

## **The Community Gathers to Greet and Say Good Bye to the Consul General Natalia Quintavalle**

M. T. (March 10, 2016)



Competence, humility, love for her job and big humanity and creativity have been the dominant factors for the General Consul Natalia Quintavalle and at the end of the diplomatic career the Italian and Italian-American community gathers to greet her.

An overcrowded room filled the General Consulate and the Italian Cultural Institute, which opened its doors to the soft tones of Jazz music for the occasion. Journalists, friends and colleagues from the cultural environment and the Italian system gathered together for the final greeting – that has been postponed due to the visit of the President of the Repubblica Sergio Mattarella last month.

“I will not speak about the main global political and economic topics like Syria, Libya, immigration, global warming, human rights: you have a brand new Ambassador in Washington, Armando Varricchio, for that and a lot of very good colleagues at the Mission to the UN leaded by Ambassador Sebastiano Cardi and Inigo Lambertini who is here with us today.



And I will not speak about culture or trade because there are Giorgio Van Straten and Maurizio Forte for that. So, what is it left for a Consul General to talk about and to work for? The answer is easy: the people!". Quintavalle is touched and her words invoke a strong pride for all she accomplished during her diplomatic mission.

Being the first woman to be nominated as a General Consul, Natalia Quintavalle represented through these years a fundamental role in promoting Italian culture and language abroad. So many people remember her.

Symbolic is her reply to Matilda Cuomo's question from i-Italy, wife of ex-governor Mauro Cuomo.

If everyone did what you do, the world would be a better place. "She completed very well her mission. She has a magnificent wellbeing and you need a lot of love and competence when you do this kind of work because you represent all of the people here. All the time she was listening to you and trying to help people around us. When she became Consul General she helped a lot and she continued in the years. It was like a strategy we needed to keep the Italian language florescent in this country".

Although in America for less than a year, the Italian Cultural Institute director Giorgio Van Straten and the ICE – Italian Trade Commission – director Maurizio Forte do not miss the chance to underline the value of such a special and humane woman as Natalia. "We appreciated Natalia's professional and humane talent, who did a team work with us. We are really going to miss her and as it happens in our careers – and I wrote to her (?)– we will have the chance to meet again and work together.

The way she welcomed us was extraordinary and this explains her success in dealing with people. "For me Natalia Quintavalle is someone who was engaged with Italian community and understood the unique role of Italian American community. She has seen us as part of the present and the future and not just part of the past. I think it's very important. We are gonna miss her". These are John Viola's words, the President of NIAF.

Also Calandra's Dean, Italian American Institute, Anthony Tamburri, tells us about the excellent presence as a woman and as a Consul for the Italian-American community. "She had certain sensibility to the consulate. She was just different and she became extremely friends of Calandra Institute".

A special thank you from Quintavalle to the entire Consulate staff was made as well "I am going to miss you more than you are going to miss me, because I know I leave you in good hands. So I ask you an applause for Roberto, Isabella, Chiara and all the staff of the General Consulate of Italy in New York!" And so the vice consuls Isabella Periotto and Chiara Saulle take the floor and begin to illustrate their experience with affection.

"New York is my first foreign branch and when I arrived at the end of 2014 I had to learn everything. Having had the chance to work with her was a big fortune. Professionally she is a diplomatic example, especially for us that are at our first experiences. She is a real problem solver and her contagious energy made the everyday work at the consulate not only full of teachings but also funny and exciting. We are going to miss her so much" Periotto says.

And talking about feminine charisma, also the journalists say something about the consul's extraordinary task. "She curated a lot the connection with the journalists. Above all, I appreciated her continuous effort to give value to women and this is something she never gave up doing. She highlighted them, and she promoted initiatives about women" tells us Angela Vitaliano.

Of course some good Italian food had to be present as well. Thanks to Milano Expo, food was one of the topics that the Italian System discussed more in these years.

During the evening, in fact, a tasting from Made in Italy brands was proposed, such as Giovanni



Rana, Risotteria Melotti Il Piccolo Caffè, Bertozzi, Clemente Bakery and Jack Di Piazza. In the meanwhile in the Italian Culture Institute room, the jazz concert organized by Enzo Capua with the evocative notes of pianist Simona Premazzi, Jay Sawyer and Pablo Meneres ended the evening in the best way.

Consul, we are going to miss you! As a woman, mother and great diplomatic. We hope that your next mission can give you as much as the New York one did.

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