



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

In 1926, The Royal Italian Consulate of Chicago published the Selected Directory of the Italians of Chicago. The compilation was a remarkable achievement and the result of a four-year effort of Lisa Cipriani, a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, to compile a directory of Italian business owners in Chicago in industries from A (Accordions) to Z (it actually ends with W, for wines of course). Updates were published over the course of a few years, and the 1930-1931 version can be read here: [read here: https://bit.ly/3RdGle1](https://bit.ly/3RdGle1).

Right in the middle of the directory, under lawyers, before listing the more than fifty Italian lawyers practicing in Chicago, it reads as you would hope and imagine: Justinian Society of Italian Advocates. The inference: if you were an Italian lawyer in Chicago, you were a member of this Society.

The 92-page publication is full of other content that delights. The first twenty pages and final sixteen pages contain advertisements consisting of full-page, half-page, and even 1/8-page ads from Italian businesses and professionals as well as their supporters of other ethnicities and heritages. It reads remarkably like the ad book publication compiled for our society's installation dinner.

It contains an "Italian-American Hymn" dedicated to the Italian explorers who laid the foundation for the discovery of the new world, to whom our ancestors undeniably felt a very direct connection, and from whom they gained the courage to leave the life they knew in Italy to come to America to build something new for future generations. While I have not read any recent Justinian-penned hymns, I have read the persuasive and passionate brief writing of Enrico Mirabelli, Frank Sommario, and the many other lawyers contributing to the JCCIA's ongoing legal battle to enforce a contract to return the Columbus statues to their lawful homes.

The 1930 directory itself lists more than 4,500 Italian professionals operating in the city at the time. Reviewing the directory is a complete blast. It is replete with recognizable names to our Society: Bisceglia (canning), Lamantia (produce), Allegretti (confectionary, drug store, and lawyers), Cannata (meat market), Grieco (plumbers), and many others.

About one-third of the way into the publication, there are introductions that Dr. Cipriani wrote for the first publication and the updates for the years that followed. From them, we learn that Dr. Cipriani undertook the task of compiling the directory at the request of an Italian organization; but she quickly turns to what she felt to be her call-to-arms to do it: a pamphlet issued by the Council of Social Agencies of Chicago designed to guide workers in the "Americanization" of their work, which she interpreted to denigrate the Italian emigrants when it read, "The Italian is not found in large numbers in industry."

Her eloquent commendation of that statement (her words, adopted here) was to list the names of the more than 3,000 Italians working in more than 150 different industries. She viewed her summation of her countrymen's accomplishments in business as the victory it was. She explicitly declared that victory

by writing, in all capitalized letters, “HERE IS TO YOU, ITALIAN EMIGRANT. MY BROTHER, YOU HAVE MADE GOOD.”

It is in the spirit of this nearly hundred-year-old declaration that I try to make good for our 2022-2023 year. I am grateful for those who braved the torrential downpour on June 8, 2022, and spent the day with us at our golf outing (if I owe you a voucher, please reach out to me!). I am grateful for all the support we are seeing with our Installation dinner, ad book, and sponsorships. I am grateful for my fellow officers who have been a guiding light on understanding what this society as a whole wants, to make our causes successful. After all, this is not about me. It is about us.

So, as we move forward into this year, I hope you will continue to help me make good for our Society by participating in and attending our events. Those who want more suburban events: we hear you. On October 20, 2022, we will host our past president’s dinner at Café La Cave in Des Plaines, and on February 2, 2023, we are bringing back our Bocce tournament to take place at Mazzini-Verdi in Franklin Park. I am excited to go north of North Avenue and west of Harlem. I am less excited to lose in the first round of that tournament.

For the Endowment Fund’s scholarship dinner, we will be at Rosebud on Taylor on November 17, 2022.

The 2022-2023 year for the Society will then conclude with the trio of events that I love too much to change a detail of: the Children’s Endowment Fund dinner will be at LuxBar on March 16, 2023; the nomination of officer’s meeting will be at Tufano’s on April 20, 2023; and I will pass the presidential torch to my colleague and friend Michael Pisano on May 18, 2023, at Gibson’s.

Dr. Cipriani concluded her introduction to the original 1926 publication with the statement that “A good Italian will make an excellent American.” Before getting there, she re-framed the statement that gave purpose in her four-year-long task of compiling the directory as a question: could Italian emigrants easily assimilate American ideals?

She answered it as follows:

“If the ideals are the ideals of previous American generations, rigid in their morality, stern in their sense of justice, fervid in their love of their family and their race, they certainly can.”

Our families who came before us met the challenge of assimilation without compromising the values and heritage of their Italian culture. As Justinians, we continue the tradition of the latter, while having excelled way beyond assimilation, into being leaders of the legal field.

It is on us collectively to do what we do best. Mentor law students and young lawyers. Build a shared knowledge of the field of law among our members. Spend time together to further our profession and efforts – and also have some fun.

In other words: continue to make good!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruno R. Marasso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bruno" being the most prominent.

Bruno R. Marasso  
President