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Welcome Randolph, NJ

***New Chapter
Randolph, NJ Pg. 26***

13 Scholarships

29 Italian Connection



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Italy Celebrates National Day

Italy's National Day is celebrated on June 2nd, the day of the birth of King Victor Emmanuel II. The day is marked by the raising of the Italian flag at 6 AM in every town and city. The day is also marked by the playing of the national anthem, the 'Canto degli Italiani' (The Song of the Italians). The day is a day of national pride and unity.

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

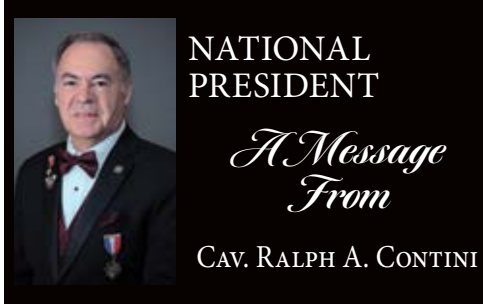
August 16, 2024: Deadline for September 2024 Chapter News

July 28-August1, 2024: 101st UNICO National Convention

July 30-August 2, 2025: 102nd UNICO National Convention

For more events, visit www.UNICO.org

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Ciao a tutti! My sincere greetings to you from your National President! As this will be my final message in ComUNICO, I extend my heartfelt thank you to the "UNICO Army" out there. Without you, the members, there are no chapters. And without chapters, there is no UNICO National. Thank you for giving me the privilege and honor of serving you.

It has been said that after the Mid-Year UNICO National board meeting, the presidency starts to wind down. My experience has been anything but that! First Lady Maria-Rose and I have crisscrossed the country from Milwaukee to Merrimack Valley, from Kansas City to Chicago, and beyond! We're completing the year in full sprint, culminating with the establishment of two new chapters in UNICO, including welcoming Randolph, NJ into the UNICO family. In July, we will be traveling to an event in San Diego and Coronado to meet UNICO members from the past 20 years.

As our administration draws to a close, I would like to make a few observations. Though we shall be brief, we must recognize and applaud those members with whom it has been a pleasure to work. My fortieth year in UNICO has been rewarding and, at times, challenging. With the driving motto of "Sempre Avanti" and its spirit leading the way, I am pleased to say that we have ultimately achieved much.

A Sampling of Accomplishments, Acknowledgements, and Memorable Moments:

- UNICO is in the midst of a renaissance and revitalization.

- We are pleased to announce that the goals we set for the UNICO Grow Avanti Plan, including the UNICO Avanti Membership Sweepstakes, have seen tremendous success. Be reminded that someone will win a Perillo land tour for two to Italy!

- As of this writing, we have nearly 800 new members! Overall membership has increased by 4% or more over the past year. Our optional DNA ancestry initiative has been well received. We have achieved an extraordinary rise in National membership.

- I want to especially thank ESPN's Sal Paolantonio, UNICO National's Honorary National Spokesperson. Sal is actively promoting UNICO. He will be honored at the upcoming National Convention.

- Our appreciation to former West Point Superintendent Lieutenant General Robert Caslen, Jr., U.S. Army (Ret.), for his service as Honorary Spokesperson for UNICO National's Military and Veteran Affairs.

- A very memorable Mid-Year Board of Directors meeting was held in Atlantic City, NJ, with an exceptional turnout as we honored outstanding awardees.

- The UNICO National website has been finalized, and our goals have been accomplished with great success. Our members and supporters now have a user-friendly platform to access UNICO National and UNICO Foundation resources online.

- We enhanced our outreach through extensive digital marketing and social media releases that exponentially extended our reach and fostered meaningful connections with our wider membership and external audiences.

- We proudly established Seton Hall University and the Valente Library as the

official repository for UNICO's paper and digital archives going forward.

- We hosted Executive Producer J. Eustace Wolfington of the motion picture "Cabrini".

- A project three years in the making culminated in the chartering of the Randolph Chapter on June 27th.

- We now have an enhanced membership pin that further highlights our rich Italian heritage.

- UNICO National has strengthened strategic Italian American connections through its new affiliation with the Italian American Leadership Forum (IALF).

This year, Maria-Rose and I, in addition to promoting our existing charities, launched an appeal for a new initiative to support UNICO's Alzheimer's research outreach. It has garnered a very positive reception, with donations eagerly welcomed. Unfortunately, however, there seems to be a lack of understanding as to what constitutes Alzheimer's disease; it is not a mental health disorder, rather, it is a neurological disorder. We will continue our efforts to establish a stand-alone committee and bring this charity within UNICO National.

To the national and district officers, the numerous committee chairs, and chapter officers who displayed willingness, loyalty, and devotion to our great UNICO organization, I want to express my sincere appreciation. To all the chapters, their officers, members, and friends we met along the way, I want to express my sincere thanks for the cordial and enthusiastic reception extended to First Lady Maria-Rose and me during our visits. We made many new friends during our journey and reconnected with numerous old friends. You have been most kind and gracious. The many expressions of true friendship afforded us by our association with our UNICO Famiglia shall never be forgotten.

It is tough to single out names because we always forget someone, and everyone in their own right does the work of UNICO. However, three names must be mentioned: Executive Director Melanie Naro; Office Manager Sue Anzelmo, and their respective staff. Without them, we would not have been able to administer and take care of all the needs of our membership. Thank you, also, to Pat Pelonero, the retiring ComUNICO Editor, for her dedicated service.

You won't want to miss our upcoming UNICO National Convention in Princeton, NJ. It is truly the highlight of every UNICO year. This event brings together members and chapters from all over the country, manifesting the UNICO National presence. At the convention, we celebrate our shared heritage, honor our accomplishments, and set the course for the future of our organization. It is an opportunity to reconnect with old friends, make new ones, and experience the full breadth of the UNICO family. Join us and be part of the vibrant community that makes UNICO National so extraordinary!

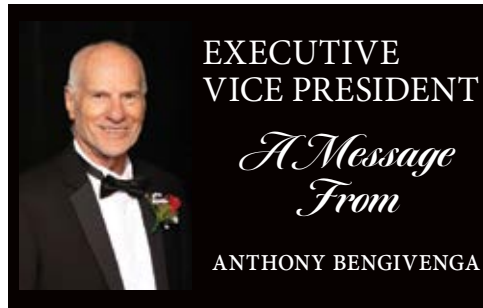
Finally, I leave office as President with the firm belief that UNICO National is the "premier Italian American nonprofit organization in the USA." It has been an honor to represent UNICO National.

God bless you; God bless UNICO National and all those who contribute to its cause. Until we meet in Princeton, ciao for now and Sempre Avanti, UNICO!

Cav. Ralph A. Contini, CPA



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EXECUTIVE
VICE PRESIDENT

*A Message
From*

ANTHONY BENGIVENGA

In just a few short weeks our 2024 National Convention will be upon us. I have been honored to serve as your Executive Vice President and look forward to my induction as National President on the final day of the convention. Our convention committee has been hard at work preparing for a memorable event in Princeton. Although Princeton is not a resort city, it is so well known all over the world as an historic city filled with a vibrant Ivy League University community.

The convention will start off with our Ice Breaker party on Sunday evening July 28. The theme this year is Rock n Roll, so wear your favorite rock star outfit or tee shirt and be prepared to rock the night away. Feel free to share with your UNICO family stories about your favorite rock stars, groups and concerts. Of past years. Although committee meetings will be held as well on Sunday afternoon, our official business meeting will commence on Monday morning July 29 and will continue Tuesday and into Wednesday morning. We have planned a unique after-dinner Comedy Show "Late Night Laughs with Anthony" for Tuesday July 30 with dessert and refreshments. Our convention Gala will be celebrated on Wednesday evening July 31. At the Gala we will be honoring ESPN reporter and UNICO spokesman Sal Paolantonio and also PSE&G CEO Ralph Russo. Other traditional awards will also be presented at the Gala.

Please continue to support our UNICO Charities. I am sure that most of us have friends or family who have been affected by cancer, Cooley's Anemia or metal issues such as Alzheimers or depression. Our Italian heritage continues to need your support, so please don't hesitate to support Italian Studies and scholarships. Let us continue the hard work we do in our communities through our generosity and community service.

Thank you all so much for putting all your trust in me by choosing me to serve you as your National President in 2024-2025, our 102nd year. It is truly the highest honor that UNICO can bestow on one of its own members. I look forward to serving and I promise to follow in the footsteps of those who served before me and to continue to work for the good of our great organization and our heritage.

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the latest news and information:

UNICO.org

UNICO National
"Service Above Self"





FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

A Message From

JOSEPH NASELLO

Ciao Tutti,

I have really enjoyed working with all the district governors this past year. We shared a lot of knowledge between us. I held several zoom meetings and one-on-ones throughout the year. I also attended many district and chapter events that I was invited to. I would like to ask all of you to bring a friend to your chapter and or district meetings.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the National Convention. As always, any questions or concerns please reach out to me.

I hope you are enjoying the summer with your family and friends. On a personal note, I became a grandfather again in early June. I now have two beautiful granddaughters and am really enjoying my summer spending time with them.

Always remember Service Above Self!

Thank you,
Joe Nasello

Reminder



The Deadline for the
September 2024 issue is
August 16, 2024



SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

A Message From

BRIAN V. GUARCO

As I reflect on this past year, as your Second Vice President of UNICO National, it has been a great pleasure working with many of the Chapters and sharing in their accomplishments and hearing their ideas for the future.

In 1993 our Past National President Frank Canata and Bob Tarte an alumnus of Seton Hall University had requested that Seton Hall agree to archive the records for UNICO National which they did. Our current President Cav. Ralph Contini CPA established a meeting with Seton Hall recently to agree to continue to archive UNICO National records which they did. I had the proud opportunity to attend this meeting along with Past National President Frank Canata and others.

If you did not know, I am a self-proclaimed cigar aficionado, I want to complement the North Shore Chapter and Patricia Stake, Ellen Leone and Lou Di Rico for putting on one of the best Cigar dinners ever.

I have had the opportunity to interact with many Chapters and one highlight for me was attending the commemoration of the chartering of our new Chapters. We recently celebrated the new Chapter in Randolph, NJ, where I had the honor in administering the oath to the new members.

I want to extend my deep appreciation for all the support I have received during my term, as your Second Vice President of UNICO National. At the National Convention this year, in Princeton N.J., I will be

up for the election to First Vice President for UNICO National. I hope to have your support for this position.

I look forward to seeing so many of you at the Convention this year.

Yours in UNICO,
Brian V. Guarco



EDITOR

A Message From

PATRICIA PELONERO

Let me start by saying it was a pleasure working with the Chapter members submitting articles and pictures. Technology is wonderful when it works, however it is an ever-changing world with updates and new features which sometimes it is hard to keep up with.

Most of you know this will be my last issue of ComUNICO. It is bittersweet as I want my time back, but I certainly will miss interacting with the members. For those of you that have a difficult time navigating through the technological world, don't give up. Erin from the National office will be gathering your information going forward and will do a great job. I am sure she will be helpful with your submissions and will be available Monday through Friday during office hours. With that said I am not leaving town, so if there are ever a question for me, please call or e-mail me.

I wish Erin much luck. I am sure Joanne our layout person, and Erin will do a great job.

Thank You for patience and well wishes.

Sincerely,
Pat Pelonero ComUNICO Editor



Farewell Ralph & Maria Rose...

Once again, the UNICO National year is coming to an end. As we will say thank you to National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini and First Lady Maria Rose for a job well done! Their year was a whirlwind of events and traveling and encouraging UNICO's membership increase and living the Italian Culture and Heritage with other organizations, leading the fight for Columbus to remain a Federal Holiday.

The 2024 Convention will be led by President Cav. Ralph A. Contini, until Saturday morning when the new President is installed. Congratulations Ralph for your dedication and hard work you do for UNICO National.



NATIONAL NEWS

Mental Health Grant Presented to FOCUS



On Monday, June 17th, UNICO National First Lady, Marie-Rose Contini and Mental Health Committee member, Celeste Pandolfi travelled to Canton, CT to present a UNICO Mental Health Foundation grant to FOCUS Center for Autism, Inc. and The Fresh Start School. The grant will be used for the purchase of an interactive display panel, a SMART board and A Spalding 50" Basketball Hoop.

L to R: Tech Co-Ordinator Eric Cohen, Associate Director and Co-Founder Fred Evans, Executive Director and Co-Founder Donna Swanson, Mental Health Committee Member, Celeste Pandolfi, Director of Educational Services, Maeghen Plourde, National First Lady, Marie-Rose Contini and HR and Operations Co-Ordinator, Yvonne Gardner.

Secaucus UNICO hosted UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini at their monthly meeting on May 8th, where he delivered inspiring and uplifting remarks. Members from the Bayonne Chapter, including UNICO National M&R Director Geri Samuel, showed their support for Secaucus Chapter's ongoing revitalization efforts. At the gathering, President Contini had the privilege of meeting Gerard Marra, the chapter's oldest member at 95 years old.



Secaucus Chapter: VP Anthony DeRienzo; President Mary Ann Pollio; UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini; UNICO M&R Dir. Geri Samuel; District Gov. NJ III Vito Bilotta; and Sam Maggio from Bayonne.



President Mary Ann Pollio; Elder Statesman Gerard Marra being presented a commemorative 100th Annual Convention pin by UNICO National President Cav Ralph A. Contini.



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Reminder



**The Deadline for the September 2024 issue is
August 16, 2024**

NATIONAL NEWS

On Tuesday, May 28th, the Cresskill Chapter of UNICO hosted National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini at their monthly meeting. Despite being small in numbers, this active Chapter accomplishes remarkable things in their community. Thank you for your generous donation to the UNICO National Alzheimer's Research Fund. Sempre Avanti, Cresskill UNICO!



Cresskill UNICO Chapter President Marty Lucibello, Jr. (R) presents a donation to UNICO National Alzheimer's Research fund to UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini (L).



Cresskill UNICO members join UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini (C) as he presents a UNICO car magnet to Chapter President Marty Lucibello, Jr.

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Festa Italiana

Congratulations to the Kansas City Chapter of UNICO National on an outstanding and memorable Festa Italiana weekend, showcasing our rich Italian culture.

Kansas City Festa Italiana weekend is the largest fundraiser for Kansas City UNICO. Kansas City Chapter of UNICO National is hosted UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini and First Lady Maria-Rose at the largest Festa Italiana in the Midwest.

Passing the torch to future generations through college scholarships for area high school



The Festa Italiana Committee, including Kansas City UNICO President Frank Cherrito, Jr., is joined by UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



Columbus Square.



UNICO Booth.



UNICO Booth with The Crew.

Seton Hall Signing Ceremony



Standing L to R: UNICO PNP Frank Cannata, UNICO First Lady Maria-Rose Contini, La Motta Chair in Italian Studies at SHU, Dr. William Connell, and the Founder of the Valente Library at SHU, Salvatore Valente.

FARMINGTON, CT

Farmington UNICO's annual Joe Filomeno Memorial Golf Tournament was held at Wethersfield Country Club on June 17th. 148 golfers enjoyed the day from start to finish. Once again, it was a huge success thanks to the Golf Committee members, Bill Coscarelli, Paul Pedemonti, Tom, Dan and Mike Filomeno, Mary and Doug Alexander, Giustina Lamoureux and Tom Magro. This Golf Tournament and the annual Sal DiMauro Italian Sunday Dinner are the fundraisers that make the presentation of grants and scholarships possible. The grant recipients this year are The Farmington Food Pantry, The House of Bread, FAVARH, Services for the Elderly and Farmington Ecumenical Housing. Keep informed on Farmington UNICO events by liking us on Facebook UNICO FarmingtonCTChapter. We look forward to future endeavors to fulfill our motto "Service above self."



Maggie Clapis, Carla Martin, Madelyn Filomeno and Mary Alexander.



Jim Mugavero and Luke Howes.



Nic, James, Chris and Alex Filomeno with a poster depicting their grandfather, Joe Filomeno seated with Pat Sinatra.



Mike Demicco, Doug Alexander and Bill Coscarelli welcome golfers as they check in.



Mike, Dan and Tom Filomeno.



Bill Coscarelli, Mark Piatkowski, Dan Filomeno and Tom Larkum.

QUEENSBORO, NY

Queensboro UNICO Annual Bocce Tournament Event 5/18 in Maspeth, NY. Proceeds from the event in the amount of \$5,000 were presented to one of the Chapters own members that is currently dealing with health issues.

The trophy remains with the same winner as last year as member Al Amico wins this year's tournament again!



Queensboro UNICO Supports and Donates to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Annual Cigar Night Fundraiser at Giando's Brooklyn in support of the upcoming Giglio Feast in July. Monsignor Jamie accepted the check presented by UNICO Members and NYII District Governor Gaspare Mistretta.



Queensboro recently held an annual picnic on the grounds of Our Lady of Hope in Middle Village collaborating with neighborhood

business, members and supporters keeping the event in Queensboro UNICO's own backyard! The event was a huge success with a fun-filled day that included food, kids rides and games, raffles & entertainment. Thanks to everyone that supported!

QUEENSBORO, NY

Queensboro UNICO was Honored by the FDNY Columbia Association for outstanding community service and celebrated the two organizations collaborated efforts working together preserving our Italian heritage as well as several charitable causes.



Queensboro UNICO Supports and Donates to Local Veterans Volunteering and providing needed essentials and Veteran relief efforts.

HACKENSACK, NJ

The Hackensack Chapter of UNICO National recently held its Installation of Officers, along with its Scholarship Awards and Dinner, where scholarships were presented to four students. The officers were installed by UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini. In what may be a first for UNICO, a National President swore in a Chapter President who is also his spouse; National President Contini installed his wife, Maria-Rose Contini, as the Hackensack Chapter President.



UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini (R) installed his wife, Maria-Rose Contini, (L) as Hackensack Chapter President.



UNICO, National President Contini (R) presents the gavel to his wife, Maria-Rose Contini, (L) as Hackensack Chapter President.

SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATIONS



GREATER BINGHAMTON, NY

The Greater Binghamton Chapter inducted officers for the 2024-2025 year. President Nick Pianella performed the installation for Richard Wahila, Treasurer; John Barbieri, Director; Carolyn Pianella, Recording Secretary; and George Sgt. at Arms: absent Lorraine Rogers, corresponding secretary.



Mike Marinaccio was installed as President for the upcoming year by current president Nick Pianella.



New member Pat Monaco was inducted at the May 8th dinner meeting by President Nick Pianella.



The Greater Binghamton NY Chapter held their annual presentation of scholarship awards to four local high school seniors on June 12th, 2024 at the Sons of Italy Endicott, NY.

GREATER ORLANDO, FL

At the Greater Orlando Chapter's Community Service Day members supported the Orlando Straight Street Food Sharing event for the homeless people. Joe Scalo, Greater Orlando Chapter President and Gary Badamo assisted with setup and handing out the food. It was very humbling to support this event. Truly an act of kindness, representing Service Above Self!



Gary Badamo, member and Joe Scalo, Greater Orlando Chapter President.



Gary Badamo, member and Joe Scalo, Greater Orlando Chapter President



Gary Badamo, member.



Joe Scalo, Greater Orlando Chapter President.

NEWBURGH, NY

On Saturday June 8th, 2024, TGI Friday's in Newburgh, NY donated 20% of everyone's check to the Newburgh Chapter of UNICO. In attendance to promote UNICO and recruit new members were, L to R: Past President Tony Navarro, President Ralph Puglielle, Board Member Denise Baginski and Past President Antonio Mugnano.



Newburgh UNICO Member Judge Jude Martini swears in 2024-25 President Ralph Puglielle.



Newburgh UNICO Member Judge Jude Martini swears in 2024-25 Executive Board. L to R: Tony Navarro, Mike Ferrara, Rita Verna, Jack Anderson, Denise Baginski, Benny Papaleo and Antonio Mugnano.

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT



Candidates applying for the highly valued UNICO Foundation Scholarships continue, as expected, to demonstrate exceptional qualifications. The academic achievements, extracurricular activities and extraordinary community service projects of these young students are remarkable. Of special note is their understanding of and appreciation for Italian contributions to American history. All candidates are worthy of recognition in their own right. Selecting the awardees was, as usual, an extremely difficult undertaking. Congratulations to our participants. Their amazing accomplishments are truly impressive.

Scholarship recipients are featured in this issue of ComUNICO and on the UNICO website.

To ensure the integrity of our awards, judging is conducted as objectively as possible. Chaired by a Scholarship Committee member, but composed of non-UNICAN professionals, Judging Committees in separate locations evaluate entries using prescribed criteria. Mille grazie to those members who guided the judging process

Review Committee

Gail R. Guy, Lou Pandolfi, Dr. Mary Ann Re

Judging Committee Chairpersons

Sherrylynn Trotta	Major Don S. Gentile Memorial Scholarship
Rose Anne Ceraso-Fritchie	William C. Davini Memorial Scholarship
Geri Samuel	Alphonse A. Miele Memorial Scholarship
Dr. Marc Summa, Geri Samuel	Theodore Mazza Memorial Scholarship
Francine Nido	Founders Scholarship In Memory of Joseph L. Manganaro
Melanie Naro, Esq.	Sgt. John Basilone Memorial Scholarship
Dr. Frank De Frank	Dr. Benjamin J. Cottone Memorial Scholarship
Frank Gonnella	Bernard and Carolyn Torracco Memorial Nursing Scholarships
Pamela Ann Domico	DiMattio Celli Family Study Abroad Scholarship
Santi V. Buscemi	Ella T. Grasso Literary Scholarship
Nicola Genchi	Guglielmo Marconi Engineering Scholarship
Grace Gynn	Ralph J. Torracco Scholarship
Glenn P. Pettinato	Louise Torracco Memorial Scholarship for Science
Christopher I. DiMattio	Ralph J. Torracco Fine Arts Scholarship
Maria Teresa Morrison	Robert J. Tarte Scholarship for Italian Studies
	Paolo and Maria Alessio Southern Italy Scholarship
Rose Ciarcia	Inserra Scholarships
Lisa Aduato	Ralph J. Torracco Scholarship for Special Education
Anthony Bocchimuzo	Ralph J. Torracco Scholarship for Therapy Sciences
Salvatore Benvenuti	Ralph J. Torracco Scholarship for Computer Science Studies
Rev. Robert Wolfee	Ralph J. Torracco Scholarship for Seminarian Studies

Special thanks to all Scholarship Committee members for their advice and assistance. Their help is truly valued.

It is also important to acknowledge the Chapters and Districts that sponsored candidates. Their commitment to encouraging students is recognized and appreciated.

Most of all, I thank all those who have contributed financially. Without your monetary support, we would not be able to continue our traditional offerings.

The Scholarship Program requires an incredible amount of attention from our National Office staff. I am sincerely grateful

to Office Manager Sue Anzelmo. Sue handles this tremendous responsibility with professionalism, integrity, patience and a sense of humor. I thank Administrative Assistants Kathy DeFeo, Fran Dangler and Media Specialist Erin Sauerborn for their help. Hardly a day goes by without a call from Joan. Sincere appreciation to Executive Director Melanie Naro for her valued suggestions. Mille grazie and congratulations to ComUNICO Editor Pat Pelonero. As with all things UNICO, the unwavering support of these individuals is vital to our success.

– Joan N. Tidona, National Scholarship Director

UNICO FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP



MAJOR DON S. GENTILE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

KATELYN ELIZABETH BATTACHARIA

Briarcliff Manor, New York

Graduated: Ossining High School

Interest: I will build my own business, Sailfish Brands, which I founded to create an eco-friendly alternative to plastic products.

National Merit Scholar, AP Scholar with Distinction, Ossining School District Peer Tutor



WILLIAM C. DAVINI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Wisconsin

SIENA FRANCESCA TINA ZICCHINELLA

Township of Washington, New Jersey

Graduated: Paramus Catholic High School

Interest: I will pursue studies of International Relations and Economics.

National Honor Society, AP Scholar with Distinction, PC Mentor



ALPHONSE A. MIELE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

ISABELLA LOUISE SENA

Plantsville, Connecticut

Sponsor: Southington UNICO

Graduated: Southington High School

Interest: I will pursue the study of Physical Therapy.

National Honor Society, Italian Honor Society, Midstate Medical Center Mobility Volunteer



THEODORE MAZZA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

JOSEPH D'ANGELO

Manhasset, New York

Graduated: Manhasset High School

Interest: I will major in Economics and minor in Finance at Villanova.

National Honor Society, Italian Honor Society, Plandome Junior Firefighter



FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF JOSEPH L. MANGANARO

Judged in Connecticut

JAMES DAVID BRUSCHINI

Shrewsbury, Massachusetts

Graduated: Shrewsbury Senior High School

Interest: I will pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering, intending to make a real difference and create a brighter future.

National Honor Society, Outstanding Achievement Award, Last Mango Boat Works Philanthropic Organization Brand Ambassador



SGT. JOHN BASILONE MEMORIAL GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Pennsylvania

GABRIELLA NICOLE CASIANO

Pine Brook, New Jersey

Sponsor: Montville UNICO

Graduated: Boston College, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences
Bachelor of Science **Major:** Biology

To Attend: Penn Dental Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania

Interest: I will pursue a Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry Degree.

Dean's List First Honors, Gateway Student Scholar, Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts Volunteer Mentor



SGT. JOHN BASILONE MEMORIAL GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Pennsylvania

SOPHIA FERREZZA

East Islip, New York

Sponsor: Montville UNICO

Graduated: The University of Alabama, College of Arts and Sciences, Tuscaloosa, AL
Bachelor of Arts, Magna cum Laude **Major:** Chemistry **Minor:** Psychology

To Attend: Kansas City University College of Osteopathic Medicine

Interest: I will pursue a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Degree.

Dean's List, Alpha Lambda Honors Society, Society of Women in Medicine



DR. BENJAMIN COTTONE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Pennsylvania

HELINA DOMENICA VANBIBBER

McDonald, Pennsylvania

Graduated: Case Western Reserve University

Bachelor of Science, Summa cum Laude **Major:** Cognitive Science

Minor: Sports Medicine, Chemistry, Psychology

To Attend: Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine

Interest: I will pursue a Doctor of Medicine Degree.

*Dean's High Honors, Patricia B. Kilpatrick Academic and Athletic Award,
VanBibber Service Legacy Co-founder*

UNICO FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

CARL DOUGLAS ALLEN

Lancaster, California

Attending: California State University, Bakersfield **Degree Objective:** Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Interest: After I complete my BSN, I plan continue my studies to become a Nurse Practitioner.
Alpha Chi Honors Society, Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honors Society, Community Preventive Health Collaborative, Volunteer



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

ANNA ARSENIO

Bronx, New York

Sponsor: Orange/West Orange UNICO
Attending: Seton Hall University **Degree Objective:** Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Interest: I will provide hope and encouragement to those who may be experiencing their most disheartening times.
Dean's List, Servant Leader Scholar, Student Nurses Association



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

KAEDEN T. CARR

Throop, Pennsylvania

Sponsor: Scranton UNICO
Attending: University of Scranton **Degree Objective:** Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Interest: I knew, as I entered the University of Scranton, that I wanted a career in nursing. Care and compassion can change lives.
Dean's List, High Honors, Northeast Rehab Volunteer



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

GABRIELLA NICOLE GENCARELLI

Wayne, New Jersey

Attending: Sacred Heart University **Degree Objective:** Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Interest: I will continue the tangible impact nurses make in the lives of others each day.
National Honor Society, Student Nurses Association, Make-A-Wish Volunteer Fundraiser



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

GIOVANNA GARCIA PINHEIRO

Saint Cloud, Florida

Attending: Valencia College **Degree Objective:** Associate of Science in Nursing
Interest: I will pursue a career in nursing, using my skills as a caregiver to assist others with compassion.
President's List, Nursing Student Association, Spina Bifida Association Volunteer

RECIPIENTS 2024



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

SOFIA ANITA SABONJIAN

Wall, New Jersey

Sponsor: Orange/West Orange UNICO

Attending: Monmouth University **Degree Objective:** Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Interest: I will help others and take care of them, as I would my own loved ones.

Dean's List, High Honor Roll, St. Stephanos Church Community Service



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

LAIBA SHAHZAD

Newington, Connecticut

Attending: University of St. Joseph **Degree Objective:** Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Interest: I am drawn to nursing, as it provides an opportunity to positively impact people's lives.

I strive to learn more about new developments through research, to better assist those in need.

Dean's List, Student Nurses Association Award, Dream Camp Peer Mentor



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

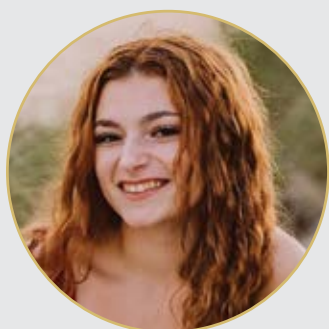
KATHERINE ELISE STEWART

Mendon, Massachusetts

Attending: Sacred Heart University **Degree Objective:** Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Interest: I will consistently engage in classes and the Student Nurses Association, so I can be most knowledgeable and show my passion for the profession.

Dean's List, High Honor Roll, Student Nurses Association



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

MEGAN EMILY TABRAHAM

Ledyard, Connecticut

Attending: Fairfield University, Egan School of Nursing /Health

Degree Objective: Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Interest: Nursing means embracing the duty of being able to make sure a patient's voice is heard and working to meet their needs. If I can do my part, I can make a difference.

National Honor Society, US Air Force and Space Force Leadership Award, Student nurses association



BERNARD AND CAROLYN TORRACO MEMORIAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

MARISSA LYNN WHITE

Waterbury, Connecticut

Attending: University of Connecticut School of Nursing

Degree Objective: Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Interest: I will concentrate on studies pertaining to pediatric nursing and cardiac care, with the intent of making a real difference.

Dean's List, New England Scholar at UConn, Student Nurse Technician at New Britain General

UNICO FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP



DIMATTIO CELLI FAMILY STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Illinois

SERENA ANGELICA MANCUSO

Boonton, New Jersey

Attending: Drew University

Major: Italian Studies, English Writing/Communications

Program: Italian 380 and Italian 385

Dean's List, Honors Seminar, Student Assistant



DIMATTIO CELLI FAMILY STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Illinois

NATHAN HENRY STABACH

Wethersfield, Connecticut

Attending: University of Connecticut

Major: Psychological Studies

Program: Multicultural Psychology

National Honors, Italian National Honors, Connecticut Foodshare Volunteer



ELLA T. GRASSO LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

MARCO BUGLIONE

Irvington, New York

Sponsor: Orange/West Orange UNICO

Attending: Fordham University

Degree Objective: Bachelor of Science in Applied Accounting and Finance

Undoubtedly, My Italian Heritage Defines My Identity



ELLA T. GRASSO LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

MICHAEL ARNOLD MARCHETTI

Waterbury, Connecticut

Attending: Mitchell Coll

Degree Objective: Bachelor of Science in Business Management

Tradition, Resiliency and Cultural Pride

RECIPIENTS 2024



GUGLIELMO MARCONI ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

SOPHIA RAE MARCHETTA

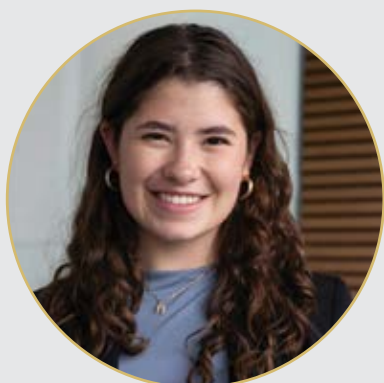
Morganville, New Jersey

Attending: Villanova University

Major: Mechanical Engineering **Minor:** Biomedical Engineering

Interest: I will use math and science to solve real-world problems, making exhilarating discoveries that help others.

National Honor Society, Villanova Society of Women Engineers, Engineers in Medicine and Biology



ROBERT J. TARTE SCHOLARSHIP FOR ITALIAN STUDIES

Judged in Delaware

MORGAN ROSE WORDELMANN

Mickleton, New Jersey

Attending: The Ohio State University, College of Arts and Sciences

Major: International Studies and Italian **Minor:** Organizational Communication

Interest: I intend to work in the international affairs sector, specifically addressing environmental issues.

Dean's List, World Language Skills and Competencies Certification, Casa Cidis Onlus Intern



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

HANNAH M. CARR

Throop, Pennsylvania

Sponsor: Scranton UNICO

Graduated: University of Scranton, Panuska College of Professional Studies, Bachelor of Science, Summa cum Laude **Major:** Kinesiology **Minor:** English

Attending: University of Scranton, Graduate Student **Major:** Doctor of Physical Therapy

Interest: TMy time in service has reinforced the notion that there can be no greater joy than helping others. That is why am committed to serving the community.

Dean's List, Phi Epsilon Kappa Honor Society for Kinesiology, Edward R. Leahy Center Clinic Volunteer



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in New Jersey

MADELINE ENGBLOM

Escondido, California

Attending: Oregon State University, Honors College

Major: Business Administration; Sustainability **Minor:** Design and Innovation Management

Interest: I want to be an advocate for the environment and teach others the importance of protecting our planet and reducing ecological harm.

Dean's List, Scholar of the Term, ARCC Center Foundation Respite Worker

UNICO FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP



LOUISE TORRACO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR SCIENCE

Judged in Pennsylvania

RYAN W. CHRISTENSEN

Centerville, Massachusetts

Attending: Northeastern University **Major:** Chemical Engineering/Environmental Engineering

Interest: : I intend to pursue a position that blends my engineering skill with my passion for the outdoors, in either the public or private sector.

Dean's List, High Honors, Phillips Brooks House Association Student Tutor



LOUISE TORRACO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR SCIENCE

Judged in Pennsylvania

EVAN BRAKO HUBBS

Madison, Connecticut

Attending: University of Rhode Island **Major:** Wildlife and Conservation Biology

Interest: I will seek employment in a state or federal department, where can use the skills I have developed to make a difference in the realm of environmental management.

Dean's List, Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society, URI Shorebird Habitat Conservation Field Work



RALPH J. TORRACO FINE ARTS SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Pennsylvania

ANDREW BROOKS MILLER

Chicago, Illinois

Attending: Roosevelt University, Chicago College of Performing Arts

Major: Bachelor of Music, Music Education and Clarinet Performance

Interest: My career aspirations align heavily with those who taught me to be the musician I am. I look forward to empowering my students, as I become a clarinet teacher and open my own studio.



RALPH J. TORRACO FINE ARTS SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Pennsylvania

DOMINIC GERALD TOWNSEND

Youngstown, New York

Attending: SUNY Fredonia School of Music

Major: Vocal Performance **Minor:** Music Education

Interest: As a student with a double major in music education and vocal performance, I am driven to build a career in music. I intend to be an educator and performer.

RECIPIENTS 2024



MARIA AND PAOLO ALESSIO SOUTHERN ITALY SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Delaware

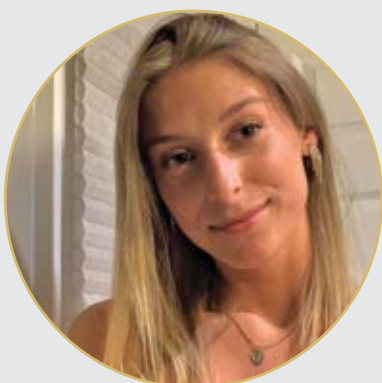
NINO JAIME-LUCAS MANNA

Wyckoff, New Jersey

Attending: Hellenic College Holy Cross **Major:** Theology

Interest: I am committed to enriching my understanding of Southern Italy, to immerse myself in the vibrant tapestry of Southern Italian life.

High Honor Roll, Project Lead - Culture of Faith President, Italian Club



INSERRA SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Florida

MIRIAM DA PONTE

Bridgeport, Connecticut

Attending: Sacred Heart University

Major: English and Philosophy **Minor:** Writing

Interest: I will use my personal skills in service to others, working with students who struggle academically, to help them succeed.

Dean's List, President's Excellence Award, Leadership in Community Service



INSERRA SCHOLARSHIP

Judged in Florida

SABRINA ELIZABETH SCIORTINO

Victor, New York

Attending: The University of Georgia

Major: Psychology **Minor:** Neuroscience

Interest: Upon graduation, I plan to attend medical school to further my education and to become the best physician possible.

Dean's List, High Honor Roll, Cares Club Volunteer



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP FOR THERAPY SCIENCE

Judged in New York

SOPHIA BAVARO

West Hartford, Connecticut

Attending: University Vermont, College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Major: Communication Sciences and Disorders

Interest: I intend to become a speech-language pathologist.

Dean's List, National Honors Society, UVM National Student Speech, Language and Hearing Association

UNICO FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP FOR THERAPY SCIENCES

Judged in New York

WILLIAM JAMES RUSSELL

Landisville, Pennsylvania

Attending: Messiah University

Major: Applied Health Science, Concentration in Physical Therapy

Interest: Becoming a physical therapist aligns with my achievements, qualifications and an unwavering commitment to assist others. A physical therapist, by helping rehabilitate people, has a positive impact.

National Honor Society, Honor Roll, Applied Health Science Club



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDIES

Judged in New Jersey

BRAYDEN CHRISTOPHER WACHTLER KRUS

East Hanover, New Jersey

Attending: Stevens Institute of Technology **Major:** Computer Science

Interest: From a very early age, I took an interest in computers. As my studies gave me the chance to explore computer science, my interest has become a passion.

Dean's List, High Honor Roll, "Out of the Darkness" Hoboken Walk



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDIES

Judged in New Jersey

MARCELO MOSQUERA

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Attending: Drexel University

Major: Computer Science

Interest: I will arm myself with the knowledge and skills for a fulfilling career in computer science. I intend to contribute meaningfully to technological advancements that promote sustainability and address environmental issues.

First Honors, Police Athletic League Award, PAL Golf Camp Volunteer Instructor



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDIES

Judged in New Jersey

JASON ROSAS

Streamwood, Illinois

Attending: Elgin Community College **Major:** Computer Science

Interest: I see computer science and programming as an art. You start with an empty program, figure it out, correct a few issues and it works.

Science Certificate of Distinction, STEM Academy Certificate of Excellence



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDIES

Judged in New Jersey

DERRICK THOMAS II

Waterbury, Connecticut

Graduated: Post University, Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems

Major: Computer Information Studies **Minor:** Criminal Justice

Dean's List, Post University Honors Society, Resident Assistant

To Attend: Post University, Pursuing a Master's Degree in Computer Studies

Interest: Throughout my academic journey, my fascination with cybersecurity has been unwavering, driving my studies in Computer and Information Systems.



RALPH J. TORRACO SCHOLARSHIP FOR SEMINARIAN STUDIES

Evaluated in New Jersey

TYLER DANIEL DAVIS

Coopersburg, Pennsylvania

Attending: Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary

Major Course of Study: Master of Divinity

Minor Course of Study: Master of Arts

BLOOMFIELD, NJ**SCHOLARSHIP DINNER**

On Thursday May 9th, the Bloomfield Chapter held their 54th Brian Piccolo Awards and Scholarship Dinner at Mamma Vittoria's in Nutley, NJ. Oh, what a night it was, for our seven scholarship and two Brian Piccolo recipients. The Chapter was honored to have NJ District IV Governor Anthony Gennaro, Bloomfield High School Principal Mr. Chris Jennings and Superintendent Mr. Sal Goncalves attend the dinner.

President Steve Milazzo welcomed recipients, parents, guests and members. Paul Alongi Sr. Past National President, was our Master of Ceremony. Tina Buontempo, Scholarship Chair recognized the Scholarship Committee members for their continued commitment to select the Best of the Best recipients.

NJ Assemblyman Michael Venezia, a member of our Chapter, although unable to attend the dinner, provided state certificates of congratulations to our nine recipients.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

On April 15th, the Bloomfield Education Foundation, at their annual dinner, recognized the Bloomfield Chapter as the "Community Organization of the Year." The dinner was held at Nannina's in the Park. Steve Milazzo, Chapter President accepted the award on behalf of the Chapter.

DAY OF SERVICE

The Bloomfield Chapter celebrated their Community Day of Service on April 27th, at Kinder Tower, a senior living community in Bloomfield, NJ. Members served 50 residents a most delicious Italian lunch catered by Vinnie's Pizzeria of Bloomfield. Entertainment was provided by Paul Alongi, Past National President and Phil Echo, and our very own comedian Rob Ruffalo. The residents enjoyed the luncheon and participated in the singing and dancing. Fifteen Chapter members participated in severing and socializing with the residents.

OAKVILLE/WATERTOWN, CT

The Oakville-Watertown, CT Chapter of UNICO National recently awarded two scholarships to Watertown students held at Mangia with Gigi and Mike in Watertown, CT. Pictured L to R: Rich Gubbiotti and Mary DiSisto (scholarship committee members); Joni Licolli, award recipient; Meni Licolli (Joni's Dad); and Bob Ruscitto, Chapter President. Joni is a Watertown High School graduate and will be attending

UConn in the pharmacy program. Missing from photo is Luke Acuna, another award recipient, who also will also be attending UConn in the engineering and business program.

**BRIDGEPORT, CT**

The Bridgeport UNICO Chapter celebrates another year of excellence and achievement from its 2024 Scholarship Award winners. The seven recipients attended high school in the surrounding towns of Redding, Fairfield, Trumbull and Newton. Members of the Scholarship Committee are shown with the recipients after their brief speeches and presentation of their award.



The Bridgeport UNICO Chapter 2024 scholarship award recipients are pictured with Perry Vincenzi, incoming Chapter President and Scholarship Committee Chairperson, Francine Nido, Connecticut I District Governor and Len LaSalandra, Chapter President and committee member.



The Bridgeport UNICO Chapter Scholarship Committee was once again honored that Francine Nido, Connecticut District I District Governor attended our Awards dinner which coincided with her birthday. It was only fitting that we all sang Happy Birthday and share in a piece of cake for spending her birthday with us.

TORRINGTON, CT

Once again, The Torrington Chapter of UNICO been very busy bringing in new members. Marching in the Memorial Day Parade in the pouring rain. Delivering flowers to the local Nursing Homes on Mother's and Father's day to all the residents to celebrate their day! And to bring a smile to everyone face!

Moving forward to the Torrington Chapter of UNICO National 46th Annual Scholarship Awards Night, Wednesday, June 12th, held at Coe Park in downtown Torrington. The Chapter presented 19 scholarships to students from area schools with a total of \$50,000. They also presented a total of \$16,117.38, to the following services organizations in the Torrington area.... Two Hearts Pregnancy Center, Susan B. Anthony, Torrington Area Youth Services, The Warner Theatre, The Alliance to Cure Cavernous Malformation, Tim Driscoll Saint Jude Telethon, Friendly Hands Food Bank & the Torrington Area families for Autism. Paul Denza presented the Honorable Judge Michael F. Magistrali, with the Community Ambassador Award for his dedicated service of 24 years as Probate Judge and now Corporate Council for the City of Torrington. Torrington Mayor Elinor Carbone & State Representative Jay Case were on hand to present the Honorable Judge Michael F. Magistrali with Citations from the City and State of Connecticut. The Brian Piccolo Award was presented to Gabriella Ford. Jonathon Di Michiel was elected to the Presidency of the Torrington Chapter for the year 2024 -2025. Over 100 people gathered together to make this event a great success.

The Chapter will hold it's Annual Golf Tournament on July 15th, at the Torrington Country Club!

The Chapter is hard at work on the Italian Festival that will be held on October 12th on Franklin Plaza in Torrington. Anyone interested in being involved may contact Jonathon Di Michiel at jondem16@gmail.com.



Torrington Chapter President David Vaill swearing in upcoming Chapter President Jonathon Di Michiel.



It is with great pride the Torrington Chapter of UNICO announces that the 2024 Community Ambassador is the Honorable Judge Michael F. Magistrali.

EASTON, PA



The Easton Chapter held their annual Scholarship Dinner on Sunday, May 19th. L to R: Chapter Vice President Ty Corallo, scholarship recipients Meghan Sandy, Molly Margolin and Nicholas Amato, and Chapter President Tony Curto.



The Easton Chapter awarded their annual Hugo "Hap" Piagesi Achievement Award to Trisha Schoeneck pictured in center with Ty Corallo and Tony Curto. Trisha is a lifelong educator in the Easton Area School district and has been extremely active with extra curriculars at the school as well as volunteer organizations in the community. Trisha's ultimate "Service Above Self" act came when she decided to become a living kidney donor. Easton school district employee and friend of Easton UNICO, Tom Lissinichia was faced with losing his life due to kidney failure. Trisha, unselfishly, got tested, and was able to be a kidney donor for Tom.



*The Largest Italian American
Service Organization
in the United States*

UNICO WELCOMES RANDOLPH, NJ

Members Celebrate at the Charter Dinner

We are proud to commemorate the chartering of our newest UNICO National Chapter in Randolph, NJ, on June 27th. We extend a warm welcome to them into the UNICO family.



Presenting the Randolph UNICO banner sponsored by the Hackensack Chapter are: L to R: UNICO First Lady & Hackensack UNICO President Elect, Maria-Rose Contini; Randolph UNICO President Joe Esposito, UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini and Expansion Director Nicki Carpinelli.



Randolph Chapter Charter presented to: L to R: Randolph UNICO President Joe Esposito, UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini and Expansion Director Nicki Carpinelli.



UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini administers the oath to Joe Esposito, Chapter President of the newly chartered Randolph, NJ Chapter of UNICO National.



Our newest UNICO National Chapter, Randolph, NJ, and their members on June 27th, extending a warm welcome to them into the UNICO family. Among them are seated L to R: Randolph UNICO Secretary Donna Mastrantonio, Randolph UNICO President Joe Esposito, UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini, UNICO First Lady Maria-Rose Contini and Expansion Director Nicki Carpinelli.





LAFESTA

I T A L I A N A

SCRANTON, PA

SMILE! ITALIAN FOOD, ENTERTAINMENT AND SO MUCH MORE!
LABOR DAY WEEKEND: FRIDAY, AUG 30TH, TO MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2ND.

DOWNTOWN SCRANTON
COURTHOUSE SQUARE

PRESENTED BY
 **Lehigh Valley
Health Network**
POCONO

FOR INFORMATION AND
DAILY SCHEDULE VISIT:
LAFESTAITALIANA.ORG



SCAN ME



NEW JERSEY DISTRICT X

On April 20, 2024, many attended the symposium held at Rutgers University and sponsored by the New Jersey Heritage Commission, "Increasing Awareness of Italian Heritage through Film."



NJ District X Members in attendance, Anthony Bengivenga, UNICO National Executive Vice President; Dr. Ann Walko, Past National President; Laura Morana, Kenilworth Chapter President; Rosaria Smeraglia, Kenilworth Chapter First Vice President; Donna Lish, Raritan Valley Chapter President; Tara Deleon, Raritan Valley Chapter Member.

UNICO National
"Service Above Self"

HIGHLAND BEACH, FL

On June 4, 2024 the Highland Beach Florida Chapter of UNICO held its General Meeting/Scholarship Night at Arturo's Restaurant. Scholarship Recipients L to R: Jacob H. Grimaldi, Ryan Patrick, Lessa Koch and Isabella Mae Mazza. Co-chairs, Gail Guy, Marcia Caruselle Amore.



Frank And Madeline Lo'RE attend Italian National Day!

GARFIELD, NJ

The Garfield Chapter held its annual cannibal night dinner at the Brownstone in Paterson.

Chapter President Ralph Hamilton started off the dinner. UNICO National President Cav. Ralph Contini attended. Vincent Latona raffles off prizes and addressed the event. Members Allen Focarino and Benedict Focarino attended with guests.



"UNICO BANNER PATCH"

Let's see it displayed on as many Chapter banners as possible!

These funds are needed to help our committee with grant requests, that come in from many cities in our UNICO family.

To receive a patch a Chapter needs to donate \$1000. In a fiscal year.

Italian Connection

UNICO National strengthens strategic Italian American connections at the 2024 Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF) NELA Gala in Washington, DC, and at the Italian American Leadership Forum (IALF) meeting.



2024 Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF) NELA Gala in Washington, DC. L to R: President JCCIA Chicago Ron Onesti, President CSJ Robert Ferrito, National President OSDIA Michael Polo, Past President OSDIA Paul Polo, UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini, President NIAF Robert Allegrini.



Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF) NELA Gala in Washington, DC. L to R: National President OSDIA Michael Polo and UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



2024 Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF) NELA Gala in Washington, DC. L to R: Joe Mantegna (award-winning actor) and UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



2024 Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF) NELA Gala in Washington, DC. L to R: Deana Martin (singer and actress) and UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



Italian American Leadership Forum (IALF) meeting. L to R: National President SIF Joseph Sciamè, OSDIA Executive Director Shayla Kaestle, UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini, National President OSDIA Michael Polo, OSDIA Paul Polo, President NIAF Robert Allegrini.

LIVINGSTON, NJ

Congratulations to Pasquale Campanile for being named UNICAN of the Year for the Livingston UNICO Chapter. In the past year, Pat has served as our Chapter's donations chairperson and was responsible for having articles published in the West Essex Tribune, ComUNICO and the Italian Tribune. Along with his wife, Mickey, he organized our Christmas party, and as a member of the Citizen of the Year committee, he brought in many sponsors. His dedication to the Chapter is evident by his nearly perfect attendance at board meetings, membership meetings and district meetings. Well done, Pat... Complimenti!



L to R: Andy Cassese, Chapter President; Pasquale Campanile and Lou Mattaliano, NJ District Governor XI.

Livingston UNICO added two new members on Wednesday, May 15th at their monthly membership meeting. They were sworn in by the Chapter President Andy Cassese and presented with their membership packets and UNICO NATIONAL pins by Membership Director Matt Ladolcetta.



L to R: New member Richard Youmans, Chapter President Andy Cassese, new member Mary Murray and Membership Director Matt Ladolcetta.

KANSAS CITY, MO**CIAO DA KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI**

On May 31, June 1 and June 2, the Kansas City Chapter of UNICO proudly hosted its annual Festa Italiana.

Our Chapter meticulously plans, diligently organizes, and seamlessly manages the entire Festa from start to finish. Over the course of three days, more than 30,000 people attended the event held once again at the Zona Rosa shopping district. This year, we proudly showcased our Italian/Sicilian heritage and awarded 36 scholarships totaling \$56,000 to deserving young Italian Americans entering college.

The Festa featured authentic Italian foods and drinks, a bustling wine tasting tent, a kids' play area, Italian motorsports show, chef demonstrations, continuous top-notch national and local entertainment, along with various craft shows and booths. A yearly highlight of the weekend was the Sunday Catholic Mass presided over by Reverend Joseph Cisetti.

Entertainment included renowned Las Vegas sensations "The Bronx Wanderers," who once again lit up the stage on Friday and Saturday nights. A special treat was Kansas City's own Kate Cosentino who, previously featured on "The Voice," performed on Saturday evening to a packed audience.

As we recap this year's event, we look forward to seeing everyone at our next Midwest UNICO Family Festa on May 30, 31 and June 1, 2025, along with new generations of Italians and Sicilians!



Three generations of Frank Cherrito with National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



A packed crowd enjoyed the Kansas City Italian celebration.



Festa Committee toasting at the start of the Festa.



Kansas City Chapter President Frank Cherrito.



Kansas City Festa committee with National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini, First Lady Maria-Rose, Kansas City Chapter President Frank Cherrito and wife Toni.

DELAWARE DISTRICT I

WINTER EVENTS:

Annual Italian Movie Night, Jan 18th: Pizza, popcorn, additional snacks and beverages. A segment from the RAI TV series "Don Matteo" featured in Italian with English subtitles.

Four (4) new members: Ann Bailey, Rosanne Hitt, Marina Hayden and Kimberlee Kelley were inducted by VP Pam Notarangelo and President Steve Stanzione. Proceeds from this event were used to prepare Easter baskets and gifts for children in homeless shelters.

Carnevale, Feb. 8th: Sunny Bay Café in Rehoboth – dinner and dancing – music provided gratis by "Back Again".

La Festa di San Giuseppe, March 19th: Traditional tribute to Saint Joseph with blessing and distribution of bread after the 8:30am Mass. Donations of "blessed" bread also offered to local food pantries.

March 21st, Cooley's Anemia Fundraiser: Guest speakers from the National Cooley's Anemia Foundation with update on the latest treatment and research for a cure. Panini and beverages served. MC, Dr. Steven Stanzione, hematologist/oncologist and director of the evening's program.



Dependable volunteers: MaryAnn Ingallina, Anne Jack, Karen Coombe, Joan Boraski.



New inductees: Anne Bailey, Rosanne Hitt, Marina Hayden and Kimberlee Kelly.



Carnevale group photo.



Cooley's Anemia Chairperson and event director – Dr. Steven Stanzione.

SPRING EVENTS:

April 17th: 500th Anniversary Celebration of the Explorations of Giovanni da Verrazzano – Rehoboth Beach Boardwalk and Olive Ave.

April 18: Brian Piccolo Scholarship Award Night. Monetary Awards presented to winners and nominees, along with copies of "PASSAGE to LIBERTY", written by A. Kenneth Ciongoli, Past President and Vice Chair of NIAF, presently NIAF Chairman, additional publications: "Beyond the Godfather", "Let Me In", and Jay Parini, born in Pittston, PA and raised in Scranton, PA. Known for novels, poetry, biography, screenplays and criticism. Italian Trivia Game multiple choice questions presented on a large screen. Gift baskets awarded to winners...FUN for ALL!

May 4: Kentucky Derby Games and Dinner, homemade Italian specialty sauces, Bolognese, alla Vodka, Lasagna soup, sausage and peppers, salad and homemade desserts. This was a fundraiser for Cancer Research, Saint Jude Children's Hospital, plus local charities, all of which eventually benefit members, family and friends.

June 8: Annual Bocce Tournament at Mulligan's Pointe, Georgetown, DE. Ten teams compete, members, family, friends and representatives from UNICO National Office NJ. Winning teams receive 40% of the entry fees. Raffle items, 50/50, gift baskets and certificates, etc. Proceeds to benefit next year's scholarship fund.



Verrazzano Monument, Rehoboth Beach, Boardwalk and Olive Ave.



Bocce Tournament Members and participants!



Kentucky Derby Hat Competition held at Derby Day Dinner, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

KEARNY, NJ

KEARNY CHAPTER MARCHES IN MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Chapter President Annamarie Latushko and members Celeste and Lou Pandolfi decorated the "UNICO-mobile" in preparation for entry into the line of march of the Kearny Memorial Day Parade.

SCHOLARSHIPS

On Thursday, June 6th, members of the Kearny Chapter attended Kearny High School's Senior Awards Night to present scholarships to graduating Seniors.



L to R: Lou & Celeste Pandolfi, Chapter President Annamarie Latushko, Sara Ryan, JoAnn Mitchell and Anthony DeLuca.

On Tuesday, June 11th, the Kearny Chapter invited High Tech HS Senior Zachary J. Wilkinson and his parents to attend their Chapter meeting where Zachary was presented with a scholarship.



Scholarship Chair Joe Sorbera, Joseph Wilkinson, Zachary Wilkinson, Danielle Wilkinson and Chapter President Annamarie Latushko.

BRIAN PICCOLO AWARD

Members of the Kearny Chapter, the Ryan Family and Mr. James Pickel of Kearny High School attended the recent District VII Brian Piccolo Awards Dinner where Sara Ryan, a multi-sport student-athlete was presented with the Chapter's Brian Piccolo Award. Other District VII Chapters also made their presentations that evening.



Sara Ryan poses with her Brian Piccolo Award as her family and Coach James Pickel, look on.

KEARNY CHAPTER HELPS CELEBRATE SPARTA'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Twenty-five years ago, the Kearny Chapter sponsored a new Chapter Sparta UNICO. On April 25th, members from the Kearny Chapters joined with Sparta UNICANs, their families and friends to celebrate twenty five years of "Service Above Self."



Kearny Chapter President Annamarie Latushko at podium, assisted by Celeste and Lou Pandolfi, presented Sparta Chapter President Ray Shupak, with a 25th Anniversary Patch. National President Cav. Ralph Contini, presented the Chapter with a congratulatory proclamation.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

On March 10th, members of the Kearny Chapter joined with Kearny's Irish community to help celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Chapter members decorated cars and then joined in the line of march of the St. Patrick's Day Parade.



The lead parade car proudly displayed the Chapter's banner.



Chapter President Annamarie Latushko and Nancy Arndt are ready to join the parade.



Dennis Latushko looks forward to the start of the parade.



Judy Hyde, JoAnn Mitchell and Celeste Pandolfi, await the signal to pull into the parade's line of march.

KEYSTONE, PA

Keystone Chapter conducted their annual Italian Heritage/Culture/Potential Member meeting at Arcaro and Genell Restaurant. President Nanine Gramigna introduced the evening's presenters, which included Wine Tasting with Sal Maiolatesi of Maiolatesi Wine Cellars and an Olive Oil/Balsamic Vinegar tasting by Thirteen Olives with Gene Litz. The presentations were followed by the yearly election of Officers and Board Members conducted by Nominations Chairman Peter Noto. Arcaro and Genell's provided a delicious Italian Dinner. Fun was had by all.



L to R: Sal Maiolatesi of Maiolatesi Wine Cellars, Chapter President Nanine Gramigna and Gene Litz of Thirteen Olives. In the back row L to R: Mike Gramigna, Michaelene Merrill, Mark McDade, Terri Pettinato, Glenn Pettinato, Past National President, and Melanie Biederman.

The Keystone Chapter donated to the Matthew Mursch Fund to help with Matt's transportation costs for treatments in Philadelphia. Besides having been treated multiple times for a congenital heart defect, Matthew was diagnosed in 2020 with auto immune blood disorder.



L to R: Members Frank and Mary Ann Coviello, Matthew and his mother Lynn Mursch, and Member Toni DiVizio. L to R: Bob Tagert, Marilyn Vitali, Sylvia Tagert, President Elect Michele McDade and Mark McDade, all Board Members.

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KEYSTONE CHAPTER UNICO DONATES TO EQUINES FOR FREEDOM



Keystone Chapter gives \$10,000 to "Equines For Freedom" (EFF) from their Annual Pig Roast Fundraiser. Members were given a tour and history at the site of the facility by Founder Ann Lewis. Dessert Storm Veteran Philip Hawthorne spoke about his very moving experience as both a client and now serves as a Director at EFF which offers therapy to individuals suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) using horses as the conduit (not for riding). This service is offered to Clients with PTSD, namely Armed Services Veterans and First Responders with no fee. Their website is equinesforfreedom.org Keystone Members and principles of EFF at the presentation included Keystone President Nan Gramigna standing center and Pig Roast co-chairs Sylvia and Bob Tagert in front center with EFF Board President holding Check.

PASSAIC VALLEY, NJ



The Passaic Valley Chapter of UNICO held their annual Scholarship, Brian Piccolo and Officer Installation Dinner on June 9th, 2024 at the Barnyard Restaurant in Totowa NJ. They gave eight, \$1,000 Scholarships, along with two Brian Piccolo Awards and one MSU Study Abroad Grant. Pictured in the photo are the students along with our Scholarship Chairman Charle Russo on the right.

UNICO National "Service Above Self"



KEYSTONE, PA

At the Annual Keystone UNICO Pig Roast everything was "A Little Bit Country", and the guests had a "Rootin Tootin Good Time". The major beneficiary from this event was "Equines for Freedom", which services All First Responders suffering from PTSD. Along with the 200 plus guests were several National Officers.

L to R: Mark McDade, Past National President Dr. Ann Walko, Michele McDade, First Lady Maria-Rose Contini, UNICO National President Cavalieri Ralph Contini, Executive Vice President, Anthony Bengivenga, Maggie Pettinato and Past National Preisent Dr. Peter Pettinato.

**ORANGE/WEST ORANGE, NJ****CHAPTER AWARDS \$48,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS**

On June 12, 2024 over one hundred people attended the Orange/West Orange Chapter of UNICO National annual scholarship dinner at the Hanover Manor in East Hanover, NJ. The Chapter awarded scholarships to student of three area high schools; West Orange HS, Seton Hall Prep, and Montville HS. The areas of study included, Italian studies & language, engineering, science, business, vocational studies such as automotive & HVAC, culinary arts, art, dance, music and the WOHS JRRUTC. We also awarded two scholarships, The Anthony & Flora Gonnella Scholarship and the Vecchio Family

Scholarship to Seton Hall University students as part of the Rome Connection study aboard program. In total twenty-eight (28) scholarships were awarded for a total of \$ 48,000.



Orange/West Orange President & Scholarship Chairman Frank V. Gonnella with WOHS Italian Studies Recipients and member and WOHS Italian teacher Rosanna Zamloot.



Orange/West Orange UNICO President & Scholarship Chairman Frank V. Gonnella with WOHS AFJROTC Recipients.



2024 Scholarship Winners.

NORTH SHORE LI, NY

The North Shore Chapter has been busy with their fundraising efforts for the families of our Veterans. It was a beautiful day and a wonderful turnout of non-perishables for the families.



LIVINGSTON, NJ

June 12, 2024, Livingston UNICO was proud to award scholarships to several worthy Livingston High School students. In recognition of their academic achievements and community service, the UNICO Livingston Chapter Scholarships were awarded to Kristen Ngai and Andrew Tesoriro. The Deacon Joe Francione Scholarship for a student pursuing an education and career in art was awarded to Heather Downey. The Al Branchi Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Alica Gupta and the Livingston Trade School Award was given to Zachary Melhorn.



L to R: Betty Cassese, Carol Branchi, Kristen Ngai, Alicia Gupta, Heather Downey and Andy Cassese.

MONTVILLE, NJ

The Montville Chapter presented St. Peter's Orphanage's Program Director Melody Johansson a check in the amount of \$2,200 at its June meeting. The Chapter sponsored a Texas Hold'em tournament in April and donated half of the net proceeds to the Orphanage. The Orphanage, located in Denville, NJ, relies upon donations to perform its mission in housing young men and helping them transition to being productive members of society as they overcome emotional, social and behavioral challenges.



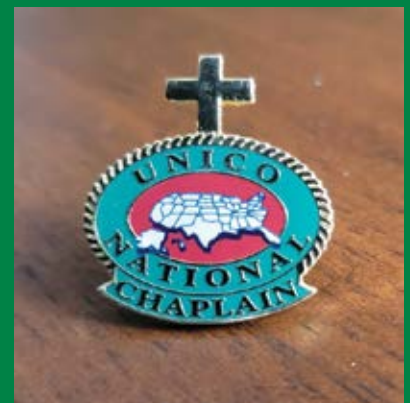
Event co-chair Paul Maddalena, Larry Casha, St. Peter's Orphanage Program Administrator Melody Johansson, event co-chair Mike Longo, Chapter President Michele Maddalena.

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PARAMUS, NJ

On June 11, 2024, the Paramus UNICO Chapter gathered to celebrate the life of an extraordinary member who passed away this past December, Lois Iula. We were united by the love and the profound sense of loss we all felt for a woman who touched our lives in ways words can hardly express. Lois was not just a friend; she was a constant source of light and warmth in our lives, a force of nature whose energy and spirit were as boundless as her power to love.

Lois was President of UNICO for eight years, the rock of the organization. A true leader. We can't say that about everyone that is a President of an organization, but we sure can say that about Lois. Why, because Lois Taught us all lessons of life. Patience, kindness, empathy, courage, these were the principles she lived by, and instilled in everyone around her. She was a mentor, a guiding light. Her work as President was not just a job, it was a passion, a mission, a calling.

Lois's accomplishments as president were as vast as they were impressive. She was a visionary, a trailblazer, a leader. Under her guidance, our Chapter overcame challenges and reached heights we could only dream of. She worked tirelessly, inspired us with her dedication and encouraged us with her positivity. It was her leadership that brought us to success, her strength that kept us going, her spirit that made us believe.

As we bid farewell to Lois on June 11th, we were not just saying goodbye, but thank you. Thank you, Lois, for your guidance, for your support, for your wisdom. Thank you for the lessons, for the memories, for the inspiration. Thank you for being our mentor, our friend.

Lois's physical presence may be absent, but her spirit lives on. Her teachings continue to guide us, her memories continue to inspire us, her legacy continues to shine. Rest in peace, dear Lois. You will always be remembered, always be missed, and forever be treasured. Her spirit, her wisdom, and her love will forever shine in our hearts until we meet again.

At the memorial we gave out three \$1,000 scholarships to high school students. We renamed our scholarships as the Paramus UNICO Lois Iula Scholarships

During the memorial a lovely speech was given by current President Rosa Rizzolo. Lois Iula's daughter Lori Ann Romiglia gave a heartwarming speech about her mother. Close friends of Lois told stories and a slide show presentation was given.



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UNICO National Executive Committee Meeting

We had an inspiring and productive day at the UNICO National Executive Committee Meeting!

On Saturday, June 15, 2024, at the new Italian American Museum in New York, NY, our meeting was led by UNICO National President, Cav. Ralph Contini. We were honored to have a special guest, J. Eustace Wolfington, Executive Producer of the Cabrini movie, who shared his valuable insights into the movie's history and making and received special recognition from UNICO for his outstanding contributions. Grazie to our host Dr. Joseph Scelsa, Founder IA Italian American Museum and everyone who participated and made this meeting a success! Sempre Avanti, UNICO!



UNICO National President, Cav. Ralph A. Contini calls the UNICO National Executive Committee Meeting to order.



UNICO National President Cav. Ralph Contini (on right) presents UNICO National Presidential Recognition Award to J. Eustace Wolfington, Executive Producer of the Cabrini movie.



L to R: Zachary DeCarlo, UNICO National President, Cav. Ralph A. Contini; UNICO First Lady Maria-Rose Contini, J. Eustace Wolfington, Executive Producer of the Cabrini movie.



L to R: ComUNICO Editor Pat Pelonero, J. Eustace Wolfington, Executive Producer of the Cabrini movie, UNICO National President, Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



L to R - UNICO First Lady Maria-Rose Contini, UNICO National President, Cav. Ralph A. Contini; Dr. Joseph Scelsa, Founder, Italian American Museum.



L to R: PNPs: Chris DiMattio, Cav. Joe Agresti, Dr. Anne Walko, UNICO National President, Cav. Ralph A. Contini, Executive VP Anthony Bengivenga, PNP Steve Pelonero.



L to R: UNICO Foundation Chair PNP Chris DiMattio presents a check to J. Eustace Wolfington, Executive Producer of the Cabrini movie; UNICO National President, Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



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NUTLEY, NJ

Membership Chair, Cathy Marucci, reports that the Nutley NJ Chapter has 176 members as of June 1. The Chapter's May meeting included the awarding of the Nutley UNICO Pride in achievement Scholarship, Nanina's Scholarship, Ritacco Family Grant, Fraginals Technology Scholarship, Peter Scarpelli (PCP) Scholarship and the Anthony Biondi (PCP) Memorial Scholarship. These were part of 30 scholarships awarded this year totaling \$44,400. The Scholarship Committee is chaired by the Honorable Alan Genitempo. Funds are raised by Chapter events and donations from families in memory of loved ones; Scarpelli, Arcuti, Biondi, Cocchiola, Ritacco, Battaglia, Piro, DiMaggio, Crupi, Martini, Kelly, Petolino, Bonadonna and Carnicella. The meeting also featured the awarding of the Lifetime Achievement Award to Michelina "Mickey" Biondi for her many years of volunteer and community service in Nutley. Dan Marucci also received the mille grazie award from President, Dan Carnicella, which is presented each year by the President to someone who has worked above and beyond on Chapter activities over the past year.



Michelina "Mickey" Biondi with her family after receiving the Nutley, NJ Chapter Lifetime Achievement award.



Dan Marucci center with his wife Cathy and Nutley president, Dan Carnicella receiving the President's mille grazie award.

Additional scholarships were presented at the Brian Piccolo Scholarship Breakfast. They included the Arcuti Family Scholarship, Joseph and amp, Tina Battaglia Scholarships, Alfred and amp, Anna Biondi Scholarship, Jim Piro Scholarship and Frank Cocchiola, Sr. Scholarship. The two Brian Piccolo Scholarships were presented to a male, Brandon Toranzo and a female, Cynthia DePersio. The highlight of the breakfast was guest speaker Robin DeLorenzo, NFL official. Robin was a Nutley HS graduate who initially became the first female high school football official in the State of NJ, then moved on the Div. III, Div. II and amp, Div. III college football before being hired by the NFL. She is one of only three females working games in the NFL. Scholarships awarded in June were Crupi, UNICO Vocational, DiMaggio, Martini, Pennoni, Kelly, Petolino, Bonadonna and Carnicella.



Scholarship recipients at the Nutley, NJ Brian Piccolo Scholarship Breakfast with Scholarship Chair, Honorable Alan Genitempo, right and event chair, Frank Cocchiola, Jr center.



Nutley, NJ District VII Brian Piccolo recipient, wrestler Brandon Toranzo, with his coach Mike DiPiano.



Guest speaker, Robin DeLorenzo, NFL official, at the Nutley Brian Piccolo Scholarship Breakfast with event chair, Frank Cocchiola, Jr.

Summer activities included a bus ride to AC run on June 23 by Frank Russo, the annual Christmas Eve in July event coordinated by Dan and amp, Cathy Marucci on July 18 and the annual golf outing run by Tom Sposato and Sal Ferraro on Aug. 28, which helps support the Chapter scholarships.



Nutley UNICANS participating in the annual Nutley Memorial Day Parade.

NUTLEY, NJ

The new slate of officers sworn in at the June meeting of the 2024-25 year are Danielle Manganello, President; Pasquale Pisani, First Vice-Président; Frank Russo, Second Vice President; Mark DiMaggio third Vice President; Jerry Del Tufo, Secretary; Sal Ferraro, Corresponding Secretary; Tom Sposato, Treasurer; Anthony "JR" Mascolo, Sgt. At Arms; and Members at Large Lenny Gugliemello, Nick Russo and Anthony Biondi. The Chapter thanks outgoing president Dan Carnicella for his productive two years in this office. Frank Russo was presented with the Chapter UNICAN of the Year Award. The Chapter stays out of politics but congratulates five of its members who were elected to the Nutley Board of Commissioners, John Kelly Mayor, Al Petracco, Joe Scarpelli, Tom Evans and Mauro Tucci.



New Nutley, NJ member, Frank Penna, being sworn in by incoming President Danielle Manganello.

PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT II

Members of PA District II gathered for a Quarterly District meeting at Yanuzzi's in Sayre. Led by District Governor Michael Marinaccio. Members from all four Chapters Carbondale, Greater Binghamton, Keystone and Sayre attended the meeting.

PEQUANNOCK, NJ

Pequannock past President Anna Lee and UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini at Pequannock's Taste of the Town event.

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RARITAN VALLEY, NJ**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERAN
ROCK AND ROLL EVENT**

Raritan Valley, NJ's March 10th \$1,000 donation was made in memory of our past president and member, Joyce Walker. Donation in part, went towards this event which took place at Lyon's Veteran's Hospital on June 7, 2024. It was complete with DJ, dinner, prizes, raffles and dessert and was well attended! Tara Deleon, Vice President of Raritan Valley UNICO assisted serving food for 2 hours.

PARAMUS, NJ**ARMY TANK PULL**

On Sunday, June 9, 2024 the UNICO Paramus, NJ Chapter sponsored the Paramus Fire Department in the Annual Charity Fundraiser Army Tank Pull organized by Clifton Knights of Columbus.



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PLAINFIELDS, NJ

At the Plainfields Chapter meeting on June 12th, UNICO National Executive Vice President Anthony Bengivenga inducted Father Edmund Luciano, pastor of Sacred Heart Church in South Plainfield as the Plainfields Chapter newest member.



L to R: District X Governor April Bengivenga, UNICO National Executive Vice President Anthony Bengivenga, Father Edmund Luciano, Chapter President Debbie Boyle.

The Plainfields Chapter Awarded Five Scholarships to local students at their annual Scholarship Awards Dinner held at the South Plainfield Post of the American Legion banquet hall on June 12, 2024. The Scholarship Committee and Exec Vice President are in the photo with the students.



L to R: Bob Bengivenga, Chapter President Debbie Boyle, NJ District X Governor April Bengivenga, UNICO National Executive Vice President Anthony Bengivenga, Scholarship recipients Jacob Sottiriou, Allison Buchanan, Madison Szalanczi, Riley Cassio, Committee Chair Francesca Merendino and John DeAndrea.



The Plainfields Chapter Scholarship Recipients Jacob Sottiriou, Allison Buchanan, Madison Szalanczi and Riley Cassio.

The Plainfields Chapter's 2024-2025 officers were sworn in by Executive Vice President Anthony Bengivenga at their June 12, dinner meeting held at the American Legion Post's banquet Hall in South Plainfield, NJ.



L to R: UNICO National Executive Vice President Anthony Bengivenga, Outgoing President Debbie Boyle, NJ District X Governor April Bengivenga, Shannon Jeffreys, Ida Vitablile, 2024-2025 Chapter President Chrissie Lee, and Stephanie Wolak.

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the latest news and information:

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RARITAN VALLEY, NJ

UNICO National community service project for Raritan Valley UNICO at Quailbrook Park, Somerset, NJ. Shannon Fillmore created a memorial of 9/11 in 2013 with pillars representing the Twin Towers and the large rock represents the Pentagon. We picked up debris, weeded, mulched and decorated. Pictured is before and after.



Chapter members Donna Fillmore, Tara DeLeon and Chapter President, Donna Lish.

Somerset County Senior Wellness Center community service/mental health, April 23, 2024.



We had about 70 attendees for Italian trivia and extreme pick-up sticks. A plethora of prizes made it extra competitive.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: MAY & JUNE 2024

CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME TO UNICO!

Basking Ridge

L. Michael Mancino

Bayonne

Michael Sears

Belleville

Donna Complitano
Joseph Thomas Crocco
Michael Derro
Judy Piscatowski
Georgeann Polite
Lois Rinaldi
Tamara Rinaldi
Barton C. Risoli
Joyce Marie Risoli

Bloomfield

Camile Schiralli

Brick

Sergio Leone

Brookhaven

Andrea Salvato

Chicago W Suburban

Joseph Bacino
Steve Bacino
Consolato Gattuso
Ray Reza Mehdipour
Nunzio Panariello

Clark

Dillon Cahill
Nicholas Decker
Susan Georgio
Daniel Malanga
Gianna Miele
Gregg Mele
Theodoe Nugent
Reese Passuth
Mary Pellegrino
Peter Philippakos
Keira R. Thompson
Steven Vigliotti

Elizabeth

Giorgio Bonacchi
Joseph G. Colacitti
Dario Muscaritolo

Fairfield

Marc A. Spallino

Garfield

Daniel Broderick

Greater Atlantic City

Anthony Scarangelli

Greater Philadelphia

Jonathan Avolio
Christopher E. Pacelli Mc Dermott

Greater Ramsey

Stanley Rutkowski
Jim Woods

Greater Tampa

Dominick John Amodio
Peter P. Gambacont
Anthony Mosco

Greater Westfield

Frank Del Re
Francis S. Giglio
Paul Tyahla

Highland Beach

Paul Finzizo
Patricia Guarnieri Litzenborger
Jacqueline Denise Romano
Dr. ILaria Serra

Hillsborough

Shirley Morella Driver
Mimma Franchino
Kristen Lindsey
Jordan Lindsey
Curt Suraci
Veronica Suraci

Kansas City

Walter A. Accurso
Nino Bruno
Zach Burke
Father Joseph Cisetti
Justice Spini Dopson
Gina Spini Drury
Jordan Felich
Joseph John Ianelli, 3rd
Father Alexander Kridler
Joseph Miniace
Carl Molle, Jr.
Sam Molle
Jack Mussorici
Charles Palmentere
David Raccuglia
Aric Raus
Gene Raus
Lorenzo Rizzi
Jeremy Saporito
Steven Schonfeldt
Larry Trombino

Kenilworth

Frances Didonato

Keystone

Wanda R. Andreoli
Melanie Biederman
Stephanie Grudis-Whisner
Lola Jolie Macciocco
Michaelene Merrill
Teresa C. Pellegrino
Dr. Kathleen Sottile

Livingston

Mary Angelino Murray
Robertino Perri
Richard Youmans

Montville

Rhonda Gerschenoff

National

Luciano Cofrancesco
Joe Coyle
Lois Maria Davino
Nicholas Larotonda
Julian Leone
Dominic Lombardi
Joseph Luppino
Anthony Mongello
Kenneth Porro
Joseph Saccomanno

North Haledon

Joanne Margherita
Karen Casapulla Rauh
Gail Zalarick

North Shore

Jon Kablack
Pamela Kablack
Attilio Morra
Margaret Piccolo

Oakville/Watertown

Noel R. Breg

Plainfields'

Lucia Rosa Merendino
Joseph Sotterian

Queensboro

Nancy Baer

Randolph

Angelo Barone
Marisa Barone
Tracy Carras

Diane Esposito

John Esposito
Joseph Esposito
Michael Esposito
Alfredo Fanelli, OFS
Rosa Fanelli
Kyle Forsbrey
Kenneth Hegarty
Linda Hegarty
Adriana Lange
Linda Corradino Leckie
James Leckie
Donna Mastrantonio
Thomas Pierson
Maria Ricupero
Gerlando Termini
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Irene Paonessa

Rockaway Township

Rosalie Marmara
Roger D. Rook
Barbara Turco

Rutherford

Deborah Viaud

Saddle Brook

John Manzo
Serphine V. Montagna

**Scotch Plains/
Fanwood**

Lydia Boczon
Sierra Pasquarella
Jacqueline Stasenko

Scranton

Ronald Augelli
Dave Boniello
Mary Lynn Byers
Hannah Carr
Kaeden Carr
Maria J. Courtright
Domenic De Sando
John De Stefano
Chris Evans
Ann O'Donnell Farias
George Franceschelli
Christopher Fazzini
Ann Grebeck
Kevin J. Grebeck
William Layo
Anthony Machelli
Thomas Mazzolla

Bryan Marzolino

Mia F. Muchisky
Nicholas R. Muchisky
Patricia Trotta Ossont
Matt Seidita

Sparta

Henry Adkins
Noah Adkins
Madeline Adkins
Sara Adkins
Tyler Adkins
Tracy De Bellis
Paula Manning

Stamford

Luigi Ceci
Anthony Socci

Waterbury

Michelle Baker
Kyla Rose Barrett
Kendall Rose Bottass
Hailey Rose Christiano
Molly Rose Dunn
Sara Fitzgerald
Matthew Goncalves
Lucca C. Magaraci
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ROSETO, PA

Continuing the tradition of "Service Above Self" The Roseto Chapter Ladies of UNICO hosted their annual Bingo on Sunday, May 19th. The profits from this bingo will now allow the ladies to add two scholarships in addition to the seven local charities the ladies presently support.



On Thursday, June 6th the Roseto Chapter Ladies of UNICO and the first recipients of the ladies' scholarships enjoyed an awards dinner presentation to graduating seniors Gillian Cesari, Bangor HS. and Katrina Valente, Pen Argyl HS. Throughout HS Gillian maintained a 4.1 GPA while participating in AP classes and community service. She will continue her studies at Ithaca College. Katrina was valedictorian, National Honor Society, maintaining top 5% for all four years. She received numerous awards and was involved in multiple community services. She will continue her studies at Mt. Aloysius College.

**SADDLE BROOK, NJ**

Saddle Brook UNICO scholarship recipients.



Saddle Brook UNICO held it's swearing in of our new Chapter President. UNICO National First Vice President Joe Nasello had the honor of swearing her in.

GREATER WESTFIELD, NJ

Foundation Trustee Bob Tarte of the Greater Westfield Chapter receives his 50-year pin from UNICO National Executive Vice President Anthony Bengivenga at a recent Greater Westfield meeting. Bob joined the Plainfields' Chapter in 1974 and moved to Westfield in the 1990's where he has served ever since. L to R: NJ District X Governor April Bengivenga, Executive Vice President Anthony Bengivenga, Trustee Bob Tarte, Greater Westfield Chapter President Myriam Restrepo.

SOUTHINGTON, CT

SOUTHINGTON UNICO FUNDS NEW POLICE TACTICAL VEST

The UNICO Chapter of Southington is proud to have donated funds to the Southington Police Department, toward the purchase of a new Special Response Tactical Vest. The new vest will help enhance the safety and effectiveness of officers who are members of the Regional Emergency Response Team. Southington Chief of Police Jack Daly expressed gratitude for the donation.

“The safety of our officers is paramount, and the donation of this tactical vest significantly enhances our ability to protect and serve the residents of Southington. We are incredibly grateful to Southington UNICO for its generous contribution,” said Chief Daly.

The tactical vest is equipped with essential features designed

to withstand various challenges encountered in law enforcement and will bolster the capabilities of the Southington Police Department. Additionally, the vest ensures that officers will be able to perform their duties with confidence. Southington UNICO partnered with the Rotary Club of Southington to purchase the vest for the department. The two service organizations have partnered on several occasions to benefit the overall community.

Southington UNICO has a long-standing commitment to community engagement and has often partnered with various local agencies to foster goodwill and provide for the needs of the Town of Southington and its residents.



Southington UNICO President Dawn Miceli, Vice President Michael Fasulo, and Sergeant at Arms David Zoni present a check to members of the Southington Police Department for the purchase of a new Special Response Tactical Vest.

HACKENSACK, NJ

MEMORIAL DAY

Honoring hometown heroes this past Memorial Day with the members of Hackensack UNICO, alongside Mayor and chapter member John Labrosse, and UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A.Contini.



SECAUCUS, NJ



At the June 12 meeting, the Officers for the 2024-2025 year were sworn in before this photo was taken.

L to R: Carol Marra, Sergeant-at-Arms, Gerry Dowd, Vice President, Mary Ann Pollio, President, Jackie Tuzzio, Secretary and Sheila Witlock, Treasurer.



Mary Ann Pollio, President, taking the oath of office.



Mary Ann Pollio and Gerard Marra, who turned 95 this year. We had a special celebration for Gerard at the June 12th meeting.

VERONA, NJ

We installed two new members. L to R: Vice President Santi Condorelli, new member Gina Auriemma, her sponsor Frank Zarro and President Tom Malanga.



Our member and UNICO National Expansion Director Nicki Carpinelli installing Adele Song.



Our UNICAN of the Year Bruce Snogans, who was celebrated at District XI meeting.



Presenting our Chaplain Rev. Jerry Racioppi with a \$4,000 check from the proceeds from our Pasta Dinner to help defray cost of repairing the Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit kitchen floor after a flood in the beginning of the year.



President Tom Malanga presenting Rev. Peter Wehrle from Our Lady of the Lake Church in Verona with \$1,000 check to aid in repair of the Church due to a recent fire.



President Tom presenting our member Kevin Toscano, who is also a Fire Department volunteer, with a \$2,100 check for them to purchase gas detectors.



Our seven Scholarship winners are pictured standing and Scholarship Committee seated. We awarded 8, \$1,000 scholarships. One student couldn't attend.



Our newly installed Chapter Officers, L to R: Sgt. at Arms Pat Garguilo; President Tom Malanga; Vice President Peter Dipetta, Corresponding Secretary Linda-Gail Alati; Chaplain Rev. Jerry Racioppi; Member and National Expansion Director Nicki Carpinelli; Recording Secretary Mickey Lawrence and Treasurer James Fasanella.

MONTVILLE, NJ**POCKETBOOK BINGO**

The Montville Chapter Foundation hosted a Pocketbook Bingo fundraiser on June 13, 2024 at the gymnasium at St. Pius X Church in Montville. The event raised over \$12,000 for the Foundation's charitable goals and educational grants programs.

Just under 150 players attended the Bingo event, including National First Lady Maria Rose Contini. Imported luxury Italian pocketbooks from Prada, Versace, Fendi and Dolce & Gabbana were offered as prizes for ten Bingo games. Two pocketbooks from Fendi and Prada were also raffled off. The pocketbooks were generously donated by 227 Park Avenue Lounge & Liquors, LLC through its owner, Anthony Mercedes.

Event Committee Chair Nancy Metz and her committee worked tirelessly to make Montville UNICO Foundation's first hosting of a Bingo fundraiser event a smashing success. The Foundation persuaded special guest Fr. Guido Sarducci to act as the Bingo numbers caller.



Montville Chapter President Michele Maddalena addresses the crowd at "Pocketbook Bingo."



Father Guido Sarducci was the guest numbers caller.

"ZEPPOLE DAY" IS COMING SOON

*"To honor my parents on their wedding anniversary August 22, 2022,
launched Camerieri's Zeppole Mix Kit with great success!
Most of my customers are Italians & love the product & are now regular customers.
Please support this Italian-American Entrepreneur even if you don't like my product,
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**– Joseph A. Camerieri,
Founder**



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HAZLETON, PA**UNICO grants \$6,000 in scholarships to local graduates**

The Hazleton Chapter of UNICO granted their annual scholarships to four successful applicants on June 13. Each successful applicant was awarded \$1,500 to be used for their tuition. Two technical school scholarships were awarded to Bruce Hopeck and Brianna Novotnak, and two academic scholarships were awarded to Sophia Lombardo and Madison Lizbinski.

Bruce is the son of Tracey and the late Bruce Hopeck of Drums and plans to attend Northampton Community College, and Brianna is the daughter of Aaron & Danielle Novotnak

of Beaver Meadows and will be attending South Hills School of Business & Technology.

Sophia is the daughter of Dino and Angela Lombardo of Ebervale and plans to attend St Joseph's University, and Madison is the daughter of Michael and Michele Lizbinski of Sugarloaf Twp. and will be attending Boston University.

UNICO wishes the very best to these graduates as they pursue their career goals in the upcoming fall semester. Hazleton UNICO is a local chapter of UNICO national, the largest Italian American Service organi-

zation in the country, with a sole mission dedicated to helping those in need in our local community.

Front row: Jen Danzeisen, UNICO Board of Directors, Bruce Hopeck, Sophia Lombardo, Brianna Novotnak, Madison Lizbinski, scholarship recipients, Donna Delehanty, UNICO President, and Nick Rossi, UNICO member.

Back row: Cathy Gasper, UNICO Board of Directors, Cheri Yanuzzi, UNICO Board of Directors/Treasurer, Elena Timko, UNICO Board of Directors/Secretary, and Anna Skawinski, UNICO member.



Hazleton UNICO contributes to Walk with The Docs, sponsored by Sacco Chiropractic to benefit Go Joe 27 for St. Joseph's Center. Thank you to Lauren Sacco, UNICO's Parliamentarism, for organizing this great Event!



Hazleton Chapter of UNICO Board Members, Cheri Yanuzzi, Maria Bonin, volunteering at Walk with the Docs supporting St. Joseph's Center.



Our Hazleton Chapter donated useful products our Veteran's use and we also donated \$250. Our local church, MPB youth group, have organized this event to help our Veteran's and show them we care. UNICO was honored to help.

CLARK, NJ

Clark UNICO Scholarship committee.



Scholarship Recipients are sworn in as UNICO Members.



Clark UNICO Board is sworn in, Fran Parisi, Mark Conforti, Ralph Bernardo, Jackie Venezia and Val Trani.



President Joe Arancio is sworn in by Vice President Ralph Bernardo.



Brian Piccolo recipients at the Installation Dinner, each received a \$2,000 scholarship.



UNICAN's enjoying the wonderful dinner.

PEQUANNOCK, NJ

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Pequannock UNICO leads the Memorial Day Parade for Pequannock Township. The UNICO float is supported by several of its members and Rich DePinto leads the horn section in memory of those lost. It was a great day, All township residents look forward to the float and its memorial symbols of the sacrifice that our servicemen made.

**GOLF OUTING**

The Pequannock Chapter of UNICO's Golf Outing was a great success on a beautiful Day. Over 60 golfers participated, and most are ready for the PGA tour. Local businesses contributed as sponsors to help raise money for local residents in need. We thank all that participated and look forward to our 2025 Outing.



*The Largest Italian American
Service Organization in the United States*



SCRANTON, PA**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

The Scranton Chapter hosted its annual golf tournament on May 20, at Elmhurst Country Club in Moscow. More than 120 golfers participated. Funds raised from the tournament benefit Outreach — Center for Community Resources, which offers a variety of programs that promote family stability and economic self-sufficiency. The day included lunch and dinner, prizes and basket raffles, plus perfect weather. A great day on the links!



At this year's tournament, longtime Scranton UNICO member Bob Pettinato was honored for his contributions to the community. Pettinato has been part of the UNICO family for 50 years. He co-founded La Festa Italiana in 1975 and has a background in entrepreneurship, civil engineering and as a public official. L to R: Lori Chaffers, Executive Director of Outreach; Dino Darbenzio, Chairman of the Tournament Committee; Pettinato, Honorary Chair; Dr. Peter Cagnetti, Scranton Chapter President; Jim Sagona, Scranton Chapter Board Chairman; Past National President and Tournament Co-Chair Chris DiMattio, and Tournament Co-Chair Jim Brogna.



Bob Pettinato accepts donation for "Peggy's Pathway for Women's Cancer Care" in honor of his late wife, Margaret Mary, who passed away in 2015. The foundation's mission is raising funds for research into innovative treatments and early detection of uterine endometrial cancer. L to R: Past National President and current Cancer Research and Prevention Chairman Dr. Frank DeFrank, Pettinato, UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini, Past National President Chris DiMattio.



Among those who helped with various aspects of the golf tournament included, L to R: Sarah Effertz, Mike Linko, Mary Ann Rubin, Mike Rescigno, Tournament Chairman Dino Darbenzio, Mary Ann Capone, Debbie Germano, Lynda Cook, Nancy and Bill Genello.

**DON'T
FORGET**

to visit the UNICO website for
the latest news and information:

UNICO.org

SPRING CLEAN-UP

Members of the Scranton Chapter participated in the Community Day Spring Clean-up project to plant flowers throughout downtown Scranton.

SPRING RAFFLE

The Scranton Chapter Ladies Auxiliary held a Cocktail Party and Spring Wreath Raffle at the Colonnade in Scranton. The winner of the Spring Raffle was drawn at the event. Danelle Hogan won the wreath containing gift certificates, cash, and lottery tickets, second prize went to Lori Nozzi, who won tickets to Broadway Theatre of Scranton, and the door prize was won by Dr. Peter Cagnetti, Chapter President. All proceeds benefit local charities. L to R: are Patti Montalbano; Dr. Peter Cagnetti, UNICO Scranton Chapter President, Julie Yando, Ladies Auxiliary President, Lori Nozzi, Danelle Hogan, and Diane Alberigi, Event Chairperson.

SCRANTON, PA**NEW MEMBERS**

The Scranton Chapter Ladies Auxiliary welcomed Tina Dean, a new member. L to R: Julie Yando, Ladies Auxiliary President; Marita Lawrence, Tina Dean, Diane Alberigi, Lori Nozzi, and Joanne Quattrone.

ARMED FORCES DAY

In recognition of Armed Forces Day, the Scranton Chapter held a bingo party at the Gino Merli Veterans Center in Scranton. The veterans enjoyed the games, cake and music. L to R: Chapter members Jack Trapani, Mike Linko, Eileen Soranno, DJ Donna Diva, Event Co-Chairs Diana Giovannini and Mary Marrara, Nancy Genello, Ginny Rescigno.



On the bingo call were, L to R: Mike Linko, Karen Clifford, Arlene Hopkins, and Jack Trapani.

WATERBURY, CT**SCHOLARSHIP AWARD CEREMONY**

On Saturday May 11th, the Waterbury Chapter had its 101st Annual Scholarship Award Ceremony at the La Bella Vista Banquet Hall in Waterbury which was attended by over 80 people. Fifteen scholarships of \$1,000 each were awarded to deserving students in the Waterbury area.



Nine of the scholarship winners with the Principal of Holy Cross High School in Waterbury.



The Chapter President Nicki Maiorano on the far left with four of the scholarship committee members.



Frank Travisano and Tara Travisano Cusack presenting the Marie Ann Ponzillo Travisano memorial scholarship to the winner Isabella Rybezyk.



Some of the attendees enjoying the event.

KEARNY, NJ

At its June 25th meeting, NJ District VII Governor Charles Nucifora (r) presented a \$300 check to Joseph Coccia III of the Coccia Foundation in support of the Foundation's mission to promote awareness of Italian and Italian American culture, heritage and societal contributions, but to also "Pass the Torch" to younger generations.



On Thursday, June 27th, members of the Kearny Chapter welcomed the new Randolph Chapter into the UNICO Family at the Randolph Chapter's Charter Night. The Kearny Chapter also presented the new Randolph Chapter with a donation for their treasury. Kearny Chapter President Annamarie Latushko (second from right) presents a donation check to Joseph Esposito, President of the new Randolph Chapter (second from left) while Celeste and Lou Pandolfi look on.

SCRANTON, PA**PAST PRESIDENTS DINNER & SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Scranton Chapter of UNICO National held its annual Past Presidents dinner at Fiorelli's in Peckville on June 11. L to R: is outgoing Chapter President Dr. Peter Cagnetti passing the gavel to new Chapter President Mike Linko, who was sworn in by UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



Outgoing Scranton Chapter President Dr. Peter Cagnetti receives a plaque in gratitude for his service from National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini.



At the Presidents Dinner several new members joined the Scranton Chapter. Seated L to R: outgoing Chapter President Dr. Peter Cagnetti, National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini, new Chapter President and sponsor Mike Linko. Standing L to R: new member Ron Augelli, Membership Director Mary Mararra, new members Kaeden Carr and Hannah Carr, and their sponsors Ginny and Mike Rescigno.



National officials at the Scranton Past Presidents event, seated L to R: outgoing Scranton Chapter President Dr. Peter Cagnetti, National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini, National Executive Director Melanie Naro. Standing L to R: Past National President Chris DiMattio, National Counsel Atty. Frank Blasi, Past National President Dr. Frank DeFrank.



New Scranton Chapter President Mike Linko with his proud mother, Viola, at his installation.



UNICO National President Cav. Ralph A. Contini was greeted by the newly installed officers of the Scranton Chapter Ladies Auxiliary. L to R: President Contini, Treasurer Diane Alberigi, Vice-President Ann Genett and Auxiliary President Julie Yando.



The Scranton Chapter presented scholarships to two students as part of the Brian Piccolo Scholarship program of UNICO National. The recipients were selected through a blind vetting process from submissions to the Piccolo Committee and the Chapter Board of Directors. Each scholarship is worth \$2,000 toward the recipient's further education.

L to R: committee member Ann Genett; recipient Antonia Piraino, a Lakeland School District senior who will study physical therapy at the University of Pittsburgh; recipient Dominic DeSando, a Dunmore School District senior who will study accounting at West Chester University; committee members Lisa Bieri, chair and Cindy Farino.



At the Scranton Chapter Past Presidents dinner the Brian Piccolo, Capt. James Minicozzi Memorial, and DiMattio-Celli Foundation scholarships were awarded to several students. Seated L to R: Dominic DeSando, Piccolo recipient, Grace Castellano, Minicozzi recipient, Antonia Piraino, Piccolo recipient, Matt Seidita, DiMattio-Celli recipient, and Louis DiMattio, Minicozzi recipient. Standing L to R: parents Nick and Amy DeSando, Frank and Cammie Castellano, Lou and Kim Piraino, Mark and Christa Seidita, Ann and Past National President Chris DiMattio.

WATERBURY, CT



Ashley Briglia of UNICO presenting a \$500 check to Jennifer Humphries the CEO of the Brass City Rescue Alliance.

Joanne D'Angelo, Chairperson of the Charity Committee, presents a check for \$500 to Anita Pettengill, the Executive Director of the Make a Home Foundation.



L to R: Anita Pettengill, Director, Bob Gerace, Financial Secretary, Dr. Joanne D'Angelo, local charities Chair, Dan Telesco, VP and Meg Bryson, Director of Development.



Marie Vitarelli of the Waterbury Chapter of UNICO presenting a \$1,000 check to Michael Culhane the Executive Director of the Malta House Health Clinic of Waterbury a nonprofit that provides health care to persons who need it but have absolutely no insurance due to homelessness or another factor.

Just by coincidence our day coincided with an annual event in Waterbury which involves volunteers cleaning up city parks in city streets all over Waterbury. Our Chapter was assigned streets in the East Mountain section of the city, and it became a fun and productive day for our members.



Mary Sagnella of UNICO is presenting a check for \$500 to Tara Cusack teacher advisor to the Student Beatification club at Kennedy High School in Waterbury, CT for artistic improvements throughout the school.

On May 14th, the Board of Directors voted to donate a total of \$6,100 to ten different nonprofit charities in the Waterbury area based on the recommendations of our Local Charities Committee.



Committee Chairperson Joanne D'Angelo presenting a check for \$1,000 to the Founder and President of Cancer Can't Go" Nicole L. Barber.



We also gave a \$500 donation to the Golden Age Theater Group in Waterbury which provides opportunities for area senior citizens to produce and act in plays in Waterbury. It just began last year and has been overwhelmingly successful.

WAYNE, NJ

Wayne UNICO has had a productive Spring, and we are looking forward to a great summer.

We welcomed two new members in April and are excited for more to come. We continue to support our township and the people that live here. There have been several family tragedies, fires, illness and we were there to help with donations or any way we could. Anthony DeGennaro our current District Governor and Steve Calantone former Eastern Regional District Chair attended the Mid-Year Board Meeting at the Hard Rock in Atlantic City. Our members continue to support other Chapters and we have attended many events including: Cedar Grove Pasta Night, Montville Texas Hold Em, Passaic Valley Cornhole Tournament, Scotch Plains and Sparta Anniversary Celebrations, Pequannock's Taste of the Town and Saddle Brook's Beefsteak.

As a Chapter we helped support the district by cooking and organizing the tricky tray at the Pasta Night. It was an immense success. Standing Room Only.

We also held our Annual Golf Outing. 105 people took part and then enjoyed dinner, tricky tray and an auction at The Carriage House. It was a great day!

We donated another check to one of our favorite charities, The Wayne Food Pantry (Wayne Interfaith Network).

We awarded a scholarship to Wayne Hills High School and Wayne Valley High School each for \$1000.00.

We are also continuing our wine making at Make Wine with Us. We sampled, crushed and pressed the grapes. Looking forward to the next steps.

We would like to wish Steve Calantone luck and give him support as he has decided to run for Second Vice President for UNICO National. Your success is our success!



Former ERDC Steve Calantone UNICO Honoree Joe Flacco and NJ IV District Governor Anthony DeGennaro at the Mid-Year Board Meeting.



Collage from our annual golf outing. Chapter President Pete Leva with Senator Kristin Corrado, Charter Chapter President Dr. Jeff Fossati, Members Donnie DeDio, Councilman Jason DeStefano and friends.



Chapter members enjoying wine making.



Supporting Pequannock Taste of the Town. Former Chapter President Joe Zisa, Former ERDC Perry Russo, UNICO National President Cav. Ralph Contini, Pequannock Chapter President Ed Lamoureux, Former ERDC Steve Calantone and NJ District IV Governor Anthony DeGennaro.



Chapter members Steve Calantone, Rocco Gallotta, Pete Leva and Joe Zisa presenting a check to the Wayne Food Pantry.

GREATER RAMSEY, NJ

BRIAN PICCOLO AWARDEES

Congratulations to Bianca and Anthony who were awarded the 2024 Brian Piccolo Award. The Ramsey Chapter of UNICO wishes them and all the UNICO District IX awardees every success for the future.



L to R: Steve Bifulco, District IX Governor; Anthony Cadicina, Bianca Aliano, Maria Arrabito, Ramsey Chapter President; Ralph A. Contini, UNICO National President; Micheal Thumm, Ramsey H.S. Principal.

"NIGHT AT THE RACES"

Ramsey UNICO hosted a sellout crowd who enjoyed a fun filled evening. The event featured a 10-card race with up to 10 horses per race. Beautiful baskets and prizes were raffled off. Almost every guest went home with a prize. Guests also dined on a catered Italian Buffet Dinner including desserts, wine, beer and soft drinks. We thank all our guests and members for their support. All proceeds from this event benefited local needs, community outreach projects and scholarships.



Loads of prizes to choose from.



Almost every guest took home a prize.

RAMSEY UNICO HOSTS MARIA PALMER, AUTHOR OF ON THE ROCKS

Greater Ramsey UNICO Members recently enjoyed a remarkable presentation by Maria Palmer Author of On the Rocks. On the Rocks chronicles the real-life story of her father Joseph Costanzo, an Italian immigrant, and his rise to success as the owner of the highly acclaimed Prima donna Restaurant. He was also a radio host, columnist and aspiring politician and suffered a sharp fall in the early 2000's, ending in an investigation and time in federal prison. Several members bought copies of her book. And a real bonus Maria cooked and provided a traditional Italian dinner for the Chapter.



Maria Palmer discussing On the Rocks.



Maria's father on the right

COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY

Participating in UNICO National's Community Service Day, Ramsey members donated grocery bags filled to the brim with food staples to Ramsey's local food pantry. The local food pantry is managed by Ramsey Responds a community based charitable organization dedicated to helping residents in need. They provide financial assistance, run clothing drives and food drives.

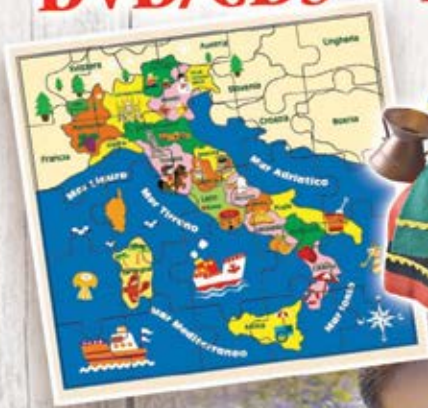


Roberta Kleinbard, Chapter Director with a sampling of grocery bags.

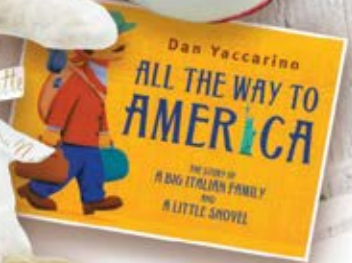


Maria Arrabito, Ramsey Chapter President, Ramsey Responds; President, Harris Recht and Ramsey Responds Event Coordinator, Diane Sundermann.

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necessity. Oh, Star of the Sea, help me and

NEVER KNOWN
TO FAIL — (1X)
Oh, most beautiful
flower of Mt.
Carmel, fruitful
vine, splendor of
Heaven, Blessed
Mother of the
Son of God,
Immaculate Virgin,
assist me in my

show me herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. (3X) Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands. (3X) Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal, you who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me, I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in eternal glory. Thank you

for your mercy toward me and mine. (Say this prayer three consecutive days and after three days, your request will be granted. Publication must be promised.)

RV, CM, AP, SL, MRM, AH, JP, JNN, AC, LG, PVM, GJA, RMN, JLAN, JCS, JPC, JM, AS, JP, JN, EDD, MC, JP, JJC, CS, WPM, GM, CS, RAB, SP, ME, JP, NLB, JW, AR, AMS, NAA, JCS, CB, BMC, GT, GT, GT, GT, JS, GT, TM, GT, BT

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PASTA, TENNIS DOUBLE UP

Italian tennis player Jannik Sinner is the new global brand ambassador for Italian pasta maker De Cecco. "In the great Italian tennis player, we recognized the values that have guided the company since 1831: daily and rigorous commitment, determination, the will to win new challenges nationally and internationally. In Jannik, we find the principles we believe in: passion, tenacity, striving to always give our best. Both share the same constant search for excellence," the company said in a statement reported by *Il Messaggero* newspaper. Sinner, 22, who grew up in Italy's South Tyrol region, is the country's highest-ranking tennis player of all time.

AND THE DAVID GOES TO...

Matteo Garrone's migration-themed film "Io Capitano" and Paola Cortellesi's feminist dramedy "C'è ancora domani" were the big winners at the 69th David di Donatello awards in May, the news site *Wanted* in Rome reported. The David awards are Italy's equivalent of the Oscars. Garrone's Oscar-nominated movie won seven awards, including best picture and best director. The film is based on the real-life story of the perilous journey of two young Senegalese men to Italy. Cortellesi's movie, whose English title is "There's Still Tomorrow," took home six awards, including best actress and directorial debut. The film centers on the domestic struggles of an abused housewife in postwar Rome.



ARTISTIC REPATRIATION

The European Court of Human Rights ruled Italy can confiscate a life-size bronze statue dating back to the second or third centuries B.C. from the Getty Villa Museum in Los Angeles. Attributed to the sculptor Lysippos, the statue was found in the Adriatic Sea by fishermen in 1964. Italy claims it was stolen and sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum for around \$4 million in 1978. The statue is known in Italy as the "Athlete of Fano," but was named by The Getty as the "Getty Bronze" and "Statue of a Victorious Youth." The Getty previously refused to return the statue, saying it was found in international waters.

A WEIGHTY TOPIC

In Italy, 19% of 8- and 9-year-old children are overweight and 9.8% are obese, including 2.6% with severe obesity, according to 2023 data from OKkio alla Salute, the monitoring system coordinated by the National Centre for Disease Prevention and Health Promotion of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità. Children in southern Italy have a higher prevalence of excess weight. Parents reported that nearly 2 in 5 children don't have an adequate breakfast, 37% consume legumes less than once a week, and almost half spend more than two hours a day in front of TV, phones or tablet screens.



—by Elena Ferrarin



MODESTY SQUAD

The mayor of Favignana has issued an order banning people from walking around the town center on the Sicilian island in bikinis or in swimming trunks while shirtless, ANSA reported. People face fines of between 25 and 150 euros if they fail to comply. “We are committed to ensuring that Favignana remains a welcoming, dignified destination for all visitors and residents,” said Mayor Francesco Forgione. “Our community deserves respectful public spaces. I trust in everyone’s collaboration to respect these rules, which do not aim to limit individual freedom but to promote civil coexistence.” Seaside areas are excluded from the ban.

PRESSURE ON THE PRESS

Some journalists at Italy’s state-run RAI TV went on a 24-hour strike in May to protest budget streamlining and what they described as an increasingly repressive atmosphere for media under Premier Giorgia Meloni’s government, AP reported. RAI said in a statement that current jobs are not at risk, and that it is “ever more committed to safeguarding the values of pluralism and freedom of expression.” The May strike came just days after Reporters Without Borders downgraded Italy five notches in its annual index of press freedom. At No. 46 out of 180, Italy moved into the “problematic” category of countries, alongside Poland and Hungary.



TECH DEFICIT

Technology investments by larger Italian banks lag behind those of their European peers, Bank of Italy Governor Fabio Panetta said in May as he urged lenders to step up spending to support innovation in the offering of their financial services, Reuters reported. Italian banks have increased their investments in innovative technology fourfold since 2017, but they remain limited, Panetta said during the presentation of the central bank’s annual report. “They need to grow: It would be a serious mistake to continue to fall behind in this area,” Panetta said. Banks with a stronger digital presence are better able to diversify revenues and gain market share in lending, he added.

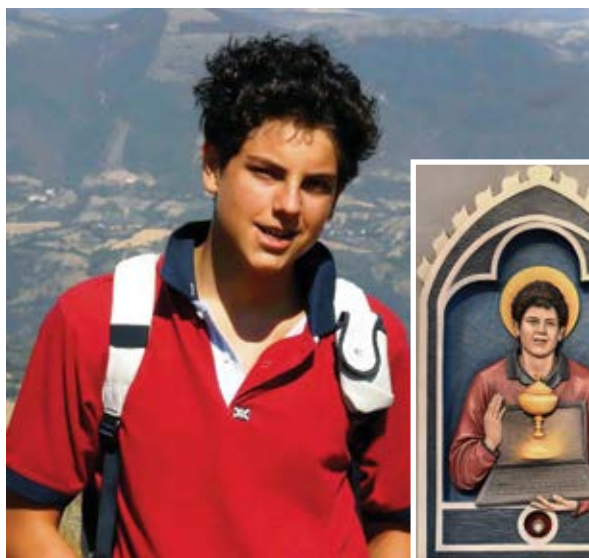
BREATHING EASIER

The number of smokers in Italy has fallen in the last 15 years to 24% in 2023 from 30% in 2008, with one in four Italians still hooked on tobacco, according to a report from Italy’s Istituto Superiore di Sanità, ANSA reported. Smoking is more prevalent among young people, with 30.2% of 18- to 25-year-olds using either traditional cigarettes, heated tobacco or electronic cigarettes, the report said. Since 2016, all cigarette and tobacco packaging in Italy has been required to say, “Smoking kills — Stop now” and “Tobacco smoke contains over 70 carcinogenic substances” next to graphic images of diseases that can affect smokers.



RECORD-BREAKING SALE

The auction for memorabilia of Italian cinema icon Gina Lollobrigida, who died last year at age 95, set a record, Adnkronos reported. Of the 410 lots put out for bid during the 10-hour auction in late May, 100 percent of them sold, bringing in more than \$1.2 million, including auction fees. In a press release, auction house Wannenes said the auction had “an exceptional participation, with more than 4,000 people from 28 countries around the world, connected via five online platforms and 12 phone lines, as well as a room full of people, to testify to the great affection and interest that the figure of Gina Lollobrigida continues to arouse on an international level today.”



MILLENNIAL MIRACLE WORKER

Carlo Acutis — whose proficiency at spreading online the teachings of the Catholic Church led to him being called “God’s influencer” — is set to become the first Millennial saint. Acutis was born in London and died at age 15 in 2006 in Monza, Italy, where he spent much of his childhood. He had been diagnosed with leukemia, the BBC reported. Acutis was beatified in 2020 after a first miracle — the healing of a Brazilian child with a congenital pancreas disease — was attributed to him. In May, Pope Francis attributed a second miracle to Acutis, this one involving the healing of a university student in Florence who had a brain bleed following head trauma.

ITALIAN AT THE HELM

Starting next month, Milan’s historic opera house, Teatro alla Scala, will have a new general director, Fortunato Ortombina, the outgoing CEO and artistic director of Venice’s Teatro La Fenice. Ortombina will work for the first few months alongside Dominique Meyer, whose role he’s stepping into. Italy’s government limited Meyer, a Frenchman, to one term as it seeks to return landmark cultural institutions to Italian leadership, the Associated Press reported. Meyer was the third foreigner in a row to run the opera house. Meyer’s last gala premiere will be Verdi’s “The Force of Destiny” on Dec. 7. The new season also features a world premiere of “The Name of the Rose,” a new opera by Francesco Filidei, based on Umberto Eco’s novel of the same name.



FROM THE HEART

Organ donations and transplants hit record levels in Italy last year, the National Transplant Centre said in its annual report. Among those who OK’d donations on their ID cards, the most generous were 30-year-old Sardinians, at a rate of 84.7%, while the most generous city was Trento, with 78.1%, ANSA reported. Last year, there were more than 2,000 donors — including 375 live donors — and more than 4,400 transplants, both new records, the report said. Throughout the country, 18- to 30-year-olds were the least generous in consenting to donations, likely because they are less well-informed, according to the report.

—by Elena Ferrarin

▲ **GEORGE GUIDA** ▲

EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK

"They flew up the stairs like superheroes in a comic book, legs blue blurs, body armor heavy, nightsticks, blackjacks, walkies, cuffs everything jangling like castanets and wood blocks, their own music competing with the crunch of chords louder and louder, the wails of solos, a Black man's raspy voice. At the bottom of the last flight, they surprised a kid in dungarees and polo shirt. The moron was just sitting there, smoking a cigarette. He tried to turn and run up the stairs, but as Alfie got close enough to hear him wheeze, he saw the dark flash of Sweeney's billy club and heard the thud on the kid's skull. Like a scarecrow the poor kid dropped straight down, rolled a few steps to the landing, and was out. Sweeney was right. It was important to maintain the element of surprise.

"Their batons rose again as they approached the door of the President's office."

THE UNIFORM

by George Guida

PAGES: 372 pages

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BUY: guernicaeditions.com

When worlds COLLIDE

by Fred Gardaphe

George Guida's new novel, "The Uniform," opens with the 1968 New York police assault on students at Columbia University. Rookie cop Alfie Baliato, traumatized early in his life by having witnessed his father's Black friend being beaten by locals during a hunting incident, arrives on campus not ready for the violence he is about to deliver and receive. This haunting scene sets up Guida's most ambitious and effective writing to date.

Primarily known for his playful use of language in poetry and humorous fiction, Guida, who teaches writing and literature at New York City College of Technology, turns to serious drama with this latest work. "The Uniform" becomes an especially relevant story these days with strong local police and state militia presences on campuses in response to student protests revolving around Israel and Palestine.

After a compelling beginning, the novel settles into the story of Alfie, a third-generation Italian American who shifts after a motorcycle accident from a promising guitarist to a cop who risks his life for values he begins to doubt. Alfie suffers from the wounds he's received, not just in his physical battles, but also in the combat of his emotional life. Drawn to his cousin Adeline, his greatest sufferings come from dealing with forbidden love. His younger brother, Frankie, has the life he wants, one less encumbered by the Italian traditions and the work ethic instilled by his father and grandfather. There's a constant competition between the two for recognition and acceptance, first by the family, then the larger community they share, and this

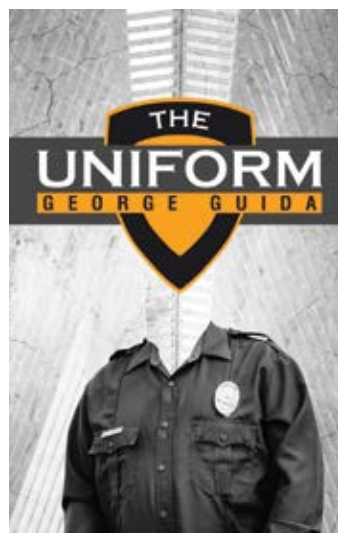
keeps them away from each other for years.

Alfie takes any work he can find to support the local girl he married and the family they create, shifting from blue-collar jobs to door-to-door sales and finally to the New York City Police Department. Before he reports, though, he takes some time off to get away and

confront his cousin in California. His time amid the beatniks and hippies of the early 1960s turns him inward as he nurses his unrequited love for his cousin and grapples with his longing to do more with his life. At family reunions in upstate New York, Alfie escapes city life, taking to metal sculpting as a way to make himself useful and to fulfill his artistic drive. Eventually, Adeline joins him, and they make a home for themselves. Alfie makes it

back to Italy, where he finds comfort in the lifestyle and art; it's also where he finds a way to make peace with his estranged brother.

Strong dialogue and rhythmic prose keep pages turning as Guida renders stories of how Italian traditions change in the course of American assimilation. Old World community beliefs turn into reactionary paranoia reflected through his extended family of uncles and cousins in upstate New York. Meanwhile, Italianate sensibilities maintain artistic integrity in spite of the challenges of America in the 1960s and '70s. Guida shows that he has matured as a writer through his ability to sustain attention over the long haul of a long novel, keeping his readers connected to his subjects, and giving us new insights into the plight of Italian-American culture.



Portrait of A GENIUS

by Jeannine Guilyard

Though he wasn't a filmmaker, his name is inextricably bound with Italian cinema as well as some of Hollywood's biggest blockbusters. Known for his long-time collaborations with directors Giuseppe Tornatore, Sergio Leone and Quentin Tarantino, Ennio Morricone created the soundtracks for Italian classics like "Cinema Paradiso" and "Malena," and American films like "The Hateful Eight," for which he won an Oscar, and "The Untouchables."

Now we have a deeply moving documentary that immerses us in the life and music of this modest genius. Written and directed by Tornatore, "Ennio" traces Morricone's path to becoming a renowned composer, focusing on his work on numerous films. It features archival and original footage, poignant interviews with Morricone conducted between 2015 and 2016, and heartfelt conversations with his peers and collaborators. The film spans Morricone's 80-plus years in music, from trumpet lessons at the age of 6 to his death at the age of 91 in 2020.

We learn that Morricone aspired as a child to be a doctor, but his father, a professional musician, enrolled him in trumpet lessons and set him on a different path. The documentary features a wonderful clip of Morricone as a boy playing the trumpet. "I was very weak at solfège," Morricone explains, referring to the sol-fa-la syllables of the musical scale. "My father became very strict. During the holidays, I wasn't allowed to play any bingo or card games, and then I improved."

When his father became ill, a young Morricone used his talent to help his family scrape by, but it wasn't a positive experience. "Playing the trumpet to earn enough to eat was a terrible

humiliation," he said, "so, I stopped loving the trumpet."

Morricone began composing music, studying it formally at an elite conservatory in Rome. There, he met composer Goffredo Petrassi, a teacher whose tough love and sage guidance had a huge impact on Morricone's life and career.

Morricone was perhaps best known for his longtime collaboration with Leone, the legendary Italian director who



Ennio Morricone in "Ennio"
(Photo courtesy of Music Box Films)

launched the spaghetti western genre. The first time they worked together was on Leone's "A Fistful of Dollars," a western set in Mexico. The film was shot in Spain and starred a relatively unknown television actor named Clint Eastwood. When Leone suggested that he might use music by another composer for the final duel in the film, Morricone threatened to walk away. He then created a piece inspired by one of his previous compositions that turned out to be perfect for the dramatic scene while complementing the film's introductory score.

"Ennio" creates a strong sense of nostalgia, transporting us to black-and-white variety shows of decades gone by and including interviews with peers who have passed away in recent years. It also features contemporary artists who speak to the multi-generational appeal of



Giuseppe Tornatore in "Ennio"
(Photo courtesy of Music Box Films)

Morricone's work. One of these artists is Carlo Verdone, who collaborated with Morricone when he was young and is now in the twilight of his own career.

The film highlights how Morricone was truly ahead of his time, taking the world a while to appreciate his immense talent. New York Times film critic Manohla Dargis reminded readers that most American film critics panned "A Fistful of Dollars" when it opened in the United States in 1967. New York Times critic Bosley Crowther was infuriated by its violence and lack of morals and criticized Morricone's music for employing "tricks and themes that sound derivative."

Despite the rough start, Morricone achieved legendary status with his mesmerizing compositions, intense passion for writing and his down-to-earth demeanor. "I feel like I've known him and loved him forever," Quincy Jones commented in the documentary. That sentiment was mirrored by the many people of all ages and backgrounds who were interviewed for the film. Tornatore not only succeeded in creating a portrait of a genius but also captured Morricone's humanity and humble nature, which undoubtedly played a role in his successful collaborations and iconic compositions.

"Ennio" is currently streaming on Apple TV+, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and other platforms.

In the footsteps of THE CARMELITES

by Lee Colsant

Why do Italians love Our Lady of Mount Carmel? Why is her feast day so special? A deep dive into the history of her veneration will help explain.

The actual Mount Carmel, near the port city of Haifa, Israel, was a holy mountain, home to Old Testament hermits like the Prophet Elijah, well before the birth of Jesus. By the end of the 12th century, it attracted the men of the Third Crusade, who chose to stay, “to follow in the footsteps of Jesus” and join the Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel, popularly known as the Carmelites.

During the 13th century, the political and religious strife wrought by the Saracens when they invaded the Holy Land forced the departure of these men of Mount Carmel. Sicily was a first stop (c. 1215) for one of these Carmelites, St. Angelo, now the patron saint of Palermo. His remains rest at Santa Maria del Carmine in Licata, Italy.

Some Carmelites made it to France and others to England, where devotion to Mary of Mount Carmel flourished. That passion was engendered by an apparition to St. Simon Stock on July 16, 1251, during which the Blessed Mother promised,



“Whosoever dies wearing this (Carmel’s) scapular shall not suffer eternal fire.”

Known for their hermetic, contemplative spirituality, the Carmelites created monastic settlements on the western side of Sicily. In 1257, a young man from Trapani, Alberto Abati, entered the Carmelite Order. Called to champion the lifting of the siege at Messina in 1301, the future saint departed from his monastery and, under the protection of Mary, saved hundreds of lives from starvation.

Throughout the 14th century, Carmelites made their way up the Italic peninsula, founding monasteries, primarily in the Tuscany region. Deep political divisions between the warring Florentine houses were reconciled in a peace treaty brokered by Andrea Corsini, a Carmelite bishop of Fiesole who was devoted to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. St. Andrea’s incorrupt body rests in Florence’s Santa Maria del Carmine.

In the 14th and 15th centuries, the contemplative life of the Carmelites attracted hundreds of women to this life of prayer. Anna Maria Redi of Arezzo (St. Teresa Margaret) and Caterina Lucrezia de’ Pazzi (St. Mary Magdalene) from the powerful Florentine banking family, as well as other Italian women too numerous to mention, chose the Carmelite life, devoting themselves to Mary, their loving Mother.

The late 15th century gave us Cristoforo Colombo, who entrusted his men to Mary, Carmel’s Stella Maris (Star of the Sea). Each sunset while sailing the high seas, Columbus’ men sought her protection by singing the “Salve Regina,” a hymn sung by all Carmelites.

In the 16th century, Mary’s order



St. Angelo, patron saint of Palermo



St. Mary Magdalene



Beato Battista Spagnoli



▲ OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Venerated for centuries in Italy and celebrated for decades here in America, her feast day offers the faithful an opportunity to manifest their devotion to her.

expanded eastward. In Mantua, Lombardy, Battista Spagnoli professed religious vows to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. In 1515, Battista relied on his steadfast devotion to and love of Mary when Pope Leo X sent him to negotiate peace between Francis I of France and Massimiliano Sforza, Duke of Milan. Blessed Battista is one of scores of Mary's beatified Carmelites.

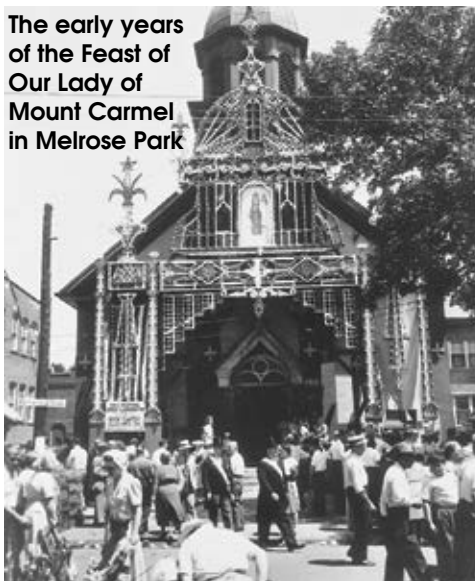
On Nov. 16, 1894, the town of Palmi, Calabria, was shaken by a disastrous earthquake but no paesani lost their lives. They attributed this to the intercession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, which the Vatican officially recognized as a miracle. Mary's appearances as Our Lady of Mount Carmel abound in history, including one to St. Bernadette in 1858 and one to the children of Fatima in 1917, as well as to St. Simon Stock in 1251.

Italian-American Kevin di Camillo recounts the story of his great-grandfather, a shepherd in the Maiella Mountains of Collach in Abruzzo. His fellow shepherds would whistle, fingers to mouth, to communicate with each other. After a violent storm came and went, all the shepherds whistled their tunes of safety except for Kevin's great-grandfather. Searching, they found him on the ground struck by lightning. Di Camillo writes, "The nails in the soles of his

boots were shot out by sheer force of electricity that had gone through his body. His entire body was charred, except for the brown scapular he wore, but he was alive." No beatification is attached to this extraordinary event, but like the town of Palmi, Calabria, Mary's intervention was felt.

In the great diaspora of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Italian immigrants brought with them this very same devotion and love for Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Pope Leo XIII made sure these Italians were well shepherded in America, appointing future saints Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini and Bishop Giovanni Battista Scalabrini to the task. Within a brief time, hundreds of churches dotted America's landscape

The early years of the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Melrose Park



bearing the name of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

As the decades and generations progressed, Italians in America morphed into Italian Americans who assimilated into an increasingly modernized and secularized nation. As a result, the saints of our ancestral homes, and the festas that celebrate them, no longer have the power to capture our imaginations as they did with our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. Back then, faith was a given and the annual celebrations held in her honor were the biggest events on the spiritual calendar for those parishes. Today's cultural changes suggest a different way to express devotion and participate in this celebration.

Is it possible for the present generations of Italian Americans to rejuvenate

these feasts by returning to the spiritual roots of these celebrations, by constantly walking in faith in the footsteps of Jesus, just as Mary did, even to Calvary?

What would that "walking" look like? We can take our lead every Sunday when we recite one of the most powerful, enduring beliefs in Mary in the Nicene Creed, which proclaims that Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, was "born of the Virgin Mary" and became man. This is the same Mary of the Annunciation who pondered Gabriel's words, then answered, "Thy will be done." To ponder is the central function of the Carmelite's contemplative life of prayer. Pondering allows us to "leave self behind" and draw closer to Mary in her role of encouraging greater union with God's will, and to embrace her example of love without limit, faith without doubt.

What if we were to take that role to heart, contemplate it deeply and live that spiritual devotion in our daily lives? The actual feast day would be a culmination of that devotion, a public manifestation of that contemplative faith. The Mass and procession would be imbued with new meaning. This added dimension would bring us a spiritual comfort that's rare nowadays but part and parcel of the experience of our immigrant ancestors.

I invite you to join us at noon on July 14 for a contemplative and joyful Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel at the Parish and Shrine in Melrose Park, Illinois or at 10:15 a.m. on July 16 with the Carmelites at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Darien, Illinois. Come, celebrate the agency of Mary in our lives. Buona festa!



Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Melrose Park
(Photo by Carmen Salerno)

Labors of love

Karen Guancione's art often results from painstakingly tearing, sewing, assembling and disassembling materials, then methodically arranging thousands of pieces into large-scale installations.

Why does she do this? To explore the questions surrounding women's work and the value placed on labor, says Guancione, who teaches art at Middlesex College in her native New Jersey.

"This repetitive process is like those found in piecework and domestic tasks — associations I bring into an art environment," she says. "I continue to be interested in work that reveals the art of labor and the labor of art."

Her work has integrated handmade books, printmaking, dance elements, live music, ritual, photography and video into mixed-media displays. She has created community art projects in the United States, Mexico, France, Italy and elsewhere.

Defined by rich and vibrant colors, her art also highlights themes of identity and class, such as prostitution, immigration, faith and the environment. "I am giving art form to these issues in a way that is never in your face," she says. "It's always very beautiful and poetic."

An installation Guancione did in Italy consisted of 10,000 pieces of paper strung together and suspended from the ceiling.

Her New Jersey installations included one made of thousands of library card-catalog entries, sewn together to hang as one large composition. For another one, titled "the art of labor," she gathered century-old sewing artifacts such as looms and incorporated the stories, on paper, of local textile workers.

She's especially attached to her installation featuring "rebozos," traditional flat garments worn by women in Mexico, that includes drawings of everyday kitchen objects used by women. The local community in the town of Pátzcuaro, Mexico, was deeply involved in the process, giving way to an intense and moving experience, she says.

Guancione says her art traces a direct link to her Sicilian mother and grandmother, who were talented seamstresses. "I feel that influenced me a lot. Not just their craftsmanship, but their flair for beauty and design."



Karen Guancione



Colorful legacy

Murano has long been home to makers of the world's most exquisite artisan glass. Among them was Carlo Moretti, whose pieces have been exhibited by museums around the world.

Carlo and his brother Giovanni opened a factory in Murano in 1958. Carlo had a central role in the design and creation of the company's pieces, while his younger brother was in charge of administration and marketing.

The brothers opened their first store, L'Isola (The Island), in 1979 in Campo San Moisè in Venice. After Carlo's death, Giovanni took the helm of the company, which he sold in 2013 to an Italian holding company. That was followed by the relocation of L'Isola to Calle de le Botteghe, also in Venice.

The company — which still bears Carlo's name — produces drinking glasses, vases, lighting, bowls, carafes and decanters, as well as collector's glasses. All are mouth-blown in vibrant combinations of stripes and swirls with a modern vibe.

The glassmaker constantly explores new styles and continuously experiments with shapes and materials, always "combining two contradictory cores, solid and liquid," according to the website.

The company is best known for its Bora Tumblers, a collection marked by slightly askew colored stripes "as though a gust of wind helped to shape them," as described by Vogue in a 2015 article. Bora is the wind that blows through the Venetian lagoon.

Carlo Moretti glassware has been displayed in museums in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Italy, Portugal and Switzerland.

In the United States, the list includes the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, both in New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; the Corning Museum of Glass in Corning, New York; and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

The brand has no association with Nason Moretti, another venerable glassmaker in Murano.

(shop.carlomoretti.com/en/)



Lessons in HEROISM

by Helen Gregory

The pristine alpine wine region of Valtellina lies two hours north of Milan near the Swiss border. This small wine-growing area occupies a beautiful valley carved into granite hills that trace the winding Adda River over 140 miles from east to west. Historically, most people have bypassed Valtellina on their way from Lago di Como, Bergamo or Milan to trendier spots like St. Moritz. Nowadays, however, the wineries of Valtellina are drawing well-deserved recognition to this once-overlooked place. Wine has been produced here for more 2,000 years, and the region's star variety, Nebbiolo, is one of the most acclaimed reds in the world.

Leonardo da Vinci described Valtellina as “a valley surrounded by high and terrible mountains, [where] they make really powerful wines.” This concise description from the master's 16th-century Codex Atlanticus sketchbook still holds today. The winegrowers of Valtellina have been laboring in the shadow of peaks like Monte Disgrazia (at 12,000 feet) for millennia. It's difficult work, dubbed “heroic viticulture” by the modern Italian wine industry. Most Valtellina vineyards are planted on steep terraces between 750 and 2,500 feet in elevation, at inclines that make mechanical harvesting virtually impossible. Hand-harvesting requires considerable time and investment, and some of the more enterprising growers have installed teleferiche cable systems to ferry the grapes as quickly as the mountains will allow.

All this back-breaking labor has its upsides. Mountain soils yield smaller berries with a higher ratio of skin to juice contact, resulting in concentrated aromas, flavors and structure. As any mountain traveler knows, conditions can swing with little notice, requiring

sunscreen and layers of clothing in all seasons. Like the local tourists, the grapes of Valtellina get plenty of sun by day and cool off at night as temperatures drop. This daily cycle of intense warmth and chilliness preserves freshness and balance in the wines, giving mountain winemakers a distinct advantage as temperatures soar elsewhere due to climate change.

As in Piedmont, the red grape variety Nebbiolo took hold centuries ago in Valtellina; the grape accounts for 90% of



local plantings and is named Chiavennasca in Valtellina (after the town of Chiavenna). Growing in cool mountain air makes Valtellina reds naturally lighter in body and less powerful than their Barolo counterparts, but also imparts grace and elegance. Bright crimson in color, Valtellina wines have pronounced acidity and aromatics, ranging from dark cherry, herbs and wild rose to gamey, leather notes.

For first-time tasters, Rosso di Valtellina is the entry-level style, well-priced and easy to drink. There are also two Valtellina DOCG wines, the highest level of the Italian denominazione and a proud acknowledgment of authenticity of location and winemaking. Valtellina Superiore earned DOCG status first in 1998 and



are sourced from the finest vineyards near the villages of Grumello, Inferno, Maroggia, Sassella and Valgella. By law, superiore wines must age for at least 24 months (including 12 months in oak) to develop complexity and nuance. In 2003, Valtellina Sforzato wines became the second regional style to obtain DOCG status. Sforzato is made in the same passito method as Amarone, by drying the grapes to “force out” (or *sforzare*) sugars before fermentation. In this traditional method, the grapes rest in drying racks for about three months after the harvest. Around late January, the semi-raisiny grapes are fermented into wine before aging an additional two years prior to release. Sforzato wines are rich and full-bodied reds to serve with savory game, truffled pasta and hearty stews.

The winegrowers of Valtellina are relentless in their determination to produce quality wines in an unforgiving landscape — and are finally getting well-earned praise. In March 2024, *Gambero Rosso*, the leading Italian wine publication, ranked five Valtellina producers (Nino Negri, Aldo Rainoldi, Dirupi, Mamete Prevostini and AR.PE.PE) among the best in Lombardy, citing their exceptional efforts. What a wonderful lesson in heroism.

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100% Chiavennasca (Nebbiolo) from 50- to 100-year vines in the village of Sassella. Intense flavors of wild berry, cassis and smoke. Serve with Alpine cheese, bresaola and grilled meats.



Celebrate FERRAGOSTO!

by Dolores Sennebogen

After Christmas and Easter, one of Italy's most important annual celebrations falls in the middle of August. On Aug. 15, cities are eerily quiet. It seems the entire population has headed for the beaches, the mountains or the countryside to get away from summer's heat and to celebrate Ferragosto, a custom that goes back to Emperor Augustus. In 18 B.C., Augustus proclaimed a holiday that allowed citizens to rest following the hard work of the harvest. Even beasts of burden such as oxen, donkeys and mules were relieved from their duties and decorated with garlands of flowers.

Ferragosto was originally a secular holiday, but it became entwined with the Catholic Church's Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Mother. So of course there are masses, processions and festas in many towns. It is now an official national holiday dedicated not only to Mary but also to family, relaxation and picnics. What Italians eat on Ferragosto varies from region to region. Offerings may include stuffed pigeons, seafood or lamb. No matter the region, vegetables, fruits, salads and cold pasta are easy to



prepare in advance and carry off for "la scampagnata." At every table, watermelon seems to be a must. The fruit has become a symbol of Ferragosto. There is a Roman expression about eating watermelon: "Mangi, bevi e te lavi 'a faccia." "Eat, drink and wash your face."

Buon Ferragosto!



GAMBERI MARINATI

(Marinated Shrimp)

- 1-1/2 pounds medium shrimp, cleaned and deveined
- 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 3 green onions, chopped
- 1/4 medium red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 2 ribs celery heart, thinly sliced

Marinade for Shrimp:

- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 small garlic clove, through a press
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 2 teaspoons lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup olive oil

Continues on page 66...



Cook the shrimp in simmering water for 2-5 minutes, until pink all over. Do not overcook. Drain and cool the shrimp. Meanwhile, combine all the marinade ingredients. Toss shrimp with the red pepper flakes, green onions, bell pepper, parsley and celery, adding some of the marinade, a bit at a time. Use it to taste. Chill before serving the shrimp.

Alternative serving idea: Drain and rinse a can of cannellini beans. Add them to the shrimp with a bit of extra marinade. If desired, serve on a bed of arugula.

CIABATTA IMBOTTITA

(Picnic Sandwich Loaf)

1 (1-pound) loaf ciabatta bread
Olive oil
Olivada or black olive tapenade
(chopped olive spread)
Pesto sauce (optional)
8 slices salami
8 slices capicola
8 slices prosciutto
8 slices provolone
Roasted red peppers
Fresh basil leaves (optional)
Red leaf lettuce

Cut the ciabatta loaf in half lengthwise and drizzle both sides with olive oil. Spread olivada on both sides, or use olivada on one side and pesto sauce on the other. Layer the bottom half with the meats and cheese. Top with sliced roasted peppers and, if not using the pesto, shredded fresh basil. Add the leaf lettuce. Carefully place the top of the bread over all and press down firmly. Wrap the loaf in plastic wrap and then in foil until serving time. Use a serrated knife to cut the loaf into four servings. Alternately, you can purchase 4 ciabatta rolls and make individual sandwiches.



POMODORI AL FORNO

(Baked Seasoned Tomato Slices)

4 large, firm tomatoes
(about 2-1/2 pounds)
1/2 cup unseasoned panko breadcrumbs
1/2 cup freshly grated Pecorino Romano
4 or 5 tablespoons olive oil
1 large garlic clove, finely minced
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
Salt and pepper, to taste
Extra basil for garnish

Slice the tomatoes 1/2-inch thick. Combine the crumbs, cheese and 4 tablespoons of oil with the remaining ingredients except the salt and pepper. Arrange the 10 most perfect tomato slices in a single layer on a baking sheet. Save the ends for another use. Sprinkle the slices with salt and pepper and distribute the crumbs evenly among the slices. Drizzle with a little additional olive oil. Bake in a 400-degree oven for 8-10 minutes. Julienne the extra basil and garnish each tomato slice. Use a pie server to transfer to a serving platter. This is a good side dish with grilled meats. Good hot, warm or room temperature.

INSALATA DI POMODORI E ANGURIA

(Tomato and Watermelon Salad)

1-1/2 cups cut-up heirloom tomatoes
1 cup cut-up watermelon
8-ounce ball of fresh mozzarella
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
4 teaspoons peach balsamic vinegar

Salt and pepper, to taste
2 tablespoons slivered fresh basil
1 tablespoon slivered fresh mint
Extra basil or mint for garnish

Cut the tomatoes, watermelon and mozzarella in 1-inch chunks. Blend together the oil and vinegar and season with salt and pepper to taste. You can have each ingredient ready in advance, but don't combine them until serving time, since the tomatoes and watermelon will give off a lot of liquid upon standing. When ready to serve, toss the ingredients together, including the slivered basil and mint. Arrange in a clear glass bowl to show off the colors of the salad. Garnish with a small bunch of basil or mint.



NOTES: I often use cherry-size heirloom tomatoes, but you can use the larger ones if you have them. I purchased peach balsamic vinegar at a gourmet shop and I like it with this dish, but you could use white balsamic vinegar. If you use the regular balsamic it will darken the mozzarella but still taste good.





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