

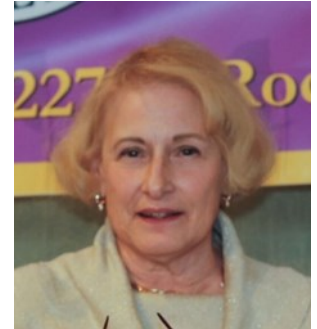


# The Roar of the Lion

Marisa Rubé Przepiora, editor  
August 2023 Edition

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Our Scholarship and Awards night was a tremendous success. All our scholarship winners for both the Lodge and the State were in attendance. We got to put a face with the names. We got to hear about their dreams and aspirations. We heard how they want to make the world a better place. Our thanks go out to the scholarship committee: Sr. Marisa Przepiora who chaired the committee and worked hard to get the information out to schools, and once the applications came in kept track of the information and passed it along to Br. Ed Groszewski, Pr. Maurice Palucci, Br. Rufus Brey, and Sister Melissa Distaffen. For me, scholarship is the highlight of what OSDIA does best. Along with what our Lodge does, the Grand Lodge of New York awarded \$111,000 in scholarships to more than 70 students this year. The Supreme Lodge itself awarded more than \$130,000, but across all the Lodges in the US, over \$750,000 was presented to students. No small feat in a time when money is tight. We are so grateful to everyone who donated to the scholarship fund and for you to know that your money has been well spent.



August is upon us. Summer is officially half over, but there is still a lot of time to enjoy warm, sultry days, picnics and outings, our gardens have filled in and look tremendous, and crops are beginning to be harvested. Public markets and roadside stands are filled with the tremendous sights and flavors of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Our Lodge is planning for some great happenings over the next several months, so please make note of them on your calendar. Our Heritage Dinner will happen on Oct. 27, 2023 at the Webster Golf Course. This is the time when we honor our Italian heritage and lodges across the country are planning events, so I hope you will make an effort to help our Lodge celebrate. Our Turkey Raffle is always a huge success and the “save the date” will be sent to you as soon as we secure the venue. While we are not trying to rush things, our December Holiday Meeting will take place on December 14th, and I would not be surprised if Santa made a visit.

All our events, while are traditional to us, take into consideration you, our members. We are very conscious of your time and the cost of events, but we also want to make them fun.

Enjoy the rest of the summer. By next month’s newsletter, many of us will have seen our children or grandchildren back to school and off to college. Time goes back so quickly so carpe diem or seize the day and make the most of the rest of the season.

Take care and God bless,

Marjorie

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Calendar of Events.....2
- Members Corner.....3
- State News.....5
- CSJ Report.....6
- Scholarship Awards....7
- Event Pictures.....15

## 2023 Vincent Lombardi Lodge Calendar

**August 5th: Members Picnic (Quinzi Lodge - Eyer Park, East Rochester)**

August 10th, 7pm: General Assembly Meeting

September 7th, 6:30pm: Council Meeting

September 13th, 7pm: General Assembly Meeting

October 5th, 6:30pm: Council Meeting

October 12th, 7pm: General Assembly Meeting

**October 15th: Traditional Sunday Dinner (Legacy at Maiden Lane)**

**October 27th: Italian American Heritage Dinner (Webster Country Club)**

November 2nd, 6:30pm: Council Meeting

November 9th, 7pm: General Assembly Meeting

**Papa Antolini Turkey Raffle: TBA**

December 7th, 6:30pm: Council Meeting

**December 14th, 7pm: Holiday Gathering**

### Italy as taken from Space

*(Photo Credit Rochester Museum and Science Center Planetarium)*





8/12: Linda Agnello, Jerry Griffo  
 8/13: Patricia Rask  
 8/14: Frank Affronti  
 8/22: Jacqueline Perrotta  
 8/23: Jeremy DiFilippo  
 8/24: Tom Meleca  
 8/31: Joe Rubé



Sending love and support to Sister Lila Bonanni for the loss of her husband, Ezio Bonanni, also a member of our lodge. Please keep Lila and her family in your prayers.

Ezio's obituary can be found here:

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/obituaries/rdc186269>



Congratulations, Sister Karen Pelc, on getting your Dual Citizenship with Italy and Italian Passport!

What a tremendous accomplishment after the years of time and energy you have put into getting it!



\$5.00

AUGUST  
2023

27 Day Drawing

Towpath Volunteers  
Fife & Drum Corps

Proceeds support the World  
Fife and Drum  
2023 Friendship Festival

Prizes: \$100 each Saturday  
\$25 every weekday

27 prizes!

Five dollars entitles the ticket holder to participate in 27 cash prizes. The winning number will be determined by the evening daily lottery numbers drawn each day. If no number is drawn the previous day's number in reverse will be used. No drawing on Sunday. Prize checks mailed within 10 days.

XXX

Towpath Volunteers  
Fife & Drum Corps  
August 2023

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

PHONE

XXX



The Towpath Volunteers  
Fife and Drum Corps,  
in Macedon, NY, is raising  
funds to host the Fife and  
Drum Friendship Festival  
in Macedon in 2023 to  
help celebrate the  
Bicentennial.

Winning Numbers are  
based on the evening  
NYS Lotto Numbers

Weekday winners will  
receive \$25.00

Saturday winners will  
receive \$100.00

To purchase tickets:  
contact any member of the Towpath Volunteers  
or Payment can be made through  
Venmo @TowpathVolunteers  
(If you would like a specific number: 000-999  
please specify 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choice)



## Join our General Assembly Meetings by Zoom

You now have the option to join our General Assembly meetings by zoom if you are unable to attend in person.

This link will remain the same for all GA meetings this year.

**Please join us August 10th at 7pm:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82651398467?  
pwd=SmlnbDhxbWIHS0gvVHJjblB0UjJBUT0](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82651398467?pwd=SmlnbDhxbWIHS0gvVHJjblB0UjJBUT0)

9

## Did you know you can pay for dues and events and even make donations to the Vincent Lombardi Lodge by credit card or PayPal?

When utilizing PayPal, include a note indicating what the payment is for. Please include a \$3 service charge when you make your payment. There are four ways to do this:

1. See Financial Secretary Marisa Przepiora at a meeting or event to utilize our credit card reader.
2. Log into your PayPal account, click the link to send money and send to: [vincentlombardilodge@gmail.com](mailto:vincentlombardilodge@gmail.com)
3. Ask a Council member to have an invoice with a link for payment sent to your email address.

4. Scan the QR code here.



## News from the National Sons of Italy Foundation

May 28, 2009, Sons of Italy Foundation National Executive Director, Philip Piccigallo greets the special guests at the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Gala in Washington, DC. The emcee for the event was award winning actor Joe Montegna. The recipient for the 2009 Sons of Italy Foundation Education and Leadership Award found himself in good company of past honorees Frank Sinatra, Tommy Lasorda, Joe Paterno, and Judge Scalia. The 2009 recipient, Vice President Joseph Biden, commented that something was missing in his last name—it's a vowel. A few jokes passed between Montegna and he vice president about Biden's Irish-Catholic heritage and applauded him for marrying an Italian woman. Jill Biden's name, while known as Jacobs, was changed, as so many did, from Giacoppa.

It did not go unnoticed that Mr. Biden was the first non-Italian American to be honored by SIF. Biden reminisced about growing up with a neighborhood of Italians, "My self-consciousness about not being Italian goes all the way back to my childhood." He described grade school friends and teammates on the football team. The he was able to name staffers that helped him run for public office and two priests who were close to him. What became obvious to the audience was Biden's perfect pronunciation of the names he mentioned.

## NYS OSDIA News and Info

### NEW YORK STATE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PROUDLY SPONSORS “THE JOHN DABBENE ITALIAN HERITAGE ESSAY CONTEST”

If you are an OSDIA member in good standing in one of our local lodges and have a child, grandchild, niece or nephew in grades 7 through 12, that child is eligible to enter our John Dabbene Italian Heritage Essay Contest.

A winner will be chosen from each district throughout the State from each grade category. Each winner will receive a \$200 award for his or her essay.

Sponsoring lodge presidents will be responsible for validating their member’s standing within the lodge by signing the application form. The application form accompanies this letter and is available through our **Important Links** section. Please read it carefully and comply with all requirements.

All essays must be postmarked by September 9th, 2023 and mailed to:  
Geraldine Iannello Graham, Chairperson  
John Dabbene Italian Heritage Essay Contest  
53 Brookside Drive  
Smithtown, NY 11787

Questions? Email [Geraldine@sellarolodge.org](mailto:Geraldine@sellarolodge.org)

### CSJ Columbus Day Share the Wealth Board

On October 3rd, 1492 Columbus set sail from Spain with three ships - the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria. The ships made landfall on October 12th. This year on October 12th, the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria will bring three lucky people some cash!

As you are all aware, our fight to save Columbus Day and our Italian Culture and Heritage is an ongoing battle. To help fund these efforts, the CSJ will have a Columbus Day Share the Wealth Board. The boxes on this board will be \$25 each.

Prizes:  
The Nina: \$500  
The Pinta: \$250  
The Santa Maria: \$250

Please mail your check, made payable to the NYS Commission for Social Justice to:  
Anthony Rotoli  
93 Lincoln Ave  
Port Jefferson Station, NY 11776

The drawing will be held on Thursday, October 12th at 7pm via zoom. The zoom login information will be sent out prior to the drawing.



### Garibaldi-Meucci Museum News and Updates

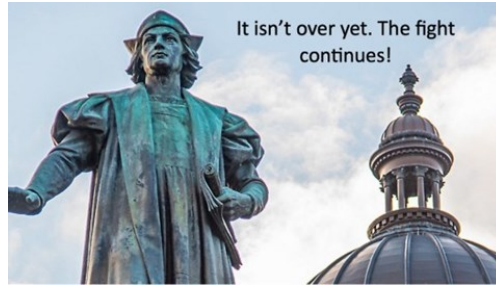
GMM is conducting a “Super Raffle” with 1st prize of \$500, 2nd prize of \$250, and 3rd prize of \$100. The drawing will be held on Saturday, November 11, 2023. Tickets are for sale at \$5 per ticket or \$30 for a book of six. Tickets can be purchased from Sr. Marjorie thru October 12th.

~~~~~

The GMM is once again planning a patriotic display of US Flags to be placed on the front lawn, running from October 23rd to November 23rd. You can sponsor a flag (12” x 18”) either in honor or in memory of a loved one, for \$20 per flag. Each flag comes with a tag detailing the honoree and the sponsor. Please see our **Important Links** section for more information and the order form. All orders must be received by September 1st.



## New York State Commission for Social Justice



Columbus Committee Corporation, Syracuse

On Friday, July 28, 2023, the New York State Supreme Court Appellate Division ruled 4-0 against the Columbus Monument Corporation and in favor of Mayor Ben Walsh. The City of Syracuse is allowed to removal the Columbus Statue located in Columbus Circle. Over these past few years, the Columbus Monument Corporation has done an amazing job in fighting Walsh. They have been savvy, formidable, and determined. They have been victorious in both the courts of public opinion and in law.

In the first suit that went to court, Justice Gerald Neri made it clear the city has no right to tear down the statue. It was built by, financially support, and given to the city by the Italian Americans.

At the Appellate Division in Rochester on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the case regarding the Columbus Statue was the last to be heard. An unusual incident of not one but two justices recused themselves. Substitutes were brought in, and it is believed this switch may have been beneficial to Walsh.

The Columbus Monument Corporation lawyers, while disappointed, are revving up for the next round. They are reviewing the decision to move forward. Their message, “We fight onward. We don’t give up.”

.....

Other attacks on Columbus and our holiday continue from Queens Senator Ramos and Brooklyn Assembly-member Marcela Mitaynes.

Although there was a victory in Philadelphia to keep the Columbus Statue, the holiday is endangered of being replaced with Indigenous Peoples Day. This is currently in the courts.

The NYS CSJ continues its efforts to get a bill sponsored to make vandalism to statues and edifices a hate crime no matter the ethnicity, race, or religious group.

~~~~~

October is only two months away. It is a time for Italian Americans to recognize and celebrate all the contributions made globally that have benefited all of us. During the Renaissance Italy had thriving cities, a wealthy merchant class, and the classical heritage of Greece and Rome. Since the rise of the Roman Empire, Italian art, architecture, and culture have had an influence around the world. The Renaissance saw the rise of strong central governments and an increasingly urban economy, based on commerce rather than agriculture. The modern banking system can be traced back to medieval and Renaissance Italy. Since the Renaissance era, Italians have made strides in all factions of life: art, music, medicine, science, fashion, communication. Italy counts 21 people who were awarded the Nobel Prize since its founding in 1901, the latest of which in 2021, in the fields of medicine, literature, physics, peace, chemistry, and economics. More than one hundred years after the great migration, Italian Americans are represented in all areas of American Life. We have a lot to be proud of for the contributions that have made everyone’s life just a little bit easier.



**EMMA ROSATO**  
**VINCENT LOMBARDI LODGE SCHOLARSHIP - \$1500**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: AQUINAS INSTITUTE**  
**COLLEGE: SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: MECHANICAL ENGINEERING**

Emma is a varsity soccer player and dancer from Aquinas Institute. Throughout high school, Emma participated in the Core Mission Team, The Aquinas United Arts Society, the Yearbook Club, Mathletes, the Aquinas Dance Company, and the Nazareth and Aquinas Institute Dance Collaboration. When she was not busy with her school and extracurricular activities, you could find her giving time to her community as a volunteer for the House of Mercy, Foodlink, Spencerport Fall

Festival and Summer Carnival, Happy Birthday Cha Cha Cha, Faith Formation, Aquinas Campus Ministries, Homestead for Hope, Catholic Youth Basketball, School #54, Chili Public Library, Vacation Bible School at St. John, and Princess Dance Camp. Or, you may find her scooping ice cream at Splitz Ice Cream. Emma is a member of the National Honor Society and the National Dance Honors Society. She is the recipient of the Hands of Christ Award, Physics Recognition Award, Dance Recognition Award, and the St. Joseph the Workers Community Service Award.

*“Emma is a student on whom I knew I could depend to focus her classmates, and would often take on the role of leader. Her maturity level was demonstrated through her actions and language used in class. She knew what was expected of her and modeled that behavior for her classmates. On a personal level, Emma is kind to all of her classmates, and encourages them to put forth their best effort. She always exudes the utmost confidence and maturity and it is this confidence that will be sure to make her successful. Aquinas students are taught goodness, discipline and knowledge. Emma demonstrates these teachings each day.”*

*~Christina O’Meara, Aquinas Institute*

*“Aside from being a respectable and considerate young woman, Emma is the most conscientious and loyal student I have had the privilege to work with. She is consistently compassionate with every individual she meets and has a gift for making long lasting connections. You can’t help but be drawn to Emma for her grace, sincerity and authenticity. She is humble and kind, the first and last person to work, and the one who cheers everyone on.”*

*~ Jodi Marcello, American Dance Academy*

**An Excerpt from Emma’s essay:**

I want to go to school for mechanical engineering and architecture. I want to use my creativity to make the world a better place. I look forward to sharing my interests with my father as I go through my college courses. I hope him and my Papa will share their construction knowledge with me as I tackle mechanical engineering problems along the way. I know I will need to use hard work in my college classes. And similarly to my great-grandparents and grandparents who came to an unknown country, I am entering into a field which is slowly accepting of women. I will need to rely on my determination, my knowledge and confidence to assert myself into a field which was mainly dominated by males.

My father has been a great role model in my life. He inspires me to work hard for those you love and be passionate about what you believe in. He has taught me the importance of family and to take pride in my culture. When my grandparents came over to America, all they had was family and their traditions. They relied on each other and helped each other to make a life in this country. This dedication to loved ones is the cornerstone of our family. Their journey of hard work set a precedent for my father and now for me to do the same. From my great grandparents to my grandparents, they have worked hard in their lives. I want to earn my success through hard work and determination just like my ancestors did. I hope to do them proud through my studies towards becoming a mechanical engineer.



**JOSHUA DINICOLA**  
**VINCENT LOMBARDI LODGE SCHOLARSHIP - \$1000**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: FAIRPORT**  
**COLLEGE: THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: BUSINESS**

Joshua is a varsity swimmer and tuba player from Fairport High School. Throughout high school, Josh was busy with club, JV, and varsity swim, was a member of the chess club, and also enjoyed karate, baseball, and basketball. He played the tuba with the Fairport High School Band. When he was not busy with his school and extracurriculars, you could find Josh at his job at Clawson's in Fairport. Josh is a member of the National Honor Society and Spanish National Honor Society, as well as being an Area All State Regional and State Athlete.

*“Three words come to mind when I think of Joshua: Character, heritage and family. Joshua is honest, respectful and always concerned for the well being of his family and friends. He has the courage to stand up for his beliefs while remaining fair and courteous to others. He is a very caring young man with a joyful personality felt by all who know him.”*  
~Debra Koch, Rochester Regional Health

*“Josh has shown a high level of character through both his vocal leadership as well as leading by example. His reliability and enthusiasm each day make him the great leader he is today. Josh is well respected, works hard, and has shown maturity and commitment in meeting any challenge, and he is truly a team player.”* ~Michael Kennedy, Fairport Central School District

**An Excerpt from Joshua's essay:**

David DiNicola, son of Alfred and Mary Assunta DiNicola, was about as true and real, when it came to being a man and representing the profound Italian American Heritage. Being a hardworking man was just one of the many attributes that David possessed. He was a very honorable man outside of his job and provided for his friends and family. In his free time David loved to fish, hunt, cook, and loved playing chess with his family. All of these things he did included not only himself but his other loved ones. David always wanted to be inclusive and allow others to join in on his fun. This is something that he learned from his parents. His character was unblemished and admired by everyone who knew him and you could not find someone that would have one complaint about him.

David unfortunately passed away on August 19th, 2022, and will be forever remembered. For me, the most impactful quality he had was his personality and character. Furthermore, he instilled so many values inside of me that make me the person that I am today. For example, his number one quality that he preached was respect. Not only respect to your family and friends, but respect everyone no matter who they are. He also taught me to unconditionally love family, and to always try to provide happiness. He also had a love for cooking, and he would cook some of the best meals for the holidays, and you could see the joy on his face when we would tell him how good his food was. Even when he could barely stand, because of his resilience he would still cook for us because of the love he had for his family. Personally, some of my favorite moments were when I played chess with him. His eyes would light up and he would have a big smile on his face knowing he would be challenging me to the game he loved.



**MADELYN BRUNSWICK**  
**PAST HONOREES SCHOLARSHIP - \$1500**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: WEBSTER THOMAS**  
**COLLEGE: SUNY COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL**  
**SCIENCE AND FORESTRY**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: CONSERVATION BIOLOGY**

Madelyn is an accomplished cellist from Webster Thomas High School. Throughout her schooling, Madelyn was dedicated to her music, participating in the Nazareth String Performance, Hochstein Philharmonic Orchestra, Titan Strings, Hochstein String Jam, Hochstein Sinfonia, Hochstein Group Performance, and Cello Caroling. Above and beyond her musical extracurriculars, during her down time you can find Madelyn volunteering her time to play her cello for residents at local nursing homes and senior living communities. She was class officer and Treasurer for her school board of directors, and is a certified American Red Cross Babysitter. She is a member of the World Language Society, and the National Honors Society, and has received awards for Outstanding Achievement in Math, Most Improved Orchestral Student, Principal's Recognition. She achieved High Honor Roll with Distinction every quarter since 6th grade. She is a cellist with the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, and was even a guest performer in a performance with the Grammy Award winning Mark O'Connor Band.

*"Madelyn is a very determined young woman who has reached an elite level of performance at the cello. She cares deeply about learning and is a conscientious student. She is a kind, sensitive and thoughtful friend, and a loving family member. She is a wonderful person who will succeed through hard work and determination."*

*~ Sandra Halleran, Private Cello Instructor*

*"Madelyn is a perfect blend of curiosity and drive. She is a positive and polite young adult and a brilliant musician. When I think about our core values: accountability, caring about people, initiative, integrity and team work, I truly believe Madelyn incorporates all of those values. She is one of the kindest, honest, caring, positive and hard-working young adults I have worked with over the last 30 years."*

*~ Carolyn Charleton, Webster Thomas High School*

**An Excerpt from Madelyn's essay:**

In regards to how interviewing my grandparents has affected my understanding of my heritage, I believe that I have always been immersed in my culture. It's just that I never asked such targeted questions of my grandparents. Yes, I ask about their childhood and how they grew up, but it was so normal to me that I never stopped to think that they grew up like that because of their heritage. I have noticed that as we add generations to our family, we keep the core values that my grandmother identified: food, family, and hard work. Every Christmas, my grandmother makes pizzelles and my grandfather makes gardoons, and we all fight over who gets the last one. And at Easter, my mom, sister and I go to my grandparents house and we make ravioli from scratch. These two instances directly exemplify the core pillars of our familial makeup. The thing I found most surprising from my interview with my grandparents was that they both weren't fluent in Italian. My grandmother spoke some Sicilian to her grandfather and was therefore able to communicate with some of my grandfather's relatives, but my grandfather never learned much. From what I can understand, that's a great regret of his: not being able to fully communicate with his grandparents. This only makes me more grateful for their strong involvement in my life and positive influence. I'm also grateful that their lessons from childhood helped them raise my mother into the woman she is today. She has raised me to be a strong, independent woman who knows just what she wants in life.



**EVAN STANLEY**  
**PAST HONOREES SCHOLARSHIP - \$1000**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: SPENCERPORT**  
**COLLEGE: SUNY BROCKPORT**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: NURSING**

Evan is a soccer player from Spencerport High School. When he was not busy with school and his extracurricular activities, you could find Evan volunteering his time working concessions and scorekeeping at St. John's Church basketball games, serving food to veteran's at the American Legion, landscaping at 8 Days of Hope, preparing and serving food at St. Peter's Kitchen, boxing and sorting food for Foodlink, and participating in the Red Kettle Campaign through the Salvation Army. Evan is a member of the National Honor Society.

*"Evan is among the top students I have experienced in my 24 years of teaching. He is dedicated to his studies, and I am always impressed by his work ethic, self motivation, and discipline. He has superior interpersonal skills and works equally well independently. He shows enthusiasm and dedication to learning."*

*~Holly Swick, Spencerport High School*

*"It has been a joy to watch even become the young man he is today. His hard work and dedication were not only known by the coaches, but universally by his teammates who revered him. He is quiet, but lets his work ethics and effort speak for him. He is an individual of integrity and quality of character."*

*~Brian Magin, Community Soccer Coach*

**An Excerpt from Evan's essay:**

My uncle's Italian-American heritage has influenced his life and life choices by bonding more with members of his close and extended family. He knows how to respect and help other family members from his heritage. Most importantly, he knows that no family is perfect, but at the end of the day, they are the ones you turn to. Being of Italian heritage gives my uncle a sound foundation of who he is. He has the cultures of all the past peoples that came before him, including the history of the Italian people going back to the Roman's and beyond. According to my uncle, "their history is my history, the architecture, art, food, music, land etc is something to be proud of."

My understanding of Italian American heritage has been influenced by my uncle by understanding that the culture has changed over the years. Italian American culture has become more mainstreamed, and more people are understanding the core roots and values of the culture. My uncle's experience of the culture changing throughout generations made me realize that change is sometimes good, as more people can embrace their heritage as it spreads away from Italy to other parts of the world. His experience of Italian American culture has influenced my understanding and appreciation of that heritage, by knowing that the culture has to do with respecting others. Whether it is by your actions or what you say. I learned that it is easier to be kind to someone than to be disrespectful and uncaring. My uncle's experiences made me appreciate how prideful the heritage is and how determined people can get what they want, when they work hard for it.

Overall, my interview with my uncle has shown me not to take family for granted. Family is the most important thing. Uncle Tom taught me and reminded me to take pride in my Italian heritage and the culture. A good foundation equals strength, much like a building's foundation. You know who you are and therefore you make good decisions. Those decisions reflect the respect you have for your heritage and the respect for your family, and hence for yourself. Be proud of who you are and where you came from. If you are grounded in your heritage and proud of your culture, you have the tools to succeed with your goals and dreams.

**EMILY DICESARE**  
**RUBE' FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**  
**IN MEMORY OF JENNIFER RUBE' - \$1500**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: PITTSFORD SUTHERLAND**  
**COLLEGE: STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: BIOCHEMISTRY**



Emily is a varsity gymnast and dancer from Pittsford Sutherland High School. Beyond her extensive dance and gymnastics commitments, Emily participated in Youth Group, Anatomy Club, Pre-Med/Dentistry Club. In her free time, Emily could be found volunteering at both Strong Memorial and Rochester Regional Hospitals, for PUNS, and at Mary Cariola. Or you might have found her at one of her jobs at Goldfish Swim School, Aeropostale, Camp Smallwood, or babysitting.

Emily is a member of the National Honor Society and has earned Honor Roll each quarter of her high school career. She has also received the Most Improved Award for her dance team, Most Valuable Player on the Rochester Gymnastics Academy Team, the Rising Star Award, and All County Athletic Awards.

*“Emily is a natural born leader with a passionate drive to better her school and community. She consistently modeled and encouraged good sportsmanship behavior with her teammates, and her hard work ethic made it evident to all that she had more than what it took to lead her team to victor. Emily continuously surpasses her expected roles and duties as a student, an athlete, and a leader. Her strong leadership skills will have a lasting effect on this team, on this school, and on this community.”*

*~Nicole Slack, Rochester Gymnastics Academy*

*“Emily shows grit, perseverance and motivation every day. Her commitment hardly ever waivers. She is an extremely intelligent individual with a very bright future ahead of her. I have every belief that this young lady will become a very distinguished and accomplished physician one day.”*

*~Lina Maine, Pittsford Sutherland High School*

**An Excerpt from Emily's essay:**

In Italy, family is at the center of everything, and this includes preserving traditions and customs that have been passed down through generations. As a result, he grew up with a deep respect for his family and the traditions they instilled. Consequently, he passed these values to the rest of the family, including me. One of my favorite parts about our family is that we have dinner together frequently and always celebrate holidays together. From New Year's Day, to Christmas and Easter, we all celebrate together and continue these family traditions. These gatherings always remind me that family should always be a priority in your life and come before anything else. IN addition to family, another belief that had derived from my grandpa's Italian heritage is his religion. Going to church and practicing his religious beliefs is something that he participates in because of his heritage and these practices play a key role in his life. My grandpa is very dedicated to his faith and goes to church one time per week at minimum. In addition to this, he spends a lot of his time at other events at the church, such as fundraisers and luncheons. Because of my grandpa, my dad grew up following similar beliefs and practices which he then passed to me. I am thankful for the opportunities I have been given as a result of my faith, and these opportunities are largely due to my grandpa.

My grandpa's knowledge and experience has influenced my life in tremendous ways. As I have been raised, Italian culture has been imbedded into my life and I am so grateful. Because of the time I spend with my grandpa, including this interview, I have decided I want to study abroad in Italy during college. In Italy, I want to experience the culture, learn Italian, see the stunning architecture, art and landscapes, and try authentic Italian cuisine. All of these things are important aspects of Italian culture and I appreciate them to a great extent and would like to learn more about and understand better. My grandpa always shares a variety of stories from his childhood in Italy and he inspires me to go and get first hand experience of the beautiful country. Although I may have appreciated Italian culture if my grandpa wasn't so insistent, he has transformed my appreciate into something bigger and more full of curiosity. He has helped me value where my family is from and see the importance of this.



**GABRIELLA BRONGO**  
**JOSEPH DARRYL DISTAFFEN**  
**MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP - \$1500**  
**HIGH SCHOOL: WEBSTER THOMAS**  
**COLLEGE: SUNY OSWEGO**  
**FIELD OF STUDY: CREATIVE WRITING & POLITICAL**  
**SCIENCE**

Gabriella is a writer and activist from Webster Thomas High School. In addition to these activities, she also participated in the American Sign Language Club, Art Club, Feminism Club and Mercedes Literary Club. She took a number of AP classes, including Language, Literature, Biology, Psychology, and Government. When she was not busy with school and her extracurriculars, Gabriella could be found working at the YMCA, Westside Chiropractic, or Eastway Wegmans..

*“Gabriella is bright and creative. She is very comfortable expressing her views, especially when it comes to women’s rights. She is a dream student for our teachers as she is invested in learning. I am confident she is poised to handle any difficult situation life may throw her way in college or after. It has been so rewarding for me to see how the young girl I once knew has grown into a strong, responsible, kind, caring and independent young adult.”*

*~Carolyn Charleton, Webster Thomas High School*

*“Gabriella has a kind heart and it’s a pleasure to be in her company. She always demonstrates a professional demeanor and is patient and kind. She is team player and I have no doubt she will succeed in her college endeavors and well beyond.”*

*~Susan Schaefer, Westside Chiropractic*

**An Excerpt from Gabriella’s essay:**

Joe told me how proud he was of his heritage; that Italy has contributed so much to the world, whether in terms of the arts or engineering. He told me that Italy holds less than 1% of the population in the world, but holds the most art, literature, and music. He also talked about how he learned the languages French, Spanish, and Latin while studying in Italy and how that has greatly impacted the way he views the world. Joe has said that, when learning those languages in Italy, he gained insight and knowledge into different cultures. He uses his platform at the Italian-American Sports Club to teach people about the contributions Italy has made, and how that culture has impacted how our world runs today. Joe graduated from Penn State with degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Nuclear Engineering. When asked how his studies have influenced him, he told me that he believed nuclear engineering was the future. He even worked for the federal government for 5 years in nuclear engineering. Joe told me how he worked as a professor and taught about Italy and how much of the arts, music, and literature came from there.

Joe Larizza is very proud of his Italian heritage, and this has influenced me to learn more about Italy on my own. Both of my grandparents had been born in Italy, my nonno in Spigno Vecchio and my nonna in Florence, and while I’ve visited my family there before, there’s still much I don’t know and much I’ve yet to see. I’ve been trying to learn Italian on my own, but it’s not easy and I’m far from being able to carry a conversation with my nonna or any of my cousins, but all things take work and this is not different. Joe quoted Matteo Renzi saying that, “Italy will never be a normal country, because Italy is Italy. If we were a normal country, we wouldn’t have Rome. We wouldn’t have Florence. We wouldn’t have the marvel that is Venice.”

## GRAND LODGE SCHOLARSHIP AND GRANT WINNERS

### ALEXANDER BRUNO

*ADELINE AND NICHOLAS P. DINAPOLI SCHOLARSHIP*



Alexander Bruno graduated from West Irondequoit High School and plans to attend the Rochester Institute of Technology to study computer science.

School and learning are high priorities for Alex, which was exemplified in the diversity of the he took during his high school career. His counselor commented about Alex, "He works to maximize his learning. He balances school with a part-time job through time management and organizational systems."

Alex took five years of Italian and earned 6 college credits and the Biliteracy Seal. His Italian language teacher, Renee Bosco, emphasized his ability to lead without being loud or bragging. She described Alex as "mature and makes wise choices, is a role model, a lifelong learner with a growth mindset, reflects on feedback and then puts it into action."

Alex's acceptance into the computer science program at RIT provides options for seven different computing majors. Outside of school, he volunteered with the United Way Day of Caring, Pittsford Volunteer Ambulance, and holds a part-time job working for a local pizzeria.

### EMMA ROSATO

*RICHARD DIMARCO SR. MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP BY JOHN DIMARCO AND GIAMBRA FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP AND THE PAUL AND CHERYL SPERANZA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP*



Emma Rosato graduated from The Aquinas Institute and will attend Syracuse University to study mechanical engineering. The head of the English Department said Emma is the ideal student who exemplifies outstanding dedication to academic excellence. Emma always puts forth her best effort and strives even for better in everything she does. In High School she was involved with National Honor Society, Women's Leadership, Varsity soccer and the Core Ministry Team as well as holding down a part time job. She completed two hundred and thirty hours of community service while in high school.

In her essay she described her grandparents, who came to this country and made a life for themselves, as hard working their way up from the bottom. Her great grandfather began his own iron workshop. Their bravery to leave everything in Italy to move to the United States inspires her to create her own path and persevere through any obstacles.

**DANIEL ACQUILANO**

*GENEVA LODGE #2397 SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF DECEASED MEMBERS AND THE GUGLIELMO MARCONI LODGE #154 SCHOLARSHIP AND THE JANE LIPPA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP*



Daniel Acquilano is a 2023 graduate of Geneva High School and plans to study environmental studies at SUNY Cobleskill. He would like to work as an agronomist or with soil and water conservation districts in the Finger Lakes Region. He is community minded and has volunteered with numerous organizations in Geneva. In his essay he wrote about his great grandfather who came here from Italy and worked manual jobs to put food on the table for his family. His grandfather was the first in his family to attend college, a great achievement.

Daniel studied Spanish for five years and received the Seal of Biliteracy. His Spanish teacher said that Daniel is a wonderful young man, demonstrating prodigious maturity and a strong work ethic. He is a dedicated leader. His earth science teacher said Daniel helped to charter an FFA Chapter at Waterloo HS. The FFA, Future Farmers of America, is a national youth leadership organization that claims to make a positive difference in the lives of young people by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agriculture education. He is also active in the music department and was awarded the John Philip Sousa Award. Daniel has the drive to succeed and will positively represent OSDIA.

**TALIA LEVA**

**2023 CSJ LA BELLA LINGUA AWARD**

The New York State Commission for Social Justice, CSJ, sponsors an award for students who excel in Italian Language Studies in High School. In District VIII, these schools have an Italian Language Program that also engages students in Italy's culture: McQuaid Jesuit High School, Gates-Chili High School, West Irondequoit High School, Eastridge High School, and Greece Athena High School. To be eligible, students must take a minimum of three years of Italian in an accredited program and write an essay from one of six topics. Students chosen for this award, at the high school level, are considered the best by their instructor. Each district under the Grand Lodge of New York can submit one student as the recipient of the award.

Talia Leva is a graduate of West Irondequoit High School and has studied Italian since the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. She was able to earn three college Italian credits and the Biliteracy Seal. Her Italian language teacher, Renee Bosco, said she is a masterful speaker and writer of the language. While traveling in Italy with classmates, she was able to converse easily and to immerse herself in the culture. Ms. Bosco further states of Talia that she is well-rounded, ambitious, respectful, mature, hardworking, compassionate, and responsible.

Talia wrote in her essay "Italian heritage is about tradition and family. There is an energy around Italian families, and Italian people in general when they come together that cannot be recreated." She is passionate about her heritage and how it has shaped her. She loves the traditions, the work ethic her grandparents and parents taught her, and connections he has made and will continue to make in the Italian American community.



Emma Rosato and Family



Joshua DiNicola and Family



Madelyn Brunswick and Family



Evan Stanley and Family



Emily DiCesare and Family



Gabriella Brongo and Family



Daniel Acquilano and Family



Alexander Bruno and Family



Members and guests during the award presentation



Students telling a bit about themselves



And always a good spread!

OSDIA Vincent Lombardi Lodge  
84 Mulcahy Blvd  
Rochester, NY 14624

**President**  
Marjorie Focarazzo

**Vice-President**  
Jeremy DiFilippo

**Recording Secretary**  
Patricia Bartholomew

**Financial Secretary**  
Marisa Przepiora

**Treasurer**  
Carol DiNicola

**Orator**  
Joe Rubé

**Mistress of Ceremony**  
Melissa DiStaffen

**Sentinel**  
Luigi DiFilippo

**Trustees**  
Tom Meleca  
Catherine DiNicola  
Ron Santoli  
Maurice Palucci  
Becky DiFilippo

**Immediate Past President**  
Sandra Meleca

**Chaplain**  
Patricia Galante

**District VIII State Trustee**  
Vincent Giannantonio

**Chaplain Emeritus**  
Sister Carole Proia

**State Deputy to Vincent Lombardi Lodge**  
Peter Gillotte

**State Deputy to Geneva Lodge**  
Jeremy DiFilippo

**Past Presidents**  
Joseph Lusardi\*  
Thomas Laverne\*  
Louis Giambra\*  
Joseph Vazzana \*  
John March\*  
Victor Bell\*  
Peter Cimino\*  
Sam Parese\*  
Cosmo Caceci\*  
Michael La Comba\*  
Shirley Sculli  
Phillip Dattilo\*  
Joseph Berta\*  
Joseph Rubé  
Jennifer Rubé\*  
Vincent Giannantonio  
Sandra Meleca

**All Vincent Lombardi Lodge communications should be sent to:**

**President Marjorie Focarazzo  
84 Mulcahy Blvd  
Rochester, NY 14624  
mafocarazzo@gmail.com**