

President's Corner
CSJ President's Message

I wish you all a very Happy New Year. The CSJ is looking forward to a very productive New Year. I spent many hours during the week of January 9th, watching or listening to the confirmation proceedings, on behalf of Judge Samuel A. Alito, Jr. to the Supreme Court. I only hope by the time you read this paper, the Judge will have already been confirmed and sworn into office.

In November 2004, the National CSJ placed a full page ad in the *New York Times*, supporting the nomination of Judge Alito. We are proud to say that the *New York State CSJ* contributed **Ten Thousand Dollars** towards the payment for that ad.

Shortly before the New Year Holiday, we were notified by fax that Ambassador Charles A. Gargano, National Co-Chair – Italian Americans for Judge Alito Coalition was organizing a rally, at Columbus Circle on Saturday, January 7th at 11:30 AM. The NYS Grand Lodge was represented by Salvatore Lanzalotta, Second Vice President, Bruce Lankewish, Treasurer and Marianne Ann O'Neil, Executive Director. Sal was afforded the opportunity to speak on behalf of OSIA. Together with me, representing CSJ were Rose DePinto, John Fratta, Frank Grillo, Robert Necci and Mary Ann Smith, all of whom held up the CSJ banner. I spoke on behalf of CSJ and proudly supported the Judge's nomination with the following words:

"I am here today on behalf of the Commission for Social Justice, the anti-defamation arm of the Order Sons of Italy in America. The Italian American Community has galvanized in support of the nomination of Judge Samuel A. Alito, Jr. to the Supreme Court because we are proud of his accomplishments and are confident in his ability to interpret the Constitution, fairly and justly. Judge Alito personifies the qualities Americans seek in a Supreme Court Justice.

He has an excellent record - his judicial decisions have been based on existing law and facts of a case – he does not legislate from the bench or create new policies based on his personal opinion, as many of his opponents would have us believe.

We only ask that our Senators and the Judicial Committee consider Judge Alito's exemplary background and experience on the Federal Bench, when deliberating his nomination. Contrived and politically motivated criticism must not derail his nomination.

The Senate has an obligation to give Judge Alito a fair hearing and we are confident that Judge Alito's exceptional legal acumen and fair-minded character will prevail. Thank you."

CSJ proudly joined with other Italian American Organizations to support a person and an issue that is important to us. This is what we are all about!!

Last month, New Jersey Governor Codey presented David Chase, creator of the "Soprano's" with a 'first of the kind filmmaking award' because he produced a show "unlike anything else on television." I personally hope that we never see anything like it again. A letter was sent to Governor Codey, with a copy to John Corzine, Governor Elect of New Jersey

WNBC recently aired a new show, "The Book of Daniel." Daniel is an Episcopal priest, with many problems that he discusses directly with Jesus. Daniel has an extremely dysfunctional family, including an alcoholic wife, a drug dealing daughter and a brother-in-law who absconds with Three Million Dollars from the Church/School building fund. The dialogue includes numerous bigoted comments and remarks. Daniel approaches Father Frank, an *Italian American Catholic priest*, asking for his assistance in finding the stolen money. In the last scene, Father Frank advises Daniel that through his connections, the money has been found. However, there is a string attached - the Capelli Brothers must build the school. Daniel asks what would happen if he used another contractor. Father Frank replies, "I guess we didn't find your money!" The show ends leaving the audience with the impression that all Italian Americans are involved with the mob, even if they are members of the clergy. A letter just went out to the Program Director of WNBC. I can only advise our members to avoid this atrocious show.

We welcome Enrico Annichiarico to the Executive Council as Vice President – Positive Image. Rick is no stranger to the CSJ having been very active in the past few years as District I Liaison Chairperson, where he has done a great job. I look forward to working with him in his new capacity.

Carol D’Auria, a WINS newscaster, has agreed to join with us as a member of the CSJ Advisory Board. We welcome Carol, who in addition to her position at WINS, operates an Italian Language Immersion School for Children, in Long Beach, NY.

Our new Italian American Women’s poster has just arrived from the printer. We are so proud of this poster, depicting our modern Italian American women and their contributions to society. The posters are available for distribution to schools, put up in libraries, Lodge facilities and general circulation. Please contact Tony Corsello.

The CSJ has again joined with the MetroNorth Region of B’nai B’rith International in a 6th jointly sponsored essay contest for high school students entitled “2006 Enlighten America – Enlighten the World Youth Essay Award.” Three prizes are offered – 1st - \$500. U.S. Savings Bond; 2nd - \$250. U.S. Savings Bond and 3rd - \$100. U.S. Savings Bond. A certificate of participation will be issued to all students submitting an essay. A copy of the notice is reproduced in this issue of Justice.

Sal Marasa, District V Liaison Chairperson, arranged a ceremony at the Rockland County Courthouse on October 11, 2005 for the Rededication of the Statue of Christopher Columbus, in celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the founding of OSIA. Nine lodges from District V participated in the ceremony, which was presided over by Clarkstown Councilman Ralph Mandia. The ceremony included a Color Guard, Pledge, National Anthem, Invocation, Introduction of Dignitaries and speakers. Among the speakers were Rockland County Commissioners, Judges, Assemblymen, Town Supervisor and County Executive. Participation in the ceremony by Rockland County officials was extraordinary. The wreath was presented by Sal Marasa and members of OSIA. We are very proud of Sal Marasa and the members of the Order that worked diligently on this successful event. Sal has been appointed to serve on the Rockland County Board of Governors for a term of five years. He has also been asked to serve as Community Liaison for Assemblyman Kenneth Zebrowski. Sal certainly presents a positive image of Italian Americans in all that he does in his community.

I spoke to Lou Giambra, District VIII Liaison Chairperson. He is feeling better and will continue to serve as Chairperson.

Remember to save the date of our annual fund raiser– **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2006** – this year we are honoring Santina Haemmerle, CSJ Immediate Past President, for all her hard work and tireless dedication to the Commission for Social Justice, OSIA; and Thomas Suozzi, Nassau County Executive, who supports our causes. It will be held at Russo’s on the Bay, starting at 12:30 PM. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Remember if you are a member of OSIA you are a member of the CSJ!!!

Addendum: We extend our sincere congratulations to Judge Samuel A. Alito, Jr. on his confirmation as an Associate Justice on the highest court in the nation.