



# The Roar of the Lion

Marisa Rubé Przepiora, editor  
September Edition

2020

## SCHOLARSHIP EDITION

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have the distinct honor and pleasure to recognize our award and scholarship winners from the Class of 2020. While most graduates will not have the traditional “walk across the stage ritual” or experience the milestones of being a senior, high schools have thought of unique and interesting ways to present to their students their diplomas and acknowledge their accomplishments.

Many of our high school graduates were born in 2002 and will be continuing their education or entering the workforce or military during uncertain times, but these young adults were also born during uncertain times with the Great Recession and Financial Crisis, but they have a great desire to change the world and make it a better place. They want jobs that are meaningful and purposeful, they want to tap into their passions, and they want to belong to organizations that align with their social values.

Our students are quite adept using smart devices. They are the norm for entertainment, hobbies, and connecting with others since they were toddlers. It is their main way to connect and engage in everyday tasks. Text messaging has completely changed how we communicate with one another. We look at our young adults and children, especially when they have been texting for what seems forever, when they could have reached out in person to talk to someone and truly believe they no skills for talking face-to-face, but experts believe because of texting and digital communication, our young people realize how important and valuable fact-to-face communication really is.

The current health care crisis has brought about unexpected results for graduates tiny and profound, academically, and economically, socially, and emotionally. Some are entering the work force during the worst job market since the Great Depression. Some are even apprehensive that the start of college in the fall will be anything but online courses, depriving them of that initial college experience, perhaps their first time away from home and on their own. Yet, they move on. They write their final papers, log onto their last classes, zoom with friends, and cherish the unexpected from the caravan of teachers driving by and honking and when the principal waves from the sidewalk. The global class of 2020 has collided with history: pandemic, economic meltdown, and civil unrest, but the opportunity is yours to change the world. You have the power to imagine and make it better. That which will impact your life: altered climate, economic and racial inequality, health and education disparity, and intolerance will make you more globally connected. We wish the best to our graduates whatever your future endeavor is, wherever the journey takes them.

Take Care and God Bless,  
Marjorie



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Sending healing prayers to Brother Tony Palucci, hospitalized for a case of pneumonia; Sister Ann Vazzana, recuperating from surgery; Brother Tom Meleca, recuperating from a hospital procedure; and Clemente Suero, recently home after a hospitalization for illness.



Congratulations to Sister Nellie and Brother Quintino DiCesare on receiving an award as Outstanding Citizens of the Year through the Better Business Bureau of Gates.



**Council Meetings:** September 3rd, October 1st, November 5th, and December 3rd. 6:30pm. Eyer Building in East Rochester with virtual option for those who prefer it.

**General Assembly Meetings:** September 10th, October 8th, November 12th, and December 10th. 7pm. TBD



NYS Grand Lodge Raffle Tickets - \$100 each - Share the cost!! Grand Prize \$20,000

Raffle to support the Garibaldi Meucci Museum—\$5 each—Contact Marjorie to purchase

### **FIG (Friends of Italian Genealogy) 2020 Italian Genealogy Project Award**



Once again, through the generosity of Dr. Ed Maruggi and his wife Carolyn, the Friends of Italian Genealogy are sponsoring the Italian Genealogy Project Award. The post-secondary program that the award winner will be attending will receive a check for \$1,200. Winner or not, all participants will enjoy learning about their ancestral connections to Italy, as they trace their forbearers to their European roots. To successfully complete a contest entry, the students will tap into a rich load of resources including on-line and library archives, government issued documents, treasured family documents, and interviews with relatives. The final project must be presented in person to a panel of local genealogists for judging.

This competition is open to any high school senior planning to continue his or her education at a college or university, apprenticeship program, or technical or trade school in 2021. Students should complete their application by October 15, 2020 and expect to receive a packet of helpful materials by return mail. Applications are available from Marjorie Focarazzo: mafocarazzo@gmail.com or 585-749-5346.

### **From our Scholarship Committee Chairperson (and newsletter editor)....**



I just wanted to take a moment in this special edition scholarship newsletter to offer some thanks. This year's process took far more time and effort than ever before, but I believe that in the end we will remember it for years to come.

First, to our scholarship committee: Marjorie Focarazzo, Maurice Palucci, Ed Groszewski, and Rufus Brey. We had so many obstacles this year to getting these awards distributed, as COVID hit the state just as our application due date came around, closing down schools and sending us all into our homes for the duration of this process. Thank you to each of you for your diligent work to review and score all of the applications, your flexibility and willingness to adjust our interview process to zoom, and your thoughtful review of our process so that we can continue to improve for next year.

Next, to all of our members who participated in our awards ceremonies. Marjorie Focarazzo, Joe and Nancy Rubé, Kitty and David DiNicola, Carol DiNicola, Vince Giannantonio, Luigi DiFilippo, Louis DeCarolis, Tom Meleca, Angie Cataldi, Ed Maruggi, and Melissa DiStaffen. With COVID still a major concern, we ultimately decided to cancel our annual scholarship awards night and present each award individually in the driveway of each winner's home. This took place over three nights in August and included driving all over the county. Thank you so much for giving up your time to prove that we can make an incredibly special event even when we can't gather together!

And to our students and their families, for your dedication to your Italian heritage and for taking the time out of your own lives to help us celebrate you and your achievements and goals. Our scholarship program is one of the most important things we do as a lodge, and it meant so much to us to see and meet you in person, and to share this memory with you. You are truly amazing and we so look forward to seeing where your futures will take you.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!!! Now let's meet our winners....!

**AVA DINICOLA**  
**VINCENT LOMBARDI LODGE SCHOLARSHIP—\$1500**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: NARDIN ACADEMY**  
**COLLEGE: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: MEDICINE**



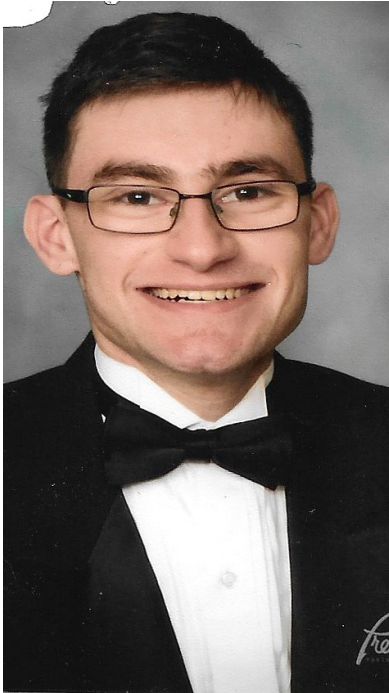
Ava graduated as an honor and merit roll student with Certificates of Excellence in Clayworks, Photography, and English; a Best in Show for Photography; and a WNYFLEC Star Award for Outstanding Performance in French. Ava is an experienced ballerina, training at the Neglia Conservatory of Ballet since she was 10 years old. She trains 6 days a week for 2-3 hours each day, is a teaching assistant, and participates in professional productions, including as the soloist in a production of The Nutcracker at Shea's Buffalo Theatre. In school, Ava was a member of the Interior Design Club, World Language Club, Ski Club, Business Club, Life Skills Club, Peer Helpers, Service Club and Grandfriends. She has also been very active in her community, volunteering her time at the Elmwood Arts Festival, where she taught children arts and crafts; St. Luke's Mission, where she organized clothes and gave out food to the homeless; and Byron Brown's Reading Rules, where she made over 2,000 sandwiches to give to people in need. She has also participated in the American Cancer Society Relay for Life and The Ride For Roswell for the last four years.

*“Ava is incredibly compassionate, caring, determined, and selfless. In all my years of teaching, I have never known a student as resilient and persistent as Ava. No matter what life threw her way, she persevered. It has been a blessing to have Ava in my class and in my life. She would never tell you, but she has taught so many people what it means to be benevolent and empathetic—including myself. She is a “beacon” in the lives of many—with her ever present smile, radiating positivity and genuine devotion. In my humble opinion, Ava DiNicola is, by far, one of the most driven, motivated, and focused students I have had in my years of teaching. Ava has endured and achieved so much in her life thus far and continues to set goals for herself to do more. She embodies our school’s mission to “do amazing things in the world”. With her curiosity, creativity, and integrity, along with her outgoing and compassionate personality and desire to achieve, Ava is sure to succeed in her future endeavors.” ~Aneeta Shepardson, French Teacher, World Language Department Chair, Nardin Academy High School*

**An Excerpt from Ava’s essay:**

The magical event of making strufelli with my Nonna is one filled with great Italian pride. It’s not a moment where we are just following a recipe to make a holiday dessert. This is a time where new memories are made with my Nonna, while feeling the memories she recants through her tales of her childhood experiences in the Campania region of Italy. In Nonna’s kitchen, she and I are physically there going through the motions, but in spirit, we are in the presence of my great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins I’ve never met and a whole neighborhood full of acquaintances that shared our strufelli-making day. Italians, like my Nonna, are storytellers. We respect and learn from our elders and then share and teach our history and traditions to those around us. On that special day, each year, I get to share Nonna’s kitchen with dozens of relatives and Italians from yesteryear. This is the gift of Nonna. I am immensely proud of her and of my Italian heritage, through practicing our traditions that Nonna continues to keep alive.





**ANTHONY PALUCCI**  
**VINCENT LOMBARDI LODGE SCHOLARSHIP—\$1000**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: MCQUAID JESUIT**  
**COLLEGE: SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: SPORTS MANAGEMENT**

Tony graduated as an honor roll student and Scholar Athlete with an academic letter. He was also a member of the National Honor Society. Tony was a varsity tennis player and competed in many United States Tennis Association tournaments across upstate NY. At school, Tony participated in Campus Ministry, St. Joseph of Arimathea Pallbearer Ministry, Big Brothers, and Simba Society. He has also been very active in his community, volunteering his time at Camp Koinonia, where he cleaned up the campgrounds and cabins for visiting families; Solstice Senior Living, where he visited residents, setting up and delivering lunches, and organizing social hours, including Smore's making and a trip to Mendon Ponds; Foodlink, where he sorted and packed donated food; and Strong Memorial Hospital, where he performed various tasks in the GI Department.

*Every once in a while, I stumble across a unique adolescent. This person is someone who encompasses maturity, fortitude, and creativity "beyond his or her years". Tony is that exact anomaly. Instantly, we developed a fantastic relationship. He is never late, which I believe to be a lost cause in modern society. My favorite attribute of Tony is his inquisitive nature. He loves learning, often asking me questions that lead to deep and meaningful conversations. His respect for all populations is what's most impressive. There is no judgment or prejudice—everyone is equal. The craziest part is I often find myself learning subtle life lessons from Tony, whether he realizes that or not." ~Nick Mancuso, Owner, Elevate Performance*

**An excerpt from Tony's essay**

My grandfather and I have a close relationship that goes beyond sharing the same name. He has shown me through his actions what being a good Italian-American is. He places family above all, and he treats his friends as if they were members of his family...I visited Italy last summer on a school trip. While I was not able to visit Casalbordino, I was able to see how much the people of Italy care for one another. My first day I was in Rome, I ate pizza at a restaurant. Afterwards, the owner of the restaurant had heard that I was of Italian descent and came up to me and hugged me. I was not surprised by this gesture and it made me feel a sense of belonging, like I was at home. This also made me think of my grandfather and the way that he treats friends as family. In Italy, I also got to see how people lived. Things, such as clean water, that I take for granted here in the United States, are not as abundant in Italy. This made me more appreciative of the sacrifices that my grandfather made to come to the United States. My grandfather is truly a one of a kind individual, and he showed me how to treat others as I wanted to be treated in my own life.



**MARIA ROSATO**  
**PAST HONOREES SCHOLARSHIP—\$1000**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: OUR LADY OF MERCY**  
**COLLEGE: NAZARETH COLLEGE**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: PHYSICAL THERAPY**



Maria graduated as an National Honor Society student who was published in Mercy Mercedes Magazine, honored with an award for achievements in English, and an essay award through the Catholic Daughters of America. Throughout high school, Maria was a multi sport athlete, playing JV, Varsity, and travel soccer as well as Varsity track. She also participated in the Red Cross Club, Students for Life, Yearbook Club, Youth Group, Best Buddies, and as an Our Lady of Mercy Ambassador. She also participated in a Friends of Strong Internship at the Sports and Spinal Center and worked at the Chili Public Library. Maria has also been extremely active in her community, where she has been a Teachers Assistant at Faith Formation, assisting in the classroom; a Tony D Memorial Golf Tournament volunteer, helping with the event; a Chili Public Library volunteer, checking in children for the summer reading program; a Mercy Service volunteer, working at House of Mercy Homeless Shelter, and Ronald McDonald House; and Outreach Coordinator for Teen Friends of Chili, where she ran the groups social media and coordinated volunteer opportunities for them.

*Overall, I would describe Maria as a stable, kind, mild-mannered classmate who willingly offers to help anyone in need. She has a unique ability to express eagerness to learn while remaining calm and even tempered. Faced with setbacks, she remains sensible and steadily plods a different path to her goal. If she were in the fable of the tortoise and the hare, Maria would win the race. We are incredibly lucky in our high school to teach young women who are courteous and respectful. Although politeness is the norm, Maria still stands out as an especially considerate classmate and generous person. Always the first to offer a resource to a fellow student, quick to offer a helping hand, and eager to meet others' needs. Maria is more than just a team player. She is genuinely a model of compassion for others to follow. ~ Alisa Belanger, PhD, Our Lady of Mercy*

**An excerpt for Maria's essay**

I chose my grandfather for this essay because he is a role model in life. He came from Italy with very little and not knowing much of the language but was able to build his own business. He was able to keep his Italian heritage and traditions in a society that is constantly changing. Because being Italian was important to him, he passed those traditions on to my family and taught us his values...The thing I am most proud of is my grandfathers hard work ethic. My grandfather came to America with very little and he was able to build a business with his trade. My grandfathers family never stopped working and were able to pass down this work ethic to my family and my cousins. My grandfather instilled pride in workmanship and hard work in my father, who took over the business. My grandfather, at age 75, never stopped working and continues to help out on the job site. There isn't a day that my grandfather doesn't work hard, and I hope that I can continue to work hard like him and pass on this work ethic. My grandfather, and everything from his strong work ethic to his traditions that he has passed on to me and my siblings makes me proud of my Italian heritage.





**MICHAELA MELECA**  
**PAST HONOREES SCHOLARSHIP—\$1000**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: WEBSTER SCHROEDER**  
**COLLEGE: ST. JOHN FISHER**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING**

Michaela graduated Magna Cum Laude as a National Honor Society and Foreign Language Honor Society high honor roll student. She has been a dancer for fifteen years and a swimmer during high school. While in school, Michaela participated on the Link Crew to help incoming freshman adjust to the new school, and was a member of the student council for all of her high school career. Michaela has also been very active in her community, volunteering her time at Church of the Holy Spirit performing food preparation and service; at St. John's Homeless Shelter; at St. Rita's Vacation Bible School; and at the Plank South Ice Cream Social. She managed to do all of this and hold down a job at Panera Bread Company.

*Michaela is a strong and capable young woman. She has a kind heart, is quick to lend you her aid and is fiercely proud of her Italian heritage. Michaela regularly attends our youth group meetings, participating in activities and volunteering whenever she is able. She has prepared Christmas cards for the elderly in local nursing homes, gone caroling to bring cheer to the homebound during the holidays, cooked and served a simple supper on a Friday in Lent, and more. One event she has never missed is volunteering at the annual St. Joseph's Day Table, a celebration held at our church in honor of St. Joseph and the Italian traditions of many of our oldest parishioners. It is always great to see our young people giving their time and helping others, especially when, like Michaela, they have the gift of giving joy to those around them. As a proud Italian and a native of New York, Michaela fits the requirements of this scholarship, yet my recommendation of her goes above and beyond her heritage to the excellence and enthusiasm with which she approaches life. ~Rebecca Mitrousis, Church of the Holy Spirit*

**An excerpt from Michael's essay:**

The person I chose to interview is my Nonna, Marisa Meleca. I chose to talk with my nonna because she is one of the most influential Italian people I know. I am very close with my nonna and I have learned so much from her. She is extremely kind and generous. She has a very strong work ethic and I have learned how to be a hard worker from her. My nonna moved to the United States from Italy at age 16. She moved here to work and provide for her family back in Italy. She worked in a sewing factory. She ended up staying in the United States and got married to my nonno, who is also from Italy. They then started a family here. Throughout her life, my nonna continued to work....she has always taken pride in doing an excellent job at anything she does....Because of my nonna I have learned to take pride in everything I do....Also, because my nonno and nonna owned their own booth at the public market, I feel inspired to follow my dream of owning my own makeup company...My nonna is one of my biggest role models. My entire life, she has been teaching me amazing things about my family's heritage. She has shared fascinating stories about living in Italy and moving to the United States. I have always admired her bravery in coming to a new country and being away from her family at such a young age. Through all of that, she has continued to have an amazing work ethic and sets an example for me and my entire family.





**ELIZABETH (LIZA) COTTER**  
**PAST HONOREES SCHOLARSHIP—\$1000**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: ALLENDALE COLUMBIA SCHOOL**  
**COLLEGE: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: ENGINEERING**

Liza graduated holding numerous awards from throughout her academic career, including New York's Distinguished Young Woman award; the Monroe Professional Engineers Society, Bergmann Award for promise in the field of Engineering; The Rensselaer Medal for outstanding achievement in study of mathematics and science; The Bausch & Lomb Science Award for superior intellectual promise in the field of science; the Cum Laude Society for superior scholastic achievement; the National Merit Commendation Award; and the Terra Science Innovation Award. She is a multi sport athlete, participating on the varsity level for Cross Country, Swimming, and Track and Field, with multiple awards for her athletic abilities. Liza was also on the student council throughout high school

and served as President during her senior year, and participated on the Robotics Team, Engineering Team, and Math League, with awards for all. Liza is also very involved in her community, volunteering her time for the Re-Run Shoes project where she worked on a shoe recycling mission for micro businesses in Africa; the 4 Walls Project, a humanitarian house building mission in El Sauce, Nicaragua; Escuela Manatiales, Republica Dominica, where she planned the collection and donation of school supplies; Clinica Veterinaria "Pet Love", where she collected and donated veterinary supplies; The Cat Doctors Veterinary Hospital, where she helped with boarding patient care, and other duties; The Red Cross of Rochester, where she created comfort kits for disaster victims; Can Tab Collection for Ronald McDonald House; and modelled at Fashion Week of Rochester to benefit The Center for Youth.

*Liza Cotter is mature beyond her years—a leader and a questioner. She is aware of and fighting against the paucity of women in STEM at an age where I was still idly pretending there was no problem. She is able to help run a program aimed at students her age to the point where we often forgot she was not one of the adults. She is eager to work with and lead her peers gently but firmly towards insight and understanding. She is chomping at the bit to be immersed in an intellectual environment of discovery, research, and innovation. I simply cannot wait to see what great things she does in college. ~ Amanda Tucker, Asst. Dir. Of Undergraduate Studies, University of Rochester*

**An excerpt from Liza's essay**

When I was thinking of who to interview, I immediately thought of my mom: Eileen Rose Adamo. She celebrates St. Joseph's Day as vigorously as St. Patrick's Day, has been the cornerstone of our family's Roman Catholic spirituality and loves preparing homemade Italian meals for us whenever her busy, working mom schedule allows.... Witnessing my mom experience an intense amount of emotion when telling me our family stories helped me to understand how immigrants were crucial to sustaining America's freedom and maintaining America as a land of opportunity. Each generation of Adamo's was dedicating to supporting others who struggled in their communities and I believe this explains how internally compelled I am to try my best to model myself after these loft ideals. The Italian American spirit of perseverance and community service is deeply ingrained in my nature and my never give up attitude has been strongly forged through tremendous adversity in previous generations.... These incredible stories of my heritage serve to remind me to appreciate the many blessings in my life, maintain an emphasis on social justice, and use my education (I plan to be a materials engineer like Papa!) to be a valuable asset to American society and to our global community. Inspired by Joseph, Papa, and my mom, I will continue to find ways to celebrate my Italian American ancestry, positively affect my community, and no matter what obstacles I face, I will never give up.





## Marissa Nicastro

**RUBE' FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP IN HONOR OF JENNIFER  
RUBE' - \$1000**

**HIGH SCHOOL: WEBSTER THOMAS**

**COLLEGE: DAEMEN COLLEGE**

**FIELD OF STUDY: PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT**

Marissa graduated Summa Cum Laude as a National Honor Society Vice President, holding awards that include the Chemistry Achievement Award through the Rochester Section, INC. of the American Chemical Society; Spanish Award; Willink's Citizenship Award for service acts in community and school; and the Hands of Christ Award. She was a member of the Varsity Swimming Team throughout her four years in high school, and participated in many clubs and organizations, including Yearbook; Science Olympiad, Math League, International Club, International Honor Society, National Honor Society, Youth Group, and Link. She has been playing piano since the first grade. Marissa is also very involved in her community, volunteering her time as a Strong Hospital volunteer in the Pediatric Post Anesthesia Care Unit, the Epilepsy Center, and the Gastroenterology; at Maplewood Nursing Home performing various duties and interacting with the residents there; as a Vacation Bible School counselor; and at St Rita's, serving breakfast to church members. She did all of this while working as a lifeguard at Knollwood Pool Club and the Webster Aquatic Center, and teaching swim lessons at the YMCA and WAC.

*I have known Marissa since September of 2016. I have watched her grow into an outstanding, diligent and hard working students. She is a committed and dedicated young woman with the skills, intellect, and personality to be successful in all that she does....Not only is Marissa an outstanding student, she also displays exceptional strength of character. She is an honest and caring young adult who is committed to upholding the values in our school community....She always works to her full potential. She is caring, intuitive and focused on her pursuits. Her willingness to take risks and go beyond what is expected assures me that there will be no limit to her growth. Marissa is a standout individual who will impress everyone she meets.*

*~ Amarilys Rodriguez, Spanish Teacher, Webster Thomas High School*

### An excerpt from Marissa's essay

Italian heritage can mean a lot of different things to a lot of different people. To some it could be Sunday dinners and to others it could be the seven fishes on Christmas Eve. To me, Italian heritage is not just about food (although it is a big part), but it's how I live my life and incorporate my ancestors' traditions into celebrating my family and loved ones....Madeline's experience and installation of Italian American culture has influenced me more than I can attest to in words. My short eighteen years of attending holidays, Sunday dinners, and cardoon making parties, I never truly appreciated the understanding on *why* we did these traditions. My aunt's outlook and years of practicing tradition showed me how important staying together as a family is while keeping the traditions that our ancestors started years before in Italy and brought to America. She made me realize that these were times to gather and focus on family whilst preparing foods that were unique to their culture. I am s thankful to be part of a big Italian American family and I will forever carry on these traditions and values onto m future children so that they will always continue.





**SEAN O'HARE**  
**THE JOSEPH DARRYL DISTAFFEN MEMORIAL**  
**SCHOLARSHIP—\$2000**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: HOMESCHOOL**  
**COLLEGE: UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: ENGLISH**

Sean graduated as an exceptional homeschool student with an impressive GPA, having taken eight college classes at the Rochester Institute of Technology, including Basic Writing, Writing Seminar, Health, World of Business, Intro to Psychology, Italian I, Italian II, and an Independent Study on the New Testament.

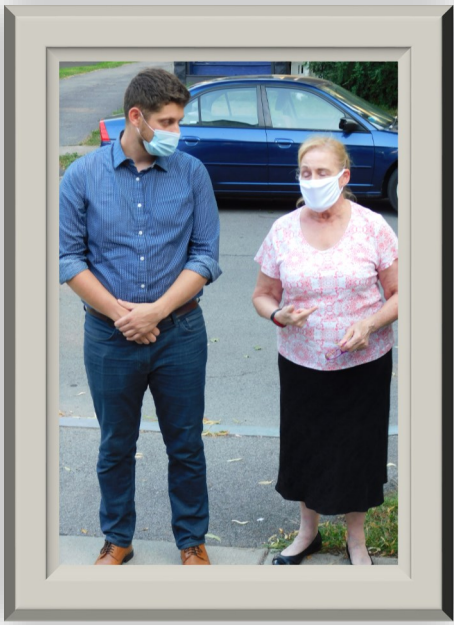
He also passed several College Level Exam Programs (CLEP), including Analyzing Literature, English Literature, and American Government. He was a member of the National Federation of Music Clubs, where he received their Gold Cup Award. After High School, Sean attended Monroe Community College to receive his Associates Degree in Liberal Arts. Sean has also been an active member of his community, volunteering his time the Calvary Assembly where he has been heavily involved with the youth ministry and music team as a youth leader; for the Forefront Festival, a Rochester arts organization, where he was

Managing Editor of their blog; and at the Flower City Work Camp, renovating homes of those living in poverty. He works as a Technical Associate II at the Laboratory for Laser Energetics. Sean is a story teller, with the goal of imparting the power of stories to others.

*Sean is a serious-minded student with a high capacity for complex topics and issues. He applies himself well in and out of the classroom. Sean also has an incredible heart for people. He has spent a week of his time for the past 10 years volunteering at Flower City Work Camp. During this week, over 600 adults and 800 middle and high school students help renovate homes of those living in poverty to help improve their daily lives. Sean does not just get the work done, he invests in students to help improve their daily lives. Sean does not just get the work done, he invests in students to help them grow in their faith and character....Sean consistently gives his time, energy, and resources to help others. He does this not so that he can get something in return from them, but simply because he loves people well. His character is exemplary, and is why Sean comes with my highest recommendation. ~ Pastor Jonathan Sigmon, Calvary Assembly*


**An excerpt from Sean's essay**

In recent years, my mother has spoken often to me of a friendship she has formed with Ed Maruggi, a well respected member of the local Italian American Community....I wanted to speak with him myself and observe how his heritage has shaped his own life and experience....Speaking to Ed recalled for me many elements of my own upbringing in an Italian family, and also illuminated some clear differences between his experience and my own. I am also the beneficiary of a tight knit family unit, both immediate and extended. Italian cuisine was a staple of my diet growing up, and I have spent some time studying the Italian language. Large family gatherings have always brought me much life and joy, and I am assured of unconditional support in all areas of my life from my Italian relatives. I have also spent some time travelling in Italy and experiencing firsthand the beauty of Italian social interactions and culture. Yet this point of similarity is actually the very thing that reveals the main difference between his experience of Italian heritage and my own. Due to his upbringing in a first generation immigrant family, at every stage he has experienced a more direct and immersive version of these cultural elements with which I am so familiar. He grew up surrounded by Italian neighbors and schoolmates; he attended far more cultural events; he studied the Italian language extensively during his academic career in Italy and over the course of his travels. Because of this, speaking with Ed offered me a vision of what deep immersion in and pursuit of one's heritage and history can produce. It was heartening, inviting me into an amplified version of the beautiful pieces of Italian culture I've already experienced and producing a desire for deeper connection with my own Italian roots.




## GRAND LODGE SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

### JOHN ASSENZIO JR. MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION and the COOLEY'S ANEMIA SCHOLARSHIP



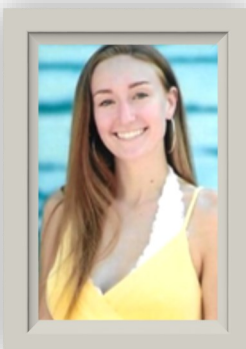
Elijah Barnard graduated from Greece Arcadia High School, and has received numerous honors for academics, athletics, and leadership. His physic teacher states that he has the rare ability to be a leader by listening to others' ideas, strives for academic excellence while challenging himself by taking difficult courses. He has volunteered with his church to go on hurricane relief trips and local service work. With Flower City Work Camp in the city of Rochester. He is smart, inquisitive, and decisive but also caring and compassionate and puts his heart and soul into everything he does. Elijah is able to balance his life with a rigorous course work. His guidance counselor says Elijah has a sense of self, is sincere, and a loyal friend. She states his goal is to make a positive impact on the world and will be a premed student at University of Rochester.

### RICHARD DI MARCO SR. MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP DONATED BY JOHN DIMARCO and the GIAMBRA FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP and the PAUL AND CHERYL SPERANZA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP



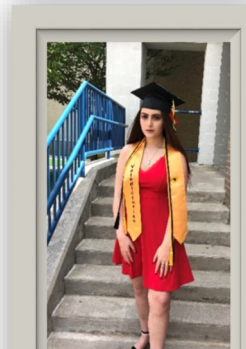
Maria Rosato who will graduate from Our Lady of Mercy with a weighted GPA of 4.27/4.0 and has taken six AP courses. Her AP Psychology instruction says of Maria that she delves into scientific inquiry with a systematic approach and sincere curiosity that will serve her well. She has a unique ability to express eagerness to learn while remaining calm and even-tempered. When faced with setbacks, she remains sensible and steadily plods a different path to reach her goals. Maria is always the first to offer a resource to a fellow student, quick to offer a helping hand, and eager to meet the needs of others, a model of compassion for others to follow. Maria plans to attend Nazareth College to study physical therapy a decision made after an internship with UR Sports and Spinal Center. Her family celebrates the celebration of Epiphany when La Befana, a little old lady, who missed seeing the baby Jesus, delivers gifts to Italian children in hopes of finding Him. Maria's grandfather brings stockings filled with fruit, snacks, and sweets each Little Christmas.

### GENEVA LODGE #2397 SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF DECEASED MEMBERS and the GUGLIELMO MARCONI LODGE #154 SCHOLARSHIP and the JANE LIPPA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Paige O'Brien graduated from Geneva High School with a weighted average of 97.10. Her guidance counselor describes Paige as being a kind and caring young woman who is passionate about race and gender inequality, climate change, immigration rights, and unequal access to health care. As a senior, she was accepted into an incredibly competitive medical exploration program, which allowed her hands-on-experience via clinical rotations spending 200 clinical hours at Geneva General Hospital. She is also certified as a nursing assistant. Paige is able to handle difficult situations and make decisions after much thought and what will be beneficial to her. Paige says of her experience at hospitals that she has learned independence and confidence in her abilities and to demonstrate knowledge she has learned. She has been accepted at and plans to attend the New York State University at Albany to study biology with the goal of becoming a doctor in the field of neurology.

### 2020 LA BELLA LINGUA AWARD



Francesca Martinez is a graduate from Greece Athena High School where she has studied four years of Italian with a GPA of 93.75 in the course and a final exam of 90%. Francesca was presented with a \$500 award, from the Commission for Social Justice, to be used towards her education.

Francesca was raised in a very Italian family, and follows their culture to the T. She will be attending Pennsylvania State University for Forensic Nursing. She is grateful for the opportunities that she has been given in school and outside of school, and the support of her family has pushed her to be the best student she can be. Francesca is excited to spread her wings and continue her educational journey throughout the next four year. She would like to thank her family, God, and all of the teachers that walked her through the college process that got her into her dream school.

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