

IACF's Annual Benefit Dinner & Auction

Letizia Airos (October 21, 2015)



The Italian Cancer American Foundations Turns 35. On the eve of the November 10th Benefit at the Mandarin Oriental, we spoke to Cristina Aibino, Executive Director of the American- Italian Cancer Foundation.

We discussed with Cristina Aibino the importance of collaborative research between Italy and the US regarding breast cancer, a very significant and pressing topic in the lives of many.

This year the benefit is celebrating its 35th anniversary. You've been putting so much effort into research for so long - what do all these years of hard work mean to you?

These 35 years represent the consolidation of our fight against cancer. We have given over 419



scholarships to young Italian researchers who have come to the US to contribute to excellent research projects and we have offered over 90,000 screening tests to New York residents to guard against cancer. Our programs allow us to invest in research and in the American community in which we reside. We're proud of the results we've achieved over the last 35 years and look forward to the next 35 years.

The American-Italian Cancer Foundation supports cancer research, a very **sensitive topic of great importance. What is the difference between the manner in which research is conducted and work is carried out in the US as opposed to Italy?**

The technical and scientific preparation of Italian researchers ranks among the best in the world. With this solid background, the recipients of our scholarships have ample opportunity for professional development. In the US, Italian researchers will have access to exceptional laboratories, international research teams, and both financial and creative freedom to develop research projects.

During the benefit, prizes will be given to two world- renowned scientists: Fredrick W. Alt. and Carlos L. Arteaga. What are the criteria for being selected for these prestigious awards?

Our Prize for Scientific Excellence in Medicine is awarded annually to two doctors who have made significant contributions to the field of oncology, one in research and the other in applied medicine.

Frederick W. Alt is the Director of the Program in Cellular and Molecular Medicine at Boston Children's Hospital and a Professor of Pediatrics and Genetics at Harvard Medical School. Carlos T. Arteaga is the Clinical Research Director of the Breast Cancer Research Program, Professor of Cancer Biology, and Professor of Medicine at Vanderbilt University.

They were chosen by our Scientific Advisory Board, a group of select Italian and American doctors who have collaborated with us for many years to further our work in the field of oncology.

The chairs of the charity gala will be Laudomia Pucci, CEO of Pucci, and Alessandro Castellano, CEO of SACE. Lamberto Andreotti, Chairman of the Board of Bristol-Myers Squibb, will receive the Alessandro di Montezemolo Lifetime Achievement Award. Why did you choose these specific honorees?

The honorees of our annual gala are professionals who have distinguished themselves via exceptional accomplishments in Italy and around the world.

What projects are you working on at the moment?

We are working on promoting the Foundation via a new website and a social networking effort to raise public awareness of our programs. We want to give a voice to our fellows, tell their stories, and follow them until the end of our scholarships so that others can travel the same road in the future.

With regards to our screening against breast cancer, we are constantly searching for centers in the region in order to expand our screening and admit more women into our clinics.

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