



## **Scuola d'Italia "Guglielmo Marconi," Tradition & Excellence in NYC**

Riccardo Chioni (March 11, 2008)



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The program began, following the school's tradition, with an interpretation of various national and European anthems sung by middle and high school students and conducted by Petrika Melo. After opening remarks by Interim Head of School Donald Maiocco and Chairman of the Board of Trustees Stephen Madsen, the Consul General Francesco Talò spoke of his wish for a more suitable site for the school, an Italian jewel in New York City.

"This is our school. I personally identify with its mission and it makes me feel at home within this community. I believe that it will always be a 100% Italian school and a 100% New York City school: this is the uniqueness of La Scuola d'Italia," the Consul General began his speech, receiving his first round of applause.

"We can say that this school is becoming increasingly integrated into the activities of the Italian Cultural Institute and the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade, as well as the other major Italian language and cultural institutions in New York City, and I can say," added Talò, "that much has been accomplished in the first few months of this year. The students have participated in activities hosted by our institution and I am glad to have seen them at the Day of Memory in January (at the Consulate on Park Avenue). There are always more attendees than we expect. I am very happy to announce that for the first time the students of La Scuola d'Italia will take the AP exam in Italian which is an important achievement for the advancement of the Italian language. Therefore, we wish to thank the students who have played a major role in this initiative."

Talò announced the arrival of the new head of La Scuola d'Italia from Italy, but in the meantime warmly thanked Donald Maiocco for his interim management of the school.

"We can say that Maiocco has been an extraordinary jeweler and that he has cared for these jewels which are the children of La Scuola. We must work together," said Talò, "on ambitious and important goals, and it is for this reason that the community is gathered here this evening. We look forward to achieving crucial goals such as creating a new site where the school can grow, a complete campus for the elementary, middle, and high schools - a school that is authenticall



y New York. The support of the Consulate will continue and we will be proactive as we work together. To Salvatore Zizza," added the Consul General, "on behalf of Ambassador Castellaneta and the Consulate, I would like to convey my admiration for his commitment to the projects that benefit our community and the Italian culture. We are here to express our pride in being part of the greatest culture in the world, because Italy is, above all, the world's cultural superpower."

Justice Massaro then explained that he would fulfill a promise made by the American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit which he represents.

"I have a check for one hundred thousand dollars," announced the judge. "We kept our promise. Our organization began by making donations to the school over the past thirty years and during its existence we have continued to donate a lot of money. We therefore decided to place a limit on our donations and to fill in the difference."

This year La Scuola d'Italia recognized Salvatore Zizza for his outstanding success and contributions. Born in Italy, Zizza arrived on American shores at ten years of age. Today, he is the face of Italian American pride and the embodiment of the American dream which he has shared with those in our community who are less fortunate.

President of the financial company of the same name, Zizza, 62 years old, has a résumé full of academic achievements and noteworthy professional and entrepreneurial activities. Since 1976 he has been a member of the Columbus Citizens Foundation. Located on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, the organization is responsible for the annual Columbus Day parade.

Renato Turano, the Senator of the Republic of Italy representing Italian citizens in North and Central America, confirms that he will be a candidate in the next election and counts on being re-elected. Turano, who was elected on April 9, 2006, explains: "We have accomplished so much, but we have also left several items on the table and we must therefore bring them to a close. For



example, we are working on the reacquisition of citizenship, finding increased funds for La Scuola d'Italia, and furthering the teaching of the Italian language. Towards this end we must create agreements with colleges and universities. These are my priorities for the coming months." The Consul General hoped for a new and more appropriate site for La Scuola which is located on East 96th Street and Fifth Avenue and has an annex with a high school and gymnasium on East 67th Street and First Avenue in Manhattan.

"I think," maintains the senator, "that it is possible to realize the dream of a new campus. Veltroni is very interested in this project and it concerns many Italians abroad. I have had meetings with him and we agree on several points, one of which is the need for Italy to invest in the next generation and to give its children and grandchildren the opportunity to learn Italian."

"If all goes well," as Turano hopes, "I would like to bring young people from all over the world to study in Italy for at least one year. I think that in this sense we can ensure that Italian is spoken in the future because students would truly have the opportunity to learn the language of Dante."

(Translated by Giulia Prestia)



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