



UPDATE

Italic Institute of America
“Italian Pride on a Classical Foundation”

March, 2018

www.italic.org



Those Sly Italians!

In our last communication we reported that NY Consul General Francesco Genuardi had failed to answer two appeals from Institute associate and State Assemblyman Anthony D’Urso (D-NY) concerning the appointment of an Italian American to the Board of the Italian Academy at Columbia University. The Academy operates out of *La Casa Italiana*, a six-story palazzo built and donated by Italian Americans in 1927. It was operated by, and for, Italian Americans for 63 years until the university sold it to Italy in 1990. Then, the Italian Language Dept. was evicted and the building routinely closed to undergraduates, including Italian American students.



La Casa Italiana was a community effort.

Assemblyman D’Urso is not one to be put off, even by discourteous Italian diplomats. He finally telephoned CG Genuardi and arranged a meeting. Italic Institute Director John Mancini was invited in recognition of our ten-year struggle for Italian American justice. The Italians had a surprise for us.

We were informed that there was no need to appoint an Italian American because the Board already had one. To our surprise, Genuardi explained that Boardmember Gianni Riotta lives in New Jersey and teaches (“visiting professor”) at Princeton. The reality is Riotta was born in Palermo, raised in Italy and studied here for his Master’s Degree. He is an Italian journalist who “*divides his time between Rome and New York*” according to his bio. In short, he does not share anything near the Italian American experience. Nevertheless, we asked to meet Signor Riotta. That was over a month ago.

On-Line or Off

Read our blogs at italic.org or sign up for hard copies of 2018 blogs with the enclosed response card. We also welcome your comments.

The Rule, Not the Exception

La Casa Italiana is not the only institution where Italian Americans are scarce. The Bank of America, founded by Amadeo Giannini as the bank of Italy in 1904, has only one Italian American senior officer - CFO Paul Donofrio. The bank’s Board of Directors has none, but does have an Irish chairman Brian Moynihan, two African Americans and an Hispanic.



**Bank of America
World Headquarters
Charlotte, NC**

Giannini’s line of succession ended with his son Mario’s death in 1952. His daughter Claire took her father’s seat on the Board until the 1980s. After that, Italian Americans were hard to come by...and still are.

Italian Name Blackened

John Mancini’s blog of February 12th was about Black History Month and how African Americans are a power group. He didn’t know it then but the day before, the *NY Daily News* had this cover. →



The school principal is Patricia Catania. From what we read, Catania was slammed for ordering an English teacher to follow school curriculum rather than deviate into Black history. Black History was already included in Social Studies classes. An insurrection at the mostly Black school followed.

Black leaders speed-dialed the *Daily News* and Catania is now labeled a racist and fighting for her career.

[We thank Dennis Mancini for bringing this to our attention.]