



NOIAW to Honor Founder and Chairwoman Aileen Riotto Sirey at Annual Gala Luncheon

F. G. (May 01, 2012)



The National Organization of Italian American Women (NOIAW) will hold its Annual Gala Luncheon next Saturday, May 5, at The Metropolitan Club in Manhattan. This year, the organization will honor Aileen Riotto Sirey, Founder and Chairwoman of NOIAW, for her 32 years of service and for her important contribution to the Italian-American community.

[The National Organization of Italian American Women](#) [2](NOIAW) will hold its Annual Gala Luncheon next Saturday, May 5, at The Metropolitan Club in Manhattan.

NOIAW is the premier non-profit organization for women of Italian ancestry and its mission is to preserve Italian heritage, language and culture by promoting and supporting the educational and professional advancement of Italian-American women.

This year, the organization will honor [Aileen Riotto Sirey](#) [3], Founder and Chairwoman of NOIAW, for



her 32 years of service and for her important contribution to the Italian-American community.

Sirey was elected the first President of NOIAW in 1980, when the organization began with a small group of women including Geraldine Ferraro, Matilda Raffa Cuomo and Roseanne Colletti.

Sirey maintained her position as President for 7 years. For the following 25 years she served as Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of the organization, which in that time span has grown into an international network with more than 1,000 members and affiliates in Australia, Argentina and Italy.

Sirey will be introduced at the Luncheon by Matilda Cuomo and Lidia Bastianich, by the Honorable Angela Mazzarelli and by Consul General of Italy to New York [Natalia Quintavalle](#) [4]. Upon her retirement in May, Dr. Sirey will be given the title of Founder and Chair Emerita and will continue to work on special projects. "It's time," said Sirey. "We have a phenomenal board, and we have expanded nationally at an amazing rate. Betty Santangelo will be my successor and she is an excellent choice."

An outstanding Italian American woman leader, Aileen Riotto Sirey is a role model to others and has demonstrated extraordinary achievements. She is a recipient of numerous awards and honors and is Cavaliere and Commendatore in the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy. Dr. Sirey had served on the board of the National Italian American Foundation for ten years, and became its first woman Vice President and Vice Chair. She currently serves as Vice Chair of the Council of Presidents of Italian American Organizations.

"As we celebrate our milestones as an organization," said Matilda Raffa Cuomo, "We are particularly proud and honored to recognize Aileen Riotto Sirey for her inspirational accomplishments in her field, positive contributions to her community and our nation, and her commitment to generations of Italian American women."

Previous winners of the NOIAW award include Lidia Bastianich, Maria Garibaldi, Baronessa Mariuccia Zerilli-Marimò, Connie Morella, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Susanna Agnelli and Lina Wertmüller.

Tickets for the luncheon are available online by contacting noiaw@noiaw.org, or at the NOIAW office located at 25 West 43rd Street, Room 1005. For more information about NOIAW and the luncheon, you may also call the office at 212-642-2003.

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