 2006, Judge Balasquide served as chief counsel at Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Arlington, Va. From February 1999 to March 2003, he served at the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in Arlington and Falls Church, Va., in various capacities: from June 2002 to March 2003, as district counsel; from September 2000 to June 2002, as appellate counsel; and from February 1999 to September 2000, as assistant district counsel. Judge Balasquide served as an assistant district counsel with the INS in Miami, from November 1991 to February 1999. Judge Balasquide joined the Department of Justice in 1991 through the Attorney General's Honor Program. He is a member of the Puerto Rico Bar.

- EOIR -

EOIR is responsible for adjudicating immigration cases. Specifically, under delegated authority from the Attorney General, EOIR interprets and administers the federal immigration laws by conducting immigration court proceedings, appellate reviews, and administrative hearings. EOIR consists of three components: the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, which is responsible for managing the numerous immigration courts located throughout the United States where immigration judges adjudicate individual cases; the Board of Immigration Appeals, which primarily conducts appellate reviews of immigration judge decisions; and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer, which adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to providing the fair, expeditious, and uniform application of the nation's immigration laws in all cases.

Information about EOIR immigration proceedings is available on EOIR's website at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/subject.htm>.