

## NIAF. New York Spring Extravaganza

A. G. (April 07, 2013)



National Italian American Foundation held at Cipriani 42nd Street. Awards for their efforts were given to Italian-Americans particularly accomplished in their business field

There are more than seventeen million Italian-Americans in the United States, all of them embodiments of two cultures. For this reason NIAF, The National Italian American Foundation, dedicates its mission to promoting the culture and heritage of Italian-Americans.

Every year, NIAF organizes a couture evening in New York to promote and honor the Italian-American Heritage. "Tonight, I see so many people committed to their heritage and community that it reminds us all exactly what we set out to preserve. On behalf of NIAF's family, let me thank you for your support, confidence and belief in NIAF and our mission," said NIAF's Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso, during his opening speech of the evening.



Over six hundred guests were present at the legendary Cipriani on 42nd street, where the gala was hosted by Rosanna Scotto, co-host of Good Day New York. She thanked gala chairman Gerard S. LaRocca, NIAF board member and chief administrative officer of Barclays Americas Capital, as well as honorary dinner chairman Mario Mercurio, senior vice president of PepsiCo Americas Beverages.

After the invocation of Monsignor Jamie Gigantiello and both the American anthem and the Italian national anthem, 'Inno di Mameli,' sang by Tisch graduate Christina Carlucci and Italian-Australian singer Alfio, respectively, the guests had the chance to taste Italian delicacies: from fresh Burrata to Tiramisù, and sip on delicious Bellinis, Cipriani's most famous cocktail.

During the night, personalities from various fields were honored by NIAF for their contribution to the Italian-American society. Mark J. Casella, a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, received NIAF's Special Achievement Award in Accounting Services, Gerald A. Donini, chief operating officer of Corporate and Investment Banking at Barclays, was awarded in the Financial Services field, Dino Fusco, managing director and global head of real estate at Goldman Sachs & Co., received the Special Award in the Real Estate Services and Tony May, owner of contemporary Italian restaurant SD26, was awarded for the Food Industry. Among these men, a woman, actress Annabella Sciorra, got the award for her efforts in the Entertainment business.

The night proceeded with an open auction, which included a custom family research package from "Roots in the Boots" and a New York Yankees Fan Package. Roberto Larussi, recognized as the most important Italian-American tenor after Mario Lanza, among other pieces performed a song titled 'I believe' from his debut album while the evening was nearing the end.

Besides the award recipients celebrated by NIAF on April 4th at Cipriani 42nd street, a large part of the Italian and Italian-American community was also present, including the Honorable Consul General Natalia Quintavalle, actor Danny Aiello, Italy's Ambassador to the United Nations Mission, Antonio Bernardini, former Italian Congressman and Amato Berardi, as well as NIAF's Vice Presidents in the Greater New York region, Susan Paolercio and Nicholas R. Caiazzo.

Once more NIAF celebrated the Italian-American heritage and culture with an elegant gala enjoyed and appreciated by all attendees.

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