



Coccia Foundation

Preserving Italian Culture



Volume 4 Issue 1

Passing the Torch

Summer 2008

Cav. Joseph Coccia Jr. Inducted to Italian American National Hall of Fame

SADDLE BROOK, NJ – Cavaliere Joseph Coccia Jr., co-founder of the Coccia Foundation and the Coccia Institute for the Italian Experience in America, was recently inducted into the Italian American National Hall of Fame during a gala dinner and ceremony held at the Tropicana Casino and Resort in Atlantic City. Cav. Coccia was joined by three prominent Italian Americans who were also inducted on this special occasion.

“There is no greater compliment that I can possibly receive than to be selected for this distinction by the Hall of Fame committee,” said Cav. Coccia as he accepted the award.

Founded in Trenton, New Jersey in 1975, the Italian American National Hall of Fame is dedicated to recognizing and perpetuating the memory of the outstanding contributions of Italian Americans to their respective communities, the country, and the world. The distinguished honor roll of inductees in the Hall of Fame is testimony to the Italian legacy that continues in the United States today.

Cav. Coccia has dedicated most of his life to the many causes of the Italian community in the United States. Born and educated in Newark, New Jersey, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and served in Japan and Korea. Later, Cav. Coccia became involved with UNICO National and served the Italian American organization for many years in various capacities, including as National President. Today he continues to dedicate much of his time to UNICO and to many other Italian groups.

In 1994, Cav. Coccia established the Coccia Foundation to preserve Italian culture on two fronts. In 2000, he began pursuing the preservation of Italian culture full time and recognized the need for an institute of higher learning connected to a university that would keep the Italian legacy alive into perpetuity through an Italian studies

program. In 2003, he and his wife Elda founded the Coccia Institute at Montclair State University. The Institute partners with the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) of Washington, DC and the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission in many cultural and educational programs.

At the Italian American National Hall of Fame induction dinner, Cav. Coccia was surrounded by his loving family, many proud friends, and numerous colleagues, including officers of the NJ Italian and Italian American

Heritage Commission and members of the Coccia Foundation and Coccia Institute. Also in attendance were students who are committed to pursuing Italian studies and the cause of Italian Americans through the Coccia Foundation's student group, Amici della Cultura Italiana.

Joining Cav. Coccia as Hall of Fame inductees were: A.J. ‘Buddy’ Fortunato, Publisher of The Italian Tribune; Janet Dillione-Connor, President of the Healthcare IT Division for Siemens Medical Solutions; and Mary Nicola Ferri, President of the Boheme Opera Guild.



Coccia Family: Phil and Gen Nicastro, Michelle and Christopher Coccia, Elda and Honoree Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr., Elisa Coccia, Jamie Rosetti, and Jonathan Coccia.

(See photos of the event on page 4)



Looking Ahead Reorganization



Founders Cav. Joseph and Elda Coccia

Amici Della Cultura Italiana in five states.

The Coccia Foundation has accepted the challenge and has been an important ingredient of our mutual success; bringing us to this very important juncture.

Due to your tremendous support, financially and voluntary our “Preserving Italian Culture” initiative has grown to an extent that we must reorganize to accommodate our growth.

How have we done this? Trustees have been added to our Board: Joseph Coccia III, Genevieve Nicastro, and Thomas Daidone. To our Executive Committee: Felix Sergio, Frank Bimonte, and honorary members Cav. Paul DiGaetano and Cav. N. Larry Paragano have been added.

(See photos on page 7)

Additionally, we have created a website, established an e-mail domain, installed new telephone and fax numbers, contracted with Pay-Pal to accept on-line contributions, changed our calendar year to a fiscal year to coordinate the Foundations income and expenses with universities’ fiscal years, and expanded the Newsletter to 16 pages.

Now, we are ‘Ready for the Future!’

With your continued financial support we will hire, by September 1, our first paid employee who will run the office.

A Moment in History

By Dr. Paul B. Winkler

The Italian people during the time of the Holocaust (1933 - 1945), while partners with the Axis powers led by Hitler, carried out many rescue efforts and saved more Jews and others identified for murder than many of the countries allied with the United States.

The New Jersey Italian American Commission has over the past years developed curriculum to present the positive contributions of Italians, which is a major goal of the Italian Commission. With these two themes in mind the two Commissions during the years of 2006/07, worked cooperatively to develop a joint curriculum for schools entitled “Italians and the Holocaust.” The curriculum provides opportunities for the students to learn about the Holocaust and the heroic efforts of many Italians.

COCCIA FOUNDATION

Founded 1994
 “Preserving Italian Culture”

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“Passing the Torch”

FOUNDATION

New Jersey Gets Its Own Italian Consul

Dr. Mary Ann Re

The New Jersey Cavalieri hosted a splendid dinner on June 18th to celebrate the elevation of the Newark Vice Consulate to full diplomatic Consulate status. As noted by Cav. Giulio Piccoli, program coordinator and master of ceremonies for the occasion, this is a landmark event and a true 'victory' for the community—those who advocated for the elevation and those who will benefit from the expanded set of services and cultural programs. As the first time a vice consulate has been elevated to a full consulate, it is a testament to the significance of the Italian and Italian American communities in New Jersey.

The program was organized by the Cavalieri of New Jersey, under the leadership of President Cav. Thomas Bellavia, and held at Nanni's Restaurant in Rochelle Park. The guest of honor, of course, was Andrea Barbaria, currently Vice Consul, who will be the first to assume the title of Consul of Italy in Newark.

Originally scheduled for July 1st, Newark will attain full consulate status on November 1, 2008. At that time, three additional NJ counties—Somerset, Hunterdon and Mercer—will be added to its jurisdiction. While Consul Barbaria will then report directly to the Italian Embassy and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he emphasized the importance of continuing Newark's collaborative and consultative relationships with the Consulates General in New York, as well as Philadelphia, whose jurisdiction includes Southern New Jersey.

Gr. Uff. Marco Cangialosi reflected the sentiments of the attendees at the dinner and, by extension, of all Italian Americans in New Jersey. He stated, "I feel very proud that New Jersey is finally going to have a full fledged Consulate...

This elevation is the best thing that could have happened in New Jersey for all Italian immigrants, descendants and the new generation who will benefit and bring our culture into the future."

A native of Chieri (Torino), Andrea Barbaria assumed his position as Vice Consul of Italy in Newark on January 21, 2008, succeeding Paolo Toschi. Having majored in Journalism and Communications at the University of Torino, soon-to-be Consul Barbaria was also graduated from the Sorbonne with a Masters in Political Science.

As summarized by Consul Barbaria,



Italian Community welcomes Consul Andrea Barbaria.

"The elevation highlights the importance of the Italian and Italian American communities of New Jersey to the Republic of Italy, not only in traditional terms as a community of people who speak Italian and honor their Italian heritage, but also as a crucial community of investors—for its economic as well as cultural value."

Serving as Italian Consul of Newark, Barbaria indicated he will provide additional impetus to the pursuit of the following key initiatives: "Top priority is the promotion of the Italian language and culture, with special efforts for the diffusion of Advanced Placement (in Italian)... Another priority is to strengthen ties with other key institutions, including those in New York where we will have a

special relationship – not only with the Consulate General of NY, but also IACE, ICE, ENIT and IIC; and in NJ with universities such as Rutgers, Montclair, Seton Hall and Princeton, as well as the NJIAHC, the Coccia Foundation, and other important cultural associations. ... And last, but not least, special emphasis will be placed on young people... In all cultural and economic fields, we need the help of the young."

In pursuing these initiatives and in all the activities of the Consulate, Barbaria highlighted the importance of collaborating with the Cavalieri, who have "deep ties with society in NJ at all levels—political, cultural and economic. You find one or two Cavalieri in all the important institutions around New Jersey... I can't conceive of my work without their strength and support."

Asked about his personal reaction to being assigned to this prestigious post, Barbaria responded, "I am honored and flattered... When I chose New Jersey as my first and only assignment location, I didn't know [about the upcoming elevation]. I chose it for different reasons—because I wanted an experience in the U. S., because I knew and respected Consul General Talo' and because my predecessor had such a great experience with all of you in New Jersey... a very exciting post for a young civil servant!"

As to his family, "They are very honored and proud of me... I am the first member of my family to have a diplomatic career—I am a 'homo novis' ... If I'm here, it's a tribute to my mother and father, who made many economic sacrifices for my education. If I succeed, it's first of all due to them."

(Photos appear on the back cover.)



Hall of Fame Induction Photo Gallery

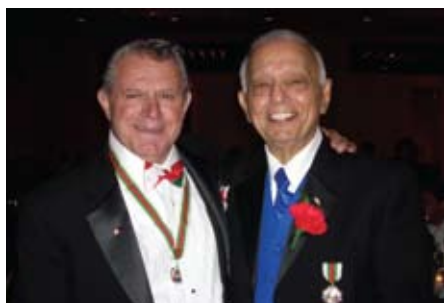
(Story on page 1)



Honorary Consul Cav. Dr. Gilda Rorro Baldassari and President of the Italian American National Hall of Fame Cav. Carl H. Carabelli present award to inductee Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.



Honoree Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr. and wife Elda with Alumni - Frank Abunia, Michael Grillo, Danielle Ferrante, Anna Rose Ghione, and Paul DiRobertis.



Mercer County Italian American Festival Association President Cav. John Scarpati, former Hall of Fame Recipient and Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.

NJ Governor's Welcome

Governor Jon S. Corzine hosted key members of the Italian Government at Drumthwacket, the Official Residence of the Governor of the State of NJ, for a Bilateral Meeting.

He met with top representatives of the Italian Government from the diplomatic corps posted in the NE of the U.S., with jurisdictional territories which include the State of NJ - The Hon. Francesco Maria Talò, Consul General of the Italian Republic in New York and The Hon. Andrea Barbaria, Vice Consul of the Italian Republic in Newark, New Jersey.

This was the Governor's first meeting with Consul General Talò and Vice Consul Barbaria. New Jersey is proud to be home to a Vice Consulate, located in Newark.

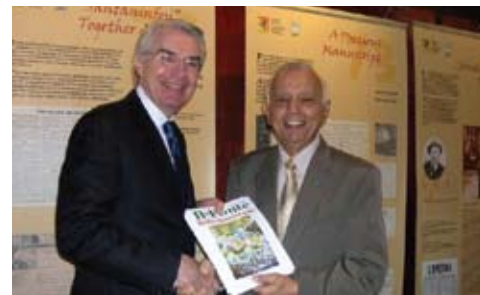
Pictured here: Hon. Cav. Paul DiGaetano, Special Advisor to the NJ Commission on Italian and Americans of Italian Heritage Cultural and Educational Programs and former NJ Assemblyman, 36th Legislative District; Hon. Consul General Francesco Maria Talò, Consul General of the Italian Republic in NY; Governor Jon S. Corzine, Governor of the State of New Jersey; Hon. Andrea Barbaria, Vice Consul of the Italian Republic in Newark, NJ; Celeste Armenti-McElroy, Director of State International Affairs and State International Trade Representative



Sicilian Crossings



Vice Consul Andrea Barbaria, Program Director Dorothea House Linda Prospero, Cav. Dr. Robert Freda at the Sicilian Crossings program where the immigration story was artistically displayed.



NJ Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission Chair Richard Billotti presenting Cav. Coccia with a publication of the Sicilian Crossings.



Producer of the Photo Exhibition Distinguished Prof. Marcella Saija showing points of interest to Lilly Freda.



The audience listened intently to the Sicilian Crossing expert panel.

FOUNDATION



Coccia Foundation Trustee Ralph Contini, Director of Corporate Responsibility John R. Smith, Honoree Ralph LaRossa, Coccia Foundation Founder Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.

7th Annual Golf Classic & Comedy Night

The Coccia Foundation hosted the seventh annual Italian Studies Golf Classic on Monday, June 23, 2008 at the White Beeches Golf & Country Club in Haworth, NJ. The highly successful golf tournament was followed by a outstanding evening of comedy and cocktails at the Estate at Florentine Gardens in River Vale. This year's event honoree was Ralph LaRossa, President and Chief Operating Officer of PSE&G.

The fun-filled day was devoted entirely to raising funds that will help to further the mission of the Coccia Foundation and began with breakfast and a \$10,000 putting contest. The golf tournament followed, with prizes awarded for Closest to Pin, Longest Drive, and Holes in One.

After an afternoon of driving, chipping, and putting, guests enjoyed a grand cocktail reception at the Estate at Florentine Gardens. Delicious dinner and dolce selections accompanied a premium open bar.

Ralph LaRossa was presented with an award for his dedication to Italian heritage and culture. Coccia Foundation Founder Cav. Joseph Coccia Jr. and event Co-Chairs, as well as Foundation Trustees, Ralph Contini and owner of the Florentine Gardens Thomas Daidone joined in paying tribute to this year's honoree.



Coccia Foundation Trustee Ralph Contini, Honoree Ralph LaRossa, Foundation Co-Founder Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.





COCCIA

QUEENSBORO UNICO Distinguished Professorship



Queensboro UNICO sponsored a newly Distinguished Professorship at Hofstra University. Members of the Queensboro, NY UNICO Chapter celebrated with newly Distinguished Professor Dr. Pellegrino D'Acerno.

Donation Received



Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr., Institute Chair Rudy Valli, Elda M. Coccia, Italian American Civic Association of Hillside Chair Angelo Bonanno, and Treasurer Robert Trotte.

Queens University



Queens University Newly Distinguished, Professor Dr. Frederick Gardaphe receiving congratulations from Elda and Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr. at the Calandra Institute, New York, NY.

NEWS FLASH!!!!
Coccia Foundation is now a part of the Conference of Presidents, an umbrella group of National Italian American Organizations.

Coccia Foundation Executive Board Member Honored

The Greater Ramsey Chapter of UNICO honored UNICO National's Executive Administrator, Barbara Peirano, as its "Citizen of the Year."

Ms. Peirano has been with UNICO thirty years (hired in 1977 by Joseph Coccia) rising to the position of Executive Administrator. Proclamations were presented to the honoree from the City of Ramsey, the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the

city of St. Louis, MO, along with a joint resolution from the NJ Senate and Assembly for her leadership and service to UNICO and its chapters.

Ramsey President Joe Verdone remarked, "Barbara's vast UNICO experience, work ethic and devotion have helped her fellow UNICANS

discover the many meaningful ways to promote UNICO's core values and our Italian heritage."

Ramsey member Rick D'Arminio was the dinner chair and MC. The fete was attended by UNICO National President Joseph Agresti and wife



Arlene, nine Past National Presidents, District Governors, Chapter Presidents, members, families and friends. Also there were fellow Coccia Foundation

members Phil Sergio, Founders Cav. Joseph and Elda Coccia, Elisa Coccia, Ralph Contini, and Alfred Amato pictured with her above.

(Barbara is the editor of this publication and a member of the Foundation's Executive Board.)



At the Hofstra University celebration are: Professor Stanislao Pugliese, Cav. Professor Josephine Maietta (President AATI Long Island Chapter) and Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.

Milestone Celebrated



Guests attending the 50th Anniversary of Ieri, Oggi, Domani.

FOUNDATION



NEEDED.....“BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS!”

NJ Italian & Italian American Heritage Commission and UNICO National Join the Coccia Foundation in Search for Books

The Coccia Foundation, in conjunction with the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission and UNICO National, is calling for donations of books on the subjects of Italian language, culture, and heritage in support of elementary, high school, and college students that are interested in and/or currently pursuing Italian studies.

“A crisis exists for teachers of Italian language, history, and culture. The Italian sections of many school libraries are empty, and the assistance of the community is needed now,” says Cav. Joseph Coccia Jr., founder of the Coccia Foundation.

As many schools are increasingly offering programs that focus on Italian language, literature, and history, the need

for books on these subjects has become more and more imperative. Private institutions, book publishers, authors, and the general public are now being called upon to contribute new and used books toward the “Books for Schools” initiative, which will provide much-needed resources to educators and students wherever they may be needed.

Books that will be accepted include new, used, over-printed, and duplicate volumes pertaining to any aspect of Italian studies, printed in either English or Italian. The books may be appropriate for any age level from pre-school through college.

The NJ Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission has chosen to join with The Coccia Foundation in this initiative, as the Commission is aware of the imperative need for books in schools

due to their continuing involvement with Italian programs throughout New Jersey school districts. UNICO National, which counts 135 chapters throughout the U.S., is also joining in the project to further its support of and commitment to the preservation of Italian culture throughout the United States.

If you are interested in aiding students of all ages who wish to pursue the study of all things Italian, you can make a difference through the “Books for Schools” project.

To make your donation, please mail books to:

Coccia Foundation
23 Leswing Avenue
Saddle Brook, NJ 07663
or call 201-712-1010
for book pick-up.

Meet the New Trustees



Joseph Coccia, III



Genevieve
Coccia-Nicastro



Thomas Daidone

New Executive Board Members



Felix Sergio



Frank Bimonte

Italian Proverb

“Dimmi con chi vai e ti diro’ chi sei”
Tell me who you go with and I’ll tell you who you are!

We have made every effort to assure that the listings in this newsletter are correct. If there are errors or omissions, please call the Coccia Foundation at (201) 712-1010 or Email the Editor at: barbarapeirano@cocciafoundation.org.

Honorary Executive Board Members



Cav. Paul
DiGaetano



Cav. N. Lawrence
Paragano



COCCIA

Amadeo Peter Giannini Banker 1870 – 1949



On April 18, 1906, an earthquake brought the city of San Francisco to its knees. Buildings collapsed, roadways ruptured, and fires raged up one street and down another. Amid the resulting chaos, some saw this as an opportunity, and looters were out scavenging all they could carry. Amadeo Peter (A.P.) Giannini sized up the situation quickly. He borrowed a horse-drawn wagon filled with produce and maneuvered his way through the crumbling city to his bank, the Bank of Italy. He dug through the rubble and was able to pile \$2 million in gold, coins, and securities onto the wagon, covering it with the produce to keep it out of hands of the looters.

With his depositors' savings secure, he quickly took the next step. Though most banks wanted to remain closed until some sense of normalcy returned to the city, Giannini set up temporary quarters on the docks near San Francisco's North Beach. Using a plank laid across two barrels as a desk, he issued credit on the strength of a face, a pledge, and a handshake, to help customers rebuild their homes and their businesses. Many cite Giannini's resourcefulness and quick action as a major factor in San Francisco's recovery.

From Produce to Banking

A first-generation Italian American, A.P. Giannini was born in 1870 in San Jose, California. Both his parents had immigrated to the United States from Liguria, near Genoa, Italy. When A.P. was seven years old, his father, a farmer, was killed, presumably during an argument over a dollar. His mother later remarried a produce merchant who took to A.P. and taught him the produce business. When A.P. was 14, he dropped out of school and worked full time with his stepfather. Showing industriousness, alertness, and good people skills, A.P. became a partner in the business after a few years. At 31, he sold his share of the business and planned to "retire." Those plans were short lived, however, when he accepted an appointment as a director of the Columbus Savings & Loan Association.

But he soon found himself in conflict with other directors, primarily over his desire to serve working class people. Until that time, banks accepted deposits from and made loans to only wealthy individuals and businesses, those who had money and collateral. From his work with farmers, merchants, and others, Giannini knew entire groups of people could not open savings accounts or get loans from banks, hard-working people who would indeed be good risks. A.P. insisted that expanding the customer based to working class families and small businesses would lead to the bank's growth. When the other directors refused to budge, he left Columbus S&L. With \$150,000 he borrowed from his stepfather and 10 other investors, he opened his own bank, the Bank of Italy, directly across the street from Columbus S&L in a former saloon. He kept the bartender on as an assistant teller.

The Little People

Giannini knew that many poor people, especially of Italian backgrounds, would not enter a bank to ask for a loan. So Giannini went door-to-door and approached people on the street. He quickly grew a roster of customers—mostly "little people"—and a sizable amount of deposits. In addition to opening the banking process to the non-wealthy, many of whom were immigrants from a variety of countries in addition to Italy, Giannini introduced a number of other new banking practices. He extended banking hours, so workers could do their banking after finishing their work. He offered home mortgages and home equity loans, and, later, auto loans. He made credit respectable and reasonable—all while seeing the bank turn a profit.

Taking a Risk

Besides taking a chance on the "little people," Giannini also accepted other "risky" customers. He made loans to vineyards, helping the wine industry get its start. His bank made a hefty loan to movie stars Charlie Chaplin and Mary Pickford when they wanted to create United Artists Studios. When Walt Disney ran over budget in filming Snow White, Giannini approved a \$2 million loan. When the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge was delayed 14 years because of lack of funding, Giannini's bank bought six million dollars worth of bonds to launch the project. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, as runs on banks caused many to collapse, Giannini convinced many depositors to keep their money in the banks where it could work for them and help revive the economy, he said. He was again successful and his actions in this endeavor were said to be the inspiration in part for the character George Bailey in Frank Capra's movie classic *It's a Wonderful Life*.

FOUNDATION

Giannini Continues...

Bank of America

Giannini's experience during the earthquake had taught him two points that stayed with him throughout this career. The first is the importance of having sufficient gold and hard cash on hand to meet any demand, even one driven by catastrophe or panic. And second, big banks are less vulnerable to crises and regional downturns than small banks are. It was this second point that drove him to expand across California and then across America as regulations would allow. He bought one small bank after another, adding branches to the Bank of Italy. The big move came in 1929 when he joined with Bank of America in New York and adopted that name.

But the initial merger between the Bank of Italy and Bank of America was not without its problems. The New York banking establishment did not take easily this upstart bank's moving into its turf. Some tried belittling Giannini with epithets like "Sicilian fruit merchant." But Giannini withstood all challenges and the merger came off.

Years later, in 2004, some 50-plus years after Giannini's death, Bank of America completed a \$48 billion purchase of FleetBoston Financial. One commentator, Ron Chernow, said the purchase "fulfills a vision that A.P. Giannini... articulated in 1904. It's taken the entire century to reach a truly national banking system."

The Money Itch

Giannini died in 1949 at the age of 79. At the time, Bank of America had become the largest bank in the world, with assets of \$7 billion and 526 branches in more than 300 United States cities. At his death, Giannini's estate was about \$500,000, a small amount for a man of his stature and success. But that was

because he did not want to acquire great wealth. He feared it might cause him to lose contact with the "little people" who meant so much to his success. For years he accepted virtually no pay, and when he was given a \$1.5 million grant, he gave it all to the University of California. "Money itch is a bad thing," he said. "I never had that trouble."

Honors, Awards, and Recognition

- A middle school in San Francisco is named after Giannini.
- The U.S. Postal Service recognized Giannini's contributions to American banking by issuing a postage stamp bearing his portrait in 1973.
- TIME Magazine named Giannini one of the 100 "builders and titans" of the 20th century. He was the only banker included in that group.
- American Banker Magazine recognized Giannini as one of the five most influential bankers of the 20th century.
- As part of its 75th anniversary in 2004, BusinessWeek named Giannini as one of the top 75 Great Innovators of the previous 75 years.

The A.P. Giannini Foundation supports medical research fellowships and organizations engaged in research to improve the quality of life for people with hemophilia. The foundation has awarded some \$12 million in support of 550 fellowships.

By Dr. Cosmo Ferrara



Practice Your Language Skills

By Joe De Felice

LILL Communicating in Italian... Words, Phrases, etc.

The Internet is a valuable tool for many things, but most especially for LEARNING. In my case, I have been very involved with 'la lingua bella', **Italian**, but the learning process is **forever**.

My thanks and acknowledgement to the Italian Mail Lists people and to the most valuable resource we all have, **ABOUT ITALIAN**.

Sempre Avanti,

Joe De Felice

Past President of Amici Della

Lingua Italiana

parola, e frase, e citazione di giorno
(words, phrases and citations
of the day)

"How do you eat an elephant???
A little bit at a time"

Try mastering some of these daily.

Parola (Parole) di giorno

WORD(s) of the DAY

Italian word: semplicemente

(sem-pleechuh-men-tay)

English translation: simply

Part of speech: adverb

Example sentence:

Italian: Esprimetevi pi semplicemente e la gente capira

English: Express yourself more simply, and people will understand!

Italian word: ospite (oh-spee-tuh)

English translation: guest

Part of speech: noun

Example sentence:

Italian: Oggi siete miei ospiti: il mio compleanno ed offro da bere a tutti!

English: Today you are my guests: it's my birthday and I'm buying drinks for everyone!



Coccia Foundation's Sponsored Scholarship Recipients

Antonio Jude Totino, Seton Hall University, Nicastro Family Scholarship



Antonio Jude Totino of Mount Arlington, NJ will be a senior during the 2008-2009 school year. A first generation Italian American, Antonio was born in Secaucus and grew up

with strong ties to his heritage.

In 2000, the year that Rome hosted World Youth Day, Antonio visited Italy and discovered a new sense of pride in the culture and traditions of his ancestors deciding to pursue the study of all things Italian.

He was graduated with honors from the County College of Morris, transferring to Seton Hall to earn a degree in Education and Italian Language and Literature.

Antonio notes that he is extremely privileged to identify with his heritage and is grateful for the opportunity to extend his knowledge of Italy. He looks forward to teaching lessons that maintain the legacy of Italians in the United States.

Giovanna Mangiola, Rutgers University Angelo & Anna Soriano Memorial Scholarship



An alumna of Montclair State University, Giovanna Mangiola is a graduate student at Rutgers University in New Brunswick. She is pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Italian with aspirations to

teach the Italian language.

A first generation Italian American, Giovanna's parents came to the U.S. from Spilinga in the region of Calabria. During visits to her parents' hometown, Giovanna gained an appreciation and understanding of her culture.

In the U.S., she is an active member of the Spilingese Italian American Association. Upon receiving the Soriano Memorial Scholarship, Giovanna stated, "I hope that the career opportunities within the Italian field will continue to grow and that I can share my knowledge and love for the Italian language and culture."

We're proud to have two first place recipients for this award.

Tiziana Briscese, Rutgers University, Anna and Angelo Soriano Memorial Scholarship



Tiziana Briscese of East Brunswick, NJ and currently a student at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, majoring in Italian. This summer, Tiziana is attending Italian

classes at the World Languages Institute to further her knowledge of the language as she pursues her goal of becoming an Italian language teacher.

She has a passion for Italian literature, the study of which she believes will prepare her well for her career through the exploration of Italian culture, politics, and social structures.

Looking to her future classroom, she says, "Making connections between time periods, my students and the Italian culture are an important part of language learning."

Urbino Bound

Johanna Rossi Wagner and Kathleen LaPenta, the recipients of the Joseph Sr. and Clementina Coccia Scholarship, are Ph.D. candidates in the Department of Italian. They are promising young scholars, who are planning to pursue research interests and teach Italian language, literature and culture at the University level.

Jaime Lynn Bernice and Kelly Porter, the recipients of the Coccia Foundation Summer program in Urbino, are undergraduate students minoring in Italian. They have been active members of the Rutgers' Italian Club and have a strong interest in Italian language and culture.

Note: Additional Coccia Foundation scholarships will appear in the next newsletter.



Briana Zygadlo, Fairleigh Dickinson University Bimonte Family Scholarship

A resident of Passaic Park, NJ, Briana Zygadlo graduated from Immaculate Conception High School in Lodi in

2007. She will enter her sophomore year at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, where she is an undeclared Education major, a member of the Italian club P.I.S.A., and is studying the Italian language.

She plans to use the Bimonte Family Scholarship to study abroad in

Alassio, Italy this summer, where she will continue to pursue the study of Italian as well as experience various aspects of the Italian lifestyle. While in Italy, Briana will also study the cuisine, music, and people of the country of her heritage, with a goal of becoming a more globally aware citizen.

In the future, she plans to teach the Italian language to her students endeavoring to make them aware of other cultures.

Briana says, "Studying abroad in Italy has now become a dream come true."

FOUNDATION

Una Serata Elegante

Carlstadt New Jersey, Friday April 18, 2008 was the celebration of Amici della Cultura Italiana's 5th annual Una Serata Elegante. This milestone occasion for the students and young adult Italian culture organizations was held at the newly renovated Il Vilaggio. Una Serata Elegante is an opportunity for the twenty-two (22) university student and alumni Italian organizations to get together and celebrate the success of the past year and begin planning for the next.

The opulent Il Vilaggio served as a perfect venue for the over 250 guests. The evening began with a few words of praise from the Honorable Andrea Barbaria, Vice Consul of Italy in Newark, NJ.

Cavaliere Joseph Coccia, Jr. and Student Liaison Phil Sergio then awarded a few outstanding students for their efforts in preserving the Italian Culture. Noelia Romero, a senior at

Ramapo who plans on perusing her masters in Italian at Rutgers in the fall, was honored for creating a weekly Italian conversation group at Ramapo. Nicole Gadaleta was given an award for her efforts in spearheading Italian studies and her fund-raising efforts and the award for most improved club went to Executive Board officers Toni Ann Corsi, Peter Ferrari, Lara Saponara and Stefanie Schera of Drew University. Italian professors and club advisors Josephine Spina of Farleigh Dickinson and Dr. Rosetta D'Angelo of Ramapo were acknowledged for their tireless efforts. Vice Consul Barbaria, Garfield Chapter of UNICO President Shawn Cochrane and guest, along with Dominic Nicastro were in attendance.

After a delicious four course meal the night continued to well after one in the morning with dancing to the latest Italian and English hits. Guests were also treated to some very lovely raffle

and door prizes.

The members of Amici della Cultura Italiana would like to thank everyone for their support over this past year, especially to all those businesses that advertised in the Una Serata Elegante Commemorative Journal.

The members look forward to many more years of success and are excited about the formation of the young adult association of the organization for those individuals beyond college age.

For more information on Amici della Cultura Italiana or the young adult organization please contact the Coccia Foundation at 201-712-1010.

Alito Luncheon



At the Luncheon for Justice Alito are: Cav. Richard Bilotti, Chair of NJ Italian and Italian American Commission; Justice Alito; Robert C. Rafano, Esq.; and Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.

AMICI Shirts



Students with newly received AMICI shirts reflecting the NEW LOGO.





Italian Conversation Session— Closing the gap between Italian Language and Learning Anxiety

By Noelia Romero—Ramapo College of New Jersey

People learn using different learning techniques, and it is a fact that peer to peer learning seems to be the most effective. After 3.5 years here at Ramapo, I had not been able to say that there was a program for myself and my peers where we could informally sit around, practice speaking Italian and learn from each other. I decided to make a change for myself and the future of my peers. Now, as a graduating senior, I have developed what I have entitled an “Italian Conversation Session,” which offers the service of practicing the language and culture in many forms.

What we do at these sessions is very simple; we sit in a circle every student reads a line aloud, whether it’s an article or lyric. When we come to an unfamiliar word, we bring out the dictionary. While viewing artwork, if we are trying to express an opinion, feeling, even a color, we refer to each other and/or the dictionary! I believe that active learning is effective learning, therefore I have the students write any and all notes on the board. My goal at the end of each of these hour and a half long

sessions is that the students leave having learned at least 5 words, some aspect of Italian culture, and are more confident learning and speaking the language. What a way to close the gap between Italian language and learning anxiety!

My biggest challenge was finding the right method to engage, benefit and result in a better performance from the students at the duration of the semester. What I applied was a variety of language learning approaches. Through Italian current event articles the students are able to attain knowledge of the culture of Italy, vocabulary, as well as important topics occurring daily in Italy. Through the use of music lyrics students are able to learn pronunciation as well as many literary devices, such as alliteration, personification, metaphor, etc. Through exploring Italian artwork, students are able to express opinions, link personal emotions, describe articles, colors, and certainly learn history! I needed a way to apply these methods without intimidating the students. Many came to me questioning if their language ability were adequate for this program.

I designed the session for students at all language ability levels, which is why I implemented the various methods of learning, to help the contextualized learner, the visual learner, the phonic learner, and those in between.

While I have been working on other ways to implement this type of preliminary learning, I think it is important to mention that the most crucial aspect of this design is how informal and relaxed it is. I encourage the students to speak and read aloud so that they make mistakes and the other students can correct them and vice versa. Peer to peer learning has shown to be very effective and in addition those dedicated students who attend my sessions have impressed me, each other and themselves!

As both a leader and learner, I strongly encourage all schools, high school level and above, to implement this type of program into their weekly routine. Not only will this strengthen their language curriculum, but also it will encourage students to want to further their language education.



Brandon reads note to Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.

SUMMER CAMP MEMORIES

Hi, my name is Brandon. I am 10 years old. When I was 7 and 8 years old, I attended La Escuela de Fantasia. This was an Italian Day Camp during the summer. The camp was fun and educational.

When I was 7 years old, we learnt Italian through different activities. Some days we pretended that we were traveling to different places in Italy. Some days we did arts and crafts, we cooked and did fashion shows.

When I was 8 years old, we learnt Italian through acting. It was a lot of fun and I was able to meet new people. I liked my teachers because they were patient and understanding.

I would like to thank Mr. Coccia and the Coccia Institute, because without them this camp would not have been possible.

Un Affettusso Abbraccio

FOUNDATION

Tante Grazie

Elisa,

I have looked over the newsletter of your Foundation and I am amazed for the multitude of activities, it must be a full-time involvement. I wish there were more people like you and your parents, you all must give an enormity of hours to the projects. Success is not just money (a necessity), but time and attention. With very little exposure, I can detect the full dedication of the Coccia Family.

Best Regards,
Cav. Antonio "Tony" Pirone
Princeton, NJ

Cav. Joseph and Elda,

I just celebrated 3 years at the Coccia Institute. It has been a great experience and I want to thank you for your kindness and for allowing me to learn and grow there. I have come to appreciate your rich culture and heritage and have met many warm Italian and Italian American people through the Institute.

I have witnessed your uncompromising love in making sure that your rich heritage continues in the hearts and minds of young emerging adults. Because of this, I know that you will have much success in completing your mission and vision.

Thank you and Elda for your kindness to me and Tim. I hope you know that I have given all that I had in doing my part of the Institute.

I hope to visit some of the many upcoming events this year and hope that you keep our names on the newsletter list.

Grazie,
Keith

Dear Cav. Joseph Coccia and Family
God bless you for your wonderful work and dedication to Italian Culture.
Brandon D'Emilio

Dear Mr. Coccia,

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for recognizing my effort in writing an essay for "La Festa Della Repubblica." I would also appreciate it if you would extend my thanks to the Coccia Foundation—Italian Studies Program for giving students the opportunity to explore the Italian culture.

The recognition I have received for the piece of writing submitted is truly appreciated. Thank you again not only for recognizing my writing but also for giving many students the opportunity for furthering their Italian Studies. Thank you, also, for your time.

Lauren Mencher
Student at St. Thomas
Aquinas College

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Coccia,

I just wanted to truly thank you for the opportunity to study abroad, in Italy. I will use this chance to learn as much as I can about our heritage and culture to bring back to my fellow classmates in America.

Your generosity has touched my life.
Thank you.
Mynda D'Anella

Dear Mr. Coccia, Mr. Sergio and all other Coccia Foundation Members,

I want to personally thank you for the continued support and generosity throughout the year. It does not go unnoticed.

John M. Miseo
Fairleigh Dickinson University

Mr. Coccia,

Whenever you look at this clock, think of the time we have spent together. Thank you for all your support, energy, and efforts. This would not be possible without you.

Danielle, Mynda, Matt, and
Jennifer

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Coccia,

Thank you very much for sponsoring and attending our Italian concert. The performers (faculty and students) and the attendees really enjoyed it.

Thank you also for the great CD—it was beautiful and very moving. It was especially timely given that we went to Ellis Island a few days ago. What a great trip!

I have enclosed my new book, The Gluten-Free Guide to Italy the second in a series of public service books I am writing. The first is The Gluten-Free Guide to New York (www.gfguideny.com). You can see more information about the Italy book on the website, www.gfguideitaly.com

It was great to see you both and I wish you a wonderful summer.

A presto,
Marian Ann Roglieri, Ph.D.
Professor of Italian
St. Thomas Aquinas College

Dear Mr. Coccia,

I am a student at Fairleigh Dickinson University and also a member of the Italian Club PISA on campus. I enrolled in Italian 3 with Signora Spina.

I received the tuition remission you offered and I just wanted to say Grazie! I really appreciate the scholarship and wanted to thank you.

Sincerely,
Christina Prunella

Mr. Coccia,

Thank you for your recent greeting. I hope you and your family enjoyed the holiday.

After attending so many of your young adult functions, I must admit I am more than looking forward to working with you in the future.

A presto,
Melissa J. Wells
Program Manager
NJIAHC



Golf Course or School?

Kimberly Kettelhut



Is this a golf course parking lot or a school parking Lot? If you chose school you'd be correct. This "commuter" school is located in Peachtree City, GA.

Peachtree City, GA, a unique city located just thirty minutes south from Atlanta, provides more than 90 miles of cart paths for its residents to walk, run, ride their bike, or even drive golf carts. With over 9,000 golf carts registered, children at the age of 12 can drive the golf cart with a parent, and when they turn 15, they can drive the golf cart alone once they have acquired their learners driving permit. Freshman and sophomores attending McIntosh High School drive their golf carts to school and park them in a separate parking lot made especially for golf carts. This golf cart parking is probably the only one of its kind at any high school in the country.

Holidays, such as the Fourth of July and Halloween, are quite different in Peachtree City thanks to the golf carts. On July 4th, we celebrate with a parade of golf carts and other floats promoting local businesses. Residents in Peachtree City decorate their golf

carts and participate in the celebrations. Instead of using a car and driving from neighborhood to neighborhood trick-or-treating on Halloween, golf carts are used for fast and easy transportation. It is an exciting and truly unique way to get around town to accumulate candy. Conveniently, young adults can get around by themselves acquiring candy without their parents walking them from house to house around the city.

Prominent titles have been given to Peachtree City. Money Magazine reported Peachtree City to be in the top 10 best places to live in 2005, and U.S. News and World Report designated this city as the best place to retire. Although the golf carts appeal greatly to independence in teenagers perspectives, elderly residents also gain more independence with the usage of golf carts.

Older citizens in the city, can comfortably and tranquilly cruise the paths to their destination instead of hesitantly driving on the dangerous roads with irresponsible drivers that can seriously injure anyone. The advantages of golf carts allow any age to get around in a safe, relaxing, and entertaining ride without spending money on gas. The electric powered golf carts need only a few hours of charging to power around the city. With all the specially constructed tunnels and bridges to connect the cart paths, the amount of money saved on gas, and the satisfaction of golf carts within Peachtree City, it is questioned why all cities don't use golf carts as their main form of transportation.

Annual Golf Classic and Comedy Night

(Continued from page 5)

LaRossa has been President and COO of Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G); New Jersey's largest electric and gas utility.

LaRossa joined the company in 1985 as an Associate Engineer and advanced through a variety of management positions in the utility's gas and electric operations. Prior to his appointment as President and COO, he was Vice President of Electric Delivery.

A graduate of Stevens Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Engineering, LaRossa completed the Harvard Business School's Program for Management Development. He is a member of various industry organizations, including the Committee on Power Delivery for the Association of Edison Illuminating Companies, the Electric Power Reliability Institute (EPRI) Research Advisory Committee, the PJM Designated Officers Committee, and the PJM Transmission Owners Agreement Administrative Committee.

LaRossa is also a member of the Board of Directors for Bergen County's United Way and a member of the Montclair State University Board of Trustees. In 1998 he received the Outstanding Manager of the Year Award from Gas Industry Magazine.

The proceeds from the annual Golf Outing & Comedy Night will support the Coccia Foundation's many projects, programs, and activities, including scholarships for students pursuing the study of Italian language and history, various cultural events, and initiatives that will further the legacy of Italians in the United States.

FOUNDATION

Joseph and Elda Coccia Institute for the Italian Experience in America 2008 And 2009 Program Schedule Montclair State University

Saturday, September 13, 2008

The Italian Teachers Association of NJ (ITANJ) is holding its PRIMO INCONTRO at the Rutgers University Student Center, College Avenue. Part 1 from 9am to 1pm workshop: Italian Through Invention: science & art - Leonardo da Vinci. Part 11 from 2pm to 4pm: Rilancio Della's - MEETING OF ITALIAN AP TASK FORCE FOR NEW JERSEY.

Friday, September 26, 2008

Italian Language Instructional Methods and Materials Seminar Workshop. A professionally developed review and call for papers of the most effective and current methods and materials available for the teaching of the Italian language. In collaboration with the NJ Italian American Heritage Commission.

Fall 2008

Announcement of winners of Post Baccalaureate Research Grants in Italian or Italian American Heritage studies.

Annual series 2008 – 2009

Interdepartmental lectures (tba) sponsored by the Coccia Institute with other departments in the science and humanities divisions of the University.

Winter – Spring 2009

Annual Anniversary Musical Performance and Cultural Celebration of the Coccia Institute.

Spring 2009 Date TBA

Annual Student Heritage Celebration and Symposium – State-wide New Jersey High school students of the Italian language present interpretations of a wide range of topics relating to the culture, heritage, current events and history of Italy. In collaboration with the Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey.

Spring 2009

K – 12 Teacher Training hosted by The Coccia Institute for “The Universality of Italian Heritage” the official state sponsored curriculum project of NJ Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission.

For further information visit: www.montclair.edu.coccia/

“Preserving Italian Culture”

The Coccia Foundation has, since its inception, grown more quickly, helped more students, and held more cultural events than any of us would have thought possible at the start.

The requests to the Foundation are received on a daily basis. We have had the indescribable pleasure of seeing the appreciation and

Volunteers Needed

determination to preservation of our Italian Culture grow in the hearts of the student groups the Foundation was instrumental in forming at colleges throughout the country.

Student attention and interest, along with that of their parents, families, professors, and sponsors is on the increase. This phenomenon has

“Passing the Torch”

created a need for **Volunteers. Can you help?**

All interested persons kindly call Joseph at (201) 712-1010 or Email him at: Joseph@cocciafoundation.org.

COCCIA FOUNDATION



Coccia Foundation

"preserving Italian culture"

Foundation Office
23 Leswing Avenue
Saddle Brook, NJ 07663

Benvenuti...

To our AMICI and supporters.

Thank you for bringing our rich Italian
Culture and Heritage into your home.

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