Coccia Foundation
Preserving Italian Culture

Volume 2 Issue 2 | Coccia Foundation | Winter 2006/2007

# Italy's First Senator Representing Italian Citizens in the United States Speaks at Montclair State University

*N. Lawrence Paragano, Chairman of New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, Susan A.Cole, President of Montclair State University, Senatore Renato G. Turano and Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.*

Senator Renato G. Turano's lecture was presented by Montclair State University's Joseph and Elda Coccia Institute for the Italian Experience in America on December 4th, 2006 as part of the Institute's third Anniversary celebration.

Italian citizens abroad were granted the ability to vote in the Italian elections via absentee ballots in 2001. In May 2006, however , they had the opportunity for the first time to elect their own representatives to the Italian Parliament.

In that election , Italian citizens living in a newly constituted voting district encompassing North and Central America, elected Renato G. Turano as their first Senator. Sen. Turano, an Illinois major bakery owner, represents approximately 200,000 Italian citizens living in the United States, and an additional 150,000 living in Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

During the lecture, Senator Turano discussed the long term implications of the new Italian-American electorate, the reasons why the Italian government decided to grant representation to Italians abroad and the history of Italian-American voting in the United States.

At the conclusion of the lecture, students were able to question the Senator on various issues relating to students visiting Italy as exchange students or part of study abroad programs. In addition, they focused much of their questions regarding of dual citizenship. Having dual citizenship would provide students with employment opportunities in all of Europe before or after graduation.

Senator Turano, a dual citizen of the United States and Italy, lives in the Chicago suburb of Burr Ridge. Born in Calabria, Italy, in 1942, Turano moved to Chicago in the late 1950's with his brothers and parents. His family bought a small baking company in 1962 and built it into one of the largest manufactures of artisian breads in North America. Turano serves as President of the Campagna-Turano Baking Co. He is also chairman of the American Bakers Assoccciation.

Senator Renato Turano holds a Master Degree in Business Administration from the University of Chicago and an Honorable Degree from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. Married for 40 years with three children and 9 grand-children.

Final comments from Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr. were, "Today is a great Day for Montclair State as well as the Coccia Institute". In addition Coccia stated , "Senato Turano understands the hopes and dreams of first, second, third and fourth generations of Italians and we all thank him for today's participation".

*Senator Turano addressing faculty members and friends of Montcclair state University and the Joseph and Elda Coccia Institute at the new Presidents Conference Center*

*Pictured on the left is the newly formed organizational committee of the Coccia Foundation. Seated (left to right) are Alfredo Amato, Barbara Peirano, Danielle Ferrante, Elda Coccia (co-founder of the Coccia Foundation), Trustee Elisa Coccia and Rosanna Imbriano. Standing (left to right) are Anthony Marucci, Phil Sergio, Karen DiMaria, Pat O'Boyle, Esq. Michael Grillo (president of Rutgers Italian Student Club), Maria Fruci (president of Drew Italian Student Club), Anthony Bengivenga, Cav. Joseph Coccia , Jr. (co-founder), Geraldine Zarbo, and Trustee Ralph A.Contini.*

# Birth of a Committee

There is a new phenomenon stirring the Italian-American community, it is the birth of the organizational committee of the Coccia Foundation. The Foundation will support and encourage Italian and Italian-American programs that promote Italian culture and heritage through educational, cultural, and/or social activities or events. "The organization is comprised of many dedicated and hard-working individuals that are all focused on achieving our goals for 2007," states co-founder Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.

Many Italian-Americans long for the tradition and culture they grew up with and through the passing of generations have lost it to an extent. One of the focuses of the group, will be to encourage the Italian Experience through traditions; focusing on youth, especially university students.

## COCCIA FOUNDATION SPONSORS FIRST PRIZE at the 45TH ANNUAL MARIO LANZA BALL in PHILADELPHIA

The Coccia Foundation partnered with the Mario Lanza Institute with a joint mission of supporting young opera singers and furthering opera (Italian Culture) The Institute, a non-profit organization, was founded in 1961 with the goal of promoting Italian American Mario Lanza and fulfilling his dream of starting a foundation to aid young opera singers through scholarships. Since its inception, over 200 scholarships have been awarded to worthu young singers. Many, have gone on to stella careers in opera and on the concert stages of the world.

For more information regarding the Institute, please call 215-238-9691 or visit their web site at www.mario-lanza -institute,org

*Pictured on the left are Elda and Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr., founders of the COCCIA FOUNDATION with 2006 Mario Lanza Institute first prize scholarship winner, soprano Joyce El-Khoury.*

COCCIA FOUNDATION
Founded 1994
"Preserving Italian Culture"

23 Leswing Avenue
Saddle Brook, NJ 07663

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Coming in next issue.
"What Emerging Adults should know before Marrying"!
Why your blood count is important.

By Dr. Gina Cioffi
National Executive Director

Cooley's Anemia Foundation

## Celebrating 3rd Anniversary of Coccia Institute

## Senatore Renato G. Turano's visit to MSU

Elda Coccia, Cav. Jack DiPiazza and Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.

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# Coccia Foundation

## NIAF YOUTH CONFERENCE - PARTICIPATING STUDENTS - WASHINGTON, DC

Rider University
- Mike Luciano
- Dave A. Gialandell
- Sandro Bianco
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Rutgers University
- Mike Grillo
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- Loredana Bianco
- Alesandra Composta
- Gina Mondalto

Seton Hall University
- Franco Alberga
- John D'Andrea
- Anthony O'Boyle
- Vito Totino
- Frank Cinque

Stony Brook University
- Margherita Mangiafreno
- Carmela Russo
- Celiana Pati
- Anna Verde
- Giuseppe Poderati
- Giuseppe Donnici
- Flavia Ruggiero
- Fabio Teramo

Westchester County Community College
- David Cortez
- Sergio Seratto
- Alberto Spadanuto
- Christie McKenna
- Paola Pedraza
- Daniella Farduch
- Andrea Aurnia

Wm. Paterson University
- Nicole Gadeleta
- Vittoria Zuzzo
- Andrianne Guagenti
- Erica Dawson

Fashion Institute of Tech.
- Madalena Nicolosi
- Kristin Cornish
- Sofia Theosilaklios
- Rosalda Almonte

Fairleigh Dickinson Univ.
- Jackie Miller
- Tara Moratelli
- Daniela Italo
- Mynda D'Andrea
- Danielle Ferrante
- Sabino Selitto
- Marta DiBari
- Katrina Musto
- Antonio Menna
- John Miseo
- Annamarie Alamia
- Matt Pontoriero
- Sarah Roe
- Lyndsey Marks

Drew University
- Maria Fruci
- Lauren McCarthy
- Stefanie Schera
- Chris D'Andrea

MSU
- Alessio Brasile
- Anna Rose Ghione
- Shannon McGee
- Rita Cirillo
- Michelle D'Angelo
- Diana Slameh

NYU
- Allesandro Nicolaci

F & M
- Casey Meisenba
- Judith Brown

Others
- Anthony Marotta
- Mike Cirillo
- Vanessa Randazzo
- Tina Cirillo
- Allesandra Costantini
- Annalisa Fanali
- Corrine Calonges

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**The Coccia Foundation expresses thanks to NIAF for the courtesies extended during our 2 day stay as well as to the donors for their generousity and cotinued support. Special thanks to the students for being Ladies and Gentlemen throughout.**

**Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr.**

# Washington

The beautiful Hilton Washington Towers in Washington, D.C. was host to the 31st Annual National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) Youth Conference and Gala. The Coccia Foundation sent 98 passionate students to attend the weekend long conferences, seminars, and gala.

On the first day of the conference, the students attended a luncheon with former President Bush and Mrs. Bush. In the evening, the students enjoyed Frankie Valli and Four Season. The current President George W. Bush made a special appearance at the evening's event. "It was an honor to have the President of the United States show his support for the Italian-American community," said Kara Pontrelli of Rutgers.

Saturday morning, the students attended the Youth Network Breakfast. Students mingled and networked with NIAF members as well as students from other organizations. Tommy Lasorda was the keynote speaker, inspiring students to get out into the world and make a difference. "We have the best of both worlds. We as Italian-Americans have such a great history, they very best food, and the freedom and opportunities that the United States has to offer," said Lasorda.

At lunch, many students attended a seminar with the Supreme Court Justices Alito and Scalia. It was a privilege to listen to these men, no only because they are Italian, but also as they are New Jersians as well. The students also met Yogi Berra and many other notables.

A brief break allowed the students to meet up for a chance to network with one another and one of the founders of the Coccia Foundation, Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr. This afforded the students a chance for some quality time to talk with other universities and exchange ideas for events and programming for the upcoming year.

Later in the evening, the students attended the Youth Gala. Everyone, in their bests, ate and danced the night away with the 300 other students that attended. Actress Anne Hathaway and Actor Alan made a special appearance. After the festivities, the students moved upstairs to the lobby and sang Italian songs late into the evening. Included in our Group were exchange students from Italy attending stony Brook University.

The next morning the students had some free time to explore our nation's capital. Many students visited the Capital Building, the White House and other historical landmarks.

Everyone was sad to see the weekend end. Students left with a feeling of wholeness and felt they had another extended family, the Coccia Foundation Family.

*Dr. Cosmo Ferrara*
Recipient of UNICO NATIONAL's 1st place honors in the GOV.
ELLA T. GROSSO LITERARY AWARD

# Humanitarian

Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, in the Service of Immigrants

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, when countless immigrants made their way to American shores, many were in for a rude awakening. Not only were the streets not paved with gold, but they were often infested with crime, squalor, disease, and despair. Work was hard to come by as the immigrants didn't know the language and could not negotiate the system. There was no organizational structure to help these foreigners adjust and fit in. Fortunately, however, there were individuals who stepped in to help. One such individual was Sister Frances Xavier Cabrini, later known as Mother Cabrini, the first naturalized Italian American to be named a saint.

Born Maria Francesca Cabrini in the Lombardy region of Italy on July 15, 1850, Maria was one of 13 children, only four of whom survived. Maria was a small, sickly child who helped her parents work their farm. She applied a number of times to enter religious orders but was turned down because of her poor health. Her fortunes changed when she was asked to teach at a girls' school nearby, and later work at an orphanage. Being successful there, she was asked by the local bishop to found an order of nuns who would do missionary work. Maria founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in November of 1880.

Maria took the name Sister Frances Xavier Cabrini because she hoped to do missionary work in China, like the renowned Jesuit Francis Xavier. Pope Leo XIII, however, had a different idea. He asked then Mother Cabrini to take her small community (six) of missionaries to the United States to tend to the needs of poor, struggling immigrants, many of whom were Catholic and Italian.

The greeting she and her sisters received in New York City was typical of what many immigrants would find in the New World. The lodgings she had been promised did not exist. Mother Cabrini and her six sisters spent their first night in a tenement flat that was so overridden with vermin that they did not dare close their eyes the entire night. When Mother Cabrini went to see Bishop Corrigan, who was to support her mission, he provided a temporary place for the nuns to stay but backed off on the support he had promised. He would help fund a school but not the orphanage included in the original agreement.

But Mother Cabrini would not be put off that easily. Besides opening a school, she persisted in working to develop the orphanage. She was told that she would have to finance the venture herself, and could solicit funds from Italians only, who were struggling to keep a roof over their own heads. In time, though, Mother Cabrini won over the bishop, and he lifted that restriction. Soon she had the funding and opened an orphanage in West Park on the Hudson River.

To address the clear need for health care, Mother Cabrini took $250 in donations, bought 10 metal bed frames, and in 1892, founded Columbus Hospital in two small tenement houses in lower Manhattan. Within two years, the hospital moved to its present location on 19th Street in Gramercy Park and continued to expand its services to meet growing health care needs. In the early 1970s, Columbus Hospital merged with the Italian Hospital and changed its name to Cabrini Medical Center.

In 1899, Mother Cabrini founded the first bi-lingual school in New York specifically to advance the education of children of Italian immigrants. In her dealings with the Italian immigrants, Mother Cabrini brought a voice they understood and welcomed, as Italian-speaking clergy in New York were rare. While she catered to their worldly needs, she also brought to them a spirituality that was just as nourishing. They realized that God had not forgotten them.

Mother Cabrini founded schools for immigrant families in Chicago, Scranton, and Newark, New Jersey. To help fund these schools, Mother Cabrini High School was founded. This school opened as a "residential school for young ladies." It catered to wealthy immigrants who could afford tuition, some of which was redistributed to support the poorer schools. Mother Cabrini High School, which became a source of many vocations, still exists today at Fort Washington Avenue in New York as an institution dedicated to secondary education of young women.

Mother Cabrini brought her high level of care, tenacity, and business acumen to help Italian immigrants in New Orleans and Seattle. In Colorado, she worked with immigrant miners. Many died in those mines, and Mother Cabrini helped their survivors, building a school and an orphanage. She set up an orphanage in Passaic, New Jersey, and she converted a hotel in Chicago into Columbus Hospital. It was there that she died on December 22, 1917.

In 1946, Pope Pius XII canonized Frances Xavier Cabrini a saint, the first naturalized United States citizen to receive this honor. Her canonization was a fitting tribute to this humble woman who devoted her life to helping new Americans. She founded schools, hospitals, and orphanages-67 in all-and brought solace and compassion to so many.

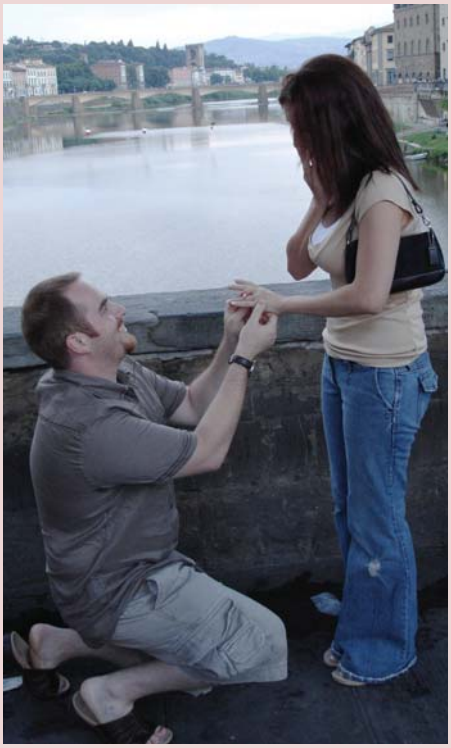
# SUPPORTING ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

The Coccia Foundation recently pioneered a special affiliation with the prestigious Istituto Italiano di Cultura (Italian Cultural Institute) of New York, with a financial contribution for a musical program with Salvatore Licitra The donation well embodies the strong determination of the Foundation to support outstanding Italian programs for the enrichment of the society. It was presented last fall by Elda and Joseph Coccia to Claudio Angelini, Director of the Istituto, at the presence of the Consul General of Italy in New York, Ministro Antonio Bandini, Mr. Alfio Russo, Director of Education at the Consulate General, and Ms. Silvia Giampaola, Director of Musical and Theatre Programs at the Istituto.

The Istituto Italiano di Cultura, an official branch of the Italian government under the guidance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is dedicated to the promotion of Italian language and culture in the United States through the organization of excellent cultural events in New York City with world renowned Italian artists such as Andrea Boccelli, Michelangelo Antonioni, Dacia Maraini, etc. Thanks to the interest of the Foundation, the Coccia Institute and other sponsoring Universities, some of the programs have been also expanding to New Jersey.

*Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr., Dr. Elda Ccccia, Consul-General of Italy Ministro Antonio Bandini and Dottore Claudio Angelini, Director of the Isituti Italiana di Cultura , New York, NY.*

Consul General Bandini expressed gratitude and satisfaction for this important step towards a close collaboration and relationship with the Foundation. He also underlined the significant role of the Foundation and the Institute in the promotion and the diffusion of Italian Culture in NJ and beyond.



## A trip to a lifetime of Happiness

When Marina Paolacci and Jason Conte took a trip to Italy this summer, little did Marina know Jason planned to propose to her on one of the most famous and beautiful bridges in the world .

Marina and Jason, both Italian majors met while taking Italian courses at Rutgers University. They became fast friends, but did not begin dating until they went on Rutger's study abroad program to Urbino, Italy, during the summer of 2005. "From that time on, we became inseparable" says Marina. During that summer, they visited Firenza, Marinas' favorite city.

When Jason decided the time was right, he knew there was no question as to where to propose. On July 6, 2006, Jason took Marina by the hand as they crossed Il Ponte Vecchio. Jason then handed his camera to a fellow American tourist, asking him to take a picture of him and Marina. To the surprise of Marina and the surrounding crowd, Jason got down on his knee and proposed. This most important moment was captured on film by the tourist.

For Jason the proposal was the easy part and commented, "I was most nervous traveling with the ring in my pocket traveling through Italy, until we arrived in Firenza".

Marina is the daughter of Marilynn and Mauro Paolaacci of Toms River, New Jersey. Jason is the son of Alice and Dan Conte of Williamstown, New Jersey. The couple graduated from Rutgers University in 2006 and are active members of the Rutgers Italian club and the young adults organization, both chapters of the Coccia Foundations' Amici della Cultura Italiana¡Kan Italian culture youth organization.

An October 2008 wedding is planned to Disney World. We the students belonging to the Amici della Cultura Italiana group, wish Jason and Marina (the first couple in our organization to become engaged) a lifetime of good health and happiness.

# Italians and the Nobel Prize - Perfect together!

Italian Science and Innovation
By Andre' DiMino

Although not a solitary indicator of career accomplishment, receiving the Nobel Prize has come to be accepted as the epitome of professional recognition. Italians are well represented in the history of the scientific Nobel Prizes when its recipients are scrutinized with a view to their ethnicity and origin. Since 1901 when the first Nobel Prize was bestowed, Italians or Italian Americans have been honored with 11 of these grand awards in the areas of Physics, Chemistry and Medicine.

The Nobel Prize is an international award given annually for achievements in the five areas of physics, chemistry, medicine, literature and for peace. In 1968, the Bank of Sweden instituted a sixth, the Nobel Prize in Economics, in memory of Alfred Nobel, founder of the Nobel Prize. The Prize winners are selected by the trustees of the Nobel Foundation and announced in October of each year. Recipients receive a monetary prize amount, a gold medal and a diploma on each December 10 - the anniversary of Nobel's death.

The Prize's founder and namesake, Alfred Nobel was born in 1833 in Stockholm, Sweden to an industrious family. Nobel invented dynamite in 1866 and later founded many companies and laboratories in more than 20 countries around the world making him a very wealthy and successful industrialist in his own right. It is postulated that Nobel was always troubled by the destruction and devastation that his invention of dynamite brought to the world. He wanted to compensate for this by rewarding and honoring individuals that would make positive contributions to the world. On November 27, 1895, Nobel signed his last will and testament providing for the establishment of the Nobel Prize with these words...

"The whole of my remaining realizable estate shall be dealt with in the following way: the capital, invested in safe securities by my executors, shall constitute a fund, the interest on which shall be annually distributed in the form of prizes to those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit on mankind. The said interest shall be divided into five equal parts, which shall be apportioned as follows: one part to the person who shall have made the most important discovery or invention within the field of physics; one part to the person who shall have made the most important chemical discovery or improvement; one part to the person who shall have made the most important discovery within the domain of physiology or medicine; one part to the person who shall have produced in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction; and one part to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses..."

Just over one year later on December 10, 1896 at the age of 63, Nobel died of a cerebral hemorrhage in his home in San Remo, Italy. His legacy lives on in the worldwide prominence and importance of the prize that he established with his dying wish.

So now let's look at the members of the exclusive "club" of Italians who have achieved the respected title of "Nobel Laureate" in the scientific areas of Physics, Medicine and Chemistry - and some specifics of their world-changing accomplishments:

1906 in Medicine - **Camillo Golgi** 1843-1926 "in recognition of his work on the structure of the nervous system"

1909 in Physics - **Guglielmo Marconi** 1874-1937 "in recognition of his contributions to the development of wireless telegraphy"

1938 in Physics - **Enrico Fermi** 1901-1954 "for his demonstrations of the existence of new radioactive elements produced by neutron irradiation, and for his related discovery of nuclear reactions brought about by slow neutrons"

1959 in Physics - **Emilio Segre'** 1905-1989 "for the discovery of the antiproton or nuclear ghost"

1963 in Chemistry - **Giulio Natta** 1903-1979 "for his discoveries in the field of the chemistry and technology of high polymers"

1969 in Medicine - **Salvador Luria** 1912-1991 "for his discoveries concerning the replication mechanism and the genetic structure of viruses"

1975 in Medicine - **Renato Dulbecco** 1914- "for discoveries concerning the interaction between tumor viruses and the genetic material of the cell"

1984 in Physics - **Carlo Rubbia** 1934- "for decisive contributions which led to the discovery of the field particles W and Z, communicators of weak interaction. These particles are the carriers of the so-called weak force involved in the radioactive decay of atomic nuclei."

1986 in Medicine - **Rita Levi-Montalcini** 1909- "for her discoveries of growth factors"

1998 in Medicine - **Louis Ignarro** 1941- "for his discoveries concerning nitric oxide as a signaling molecule in the cardiovascular system"

2002 in Physics - **Riccardo Giaconi** 1931- "for his pioneering contributions to astrophysics, which have led to the discovery of cosmic X-ray sources"

Of the eleven winners listed, there are an equal amount of recipients in Physics and Medicine (with five each) and one in Chemistry. It is also an interesting fact that there were only three of the recipients selected in the first half of the prize's history (1906, 1909 and 1938) and the balance of 8 in the second half from 1959 to 2002.

When considering the impact that those of Italian heritage have had on our world through their scientific accomplishments it is important to know about those who have been recognized with the Nobel Prize. Although these individuals have been internationally recognized with this prestigious award, only a few have become "household names." Considering the exclusivity of being recognized with this award, all of the Italian recipients and their contributions to our world should be well known and remembered by all of us of Italian heritage.

pictures continued from page 3

## Governors, Proclamations and Parades

State of New Jersey Governor Jon S. Corzine declared the month of October as "Italian Heritage and Culture Month". Governor Corzine presented the official proclamation to Ralph A. Contini, the founding sponsor, in behalf of the more than 1.5 million Italian Americans in the state of New Jersey. This annual proclamation, initiated by Mr. Contini in 2002, is issued in recognition of the many contributions made by Italian Americans in the Garden State. Mr. Contini serves as Chair of UNICO National's Columbus Day Committee, as a Trustee and Board Member of the Coccia Foundation and Coccia Institute, and as a member of The New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission's Community Advisory Council.

Several Italian American organizations were instrumental in sponsoring this proclamation, including The Coccia Foundation, UNICO National, The New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, and The Tri-State Italian-American Congress.

Contini stated "Governor Corzine's continuation of this now annual proclamation was another important step in establishing a perpetual Proclamation of October as "Italian Heritage and Culture Month". Additionally, it honored the heritage of Italian-Americans in the State and across our nation."

The New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission support the initiative to make this Proclamation an annual event in the state. Chair Larry Paragano commended Mr. Contini for his work and thanked the Governor for his commitment to New Jersey's Italian Americans.

New Jersey along with New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Illinois and Delaware have designated October as "Italian Heritage and Culture Month".

## Columbus Celebration 2006

On Sunday October 8, 2006, Chairman Contini along with a number of officers of UNICO National and guests; joined the marching contingent for the 24th Annual Nutley-Belleville, NJ Columbus Day Parade. This year, working in cooperation with the Coccia Foundation for the first time, they were joined by a group of college students from a number of, on campus, Italian Cultural Clubs from around the State. The group also had the distinction of having New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine visit with its marching contingent.

On Monday October 9, 2006, UNICO Columbus Day Committee Chair Contini, along with National President Michael Spano and Executive V.P. Joseph Agresti, were joined, once again, by a group of college students from a number of, on campus, Italian Cultural Clubs from various New Jersey schools marching in the 62nd Annual New York City Columbus Day Parade; UNICO National's flagship parade. The New York City parade is the largest Columbus Day event in the world and, this year, UNICO received outstanding placement in the line of march. The UNICO contingent stretched for over one city block. It was an unbelievable sight! The student group immensely enjoyed the experience and wants to continue working with UNICO next year.

*Picture of Famous Italian singer Andrea Bocelli, Dr. Elda Coccia and Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr having a heartfiy discussion over Italian singers*

# HE MADE MY DAY !!

"It was one of the greatest moments of my life" said Elda M. Coccia having the opportunity to exchange pleasantries with Italy's most famous singer, Andre Bocelli. Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr. and Dr. Elda M. Coccia were among the visitors at a press conference held at the Istituto Italiana di Cultura upon the singers arrival from Italy for his upcoming performance in New York city.

"It gave me a one on one opportunity to compliment him on his beautiful voice and the opportunity to learn more about him and his family" said Mrs. Coccia...

Consul General, the Honorable Ministo Antonio Bandini and Institute Director Dottore Claudio Angelini, assisted by Silvia Giampaola welcomed Bocelli, friends of the press, his guests and many disgnataries for this special occasion.

Notables present included former Governor Mario Cuomo, former first Lady Matilda Cuomo and accomplished actor Tony LoBianco.

## When Special Care is Needed

Shown here is Frank Manginello, M.D. and persons who care Beth Benjamin, M.D., Carly Pane, M.D. and Michele Lasker, M.D.

*Left to right Dave Gialanella, Adriano DiDonato, Mike Cerullo and seated Mike Luciano*

## Rider University joins the family of Italian-American student clubs based throughout New Jersey

**Vote passes school Senate by 60 - 1 vote**

The Rider University Student Government Association approved the recognition of the Italian-American Student Club by a vote of 60 to 1 on the Lawrenceville campus.

The club which is now one of the twelve groups in New Jersey, is under the general direction of the Coccia Foundation based in Saddle Brook, New Jersey.

The Coccia Foundation founded in 1994 by Dr. Elda and Cav/Dr. Joseph Coccia, Jr., has championed many Italian causes and has been benevolent in its endeavors. Cav. Joseph Coccia, Jr and his wife Elda also founded the Elda and Joseph Coccia Institute at Montclair State University, for the Italian Experience in America. Said Coccia Institute, prides itself in providing educational opportunities in order to preserve the Italian Culture amongst scholars and the public at large.

During the Senate presentation, club founder Mike Cerulo described the need for such a club on campus stating the purpose of the club, which is to create cultural awareness of the Italian-American at Rider University. Cerulo also spoke about the great opportunities for the Rider students, which provides scholarships, trips abroad, and events hosted in conjunction with the various other student clubs across the state. Dariano DiDonato, club vice-president, touched on the various events the club will be hosting on the Rider campus. "When we return (in the spring) we are going to host an information night with fine Italian Foods...we will have guest speakers from the Coccia Foundation here to describe the importance of the club and where we are headed, "DiDonato said. Cerulo summed it up by saying "Staying committed to Rider's vision to expand beyond our borders, our hope is to build and foster unique relationships between Rider and various Italian Institutions through various student exchange programs".

Anyone wishing information, please contact Mike Cerulo at the University or email joseph.cocciajr@verizon.net

# Year In Review

I love films, not movies... but films. You know those kinds of movies that can get your attention...either by grabbing you by the neck, getting in your face and yelling; or by a subtle look, clue or inflection. They give us pause to react and reflect. Why? To challenge us; to make our lives better. I love FILMS!! You ask why I am bringing this up? Elementary my dear friends, I love to litter my speech and writing with movie quotes to help illustrate my point.

Not that we have a failure to communicate, but let me elaborate on the stuff that dreams are made. In other words - what has been done throughout 2006. We have heard the call - Show me the money! The foundation has answered by awarding grants, scholarships and funding programs to deserving recipients, for the education, appreciation and growth of the "Italian-Experience" Allow me to elaborate our successes:

Our partnering with the following:

NIAF...in sponsoring 98 students for 2 days in Washington, DC
ISTITUTO -CULTURA ITALIANA...musical program with Salvatore Licitra
MARIO LANZA INSTITUTE...Philadelphia..sponsored 1st prize in Opera
VARIOUS UNIVERSITIES...Grants for study abroad programs

The Coccia Foundation's vision has always been clear - build it and they will come. At the beginning of 2006, Joseph and Elda had set-up an advisory board to help determine the strategic vision to secure long-term growth and success. Joseph recruited talented committed professionals with backgrounds in: law, higher education fundraising, human resources management, volunteer organization management, accounting/finance, international marketing, advertising and public relations. The first question, as always, was "who is on first?" in other words - what is the goal? We all agreed that we wanted first to help students go out youngsters and come back stars! But we needed to determine not only our vision and mission but also our brand and what the foundation would stand for.

The board met for three workshop-planning sessions, where we defined our brand - Providing a Unique Italian Experience, our Vision and Mission and the campaign goal for 2007 - Filling the Need. This goal is for the foundation to target certain funding opportunities and to provide the maximum support, both monetary and to solicit other strategic partners support in these endeavors. Our highly sought relationships with these strategic partners have allowed us to enhance our reputation and given us the opportunity to look at many new and exciting ventures. A few of these will be highlighted in the next edition.

From there, our vision was clear, make lives extraordinary! The passion and commitment of each board member can be labeled "electric." Joseph also asked that certain members be committee chairs and that Barbara Peirano Co-Chair the advisory Board. If you don't know Barbara, you soon will. She is a well-respected professional in association management and in Italian-American circles. I look forward to working with her over this next year.

In the past 6 months we have fielded calls for funding, received letters and checks of support and met equally-committed individuals and groups. The Coccia Foundation has stepped forward as a premier foundation, not only for the Italian Experience, but as a reputable and committed foundation. And throughout all this new growth and energy, people have been asking, "How they can be a part of the "Experience?" The answer to this question is in Joseph Coccia's message.

We can never go back to before. Our vision is clear, our banner is atop the pole, our mission is planned to every detail and our team is ready.

By Anthony Marucci
Advisory Board co-chair

**SAVE THE DATE !!**

2007 ITALIAN STUDIES GOLF CLASSIC
MONDAY, JUNE 25TH , 2007
WHITE BEACHES GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB
HAWORTH, NEW JERSEY

# Coccia Foundation

## Coccia Foundation

*"Preserving Italian Culture"*

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## *Benvenuti...*

*To our AMICI and supporters.*

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