

October 2026
Volume 6, Issue 10

ARIZONA ITALIAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chamber was in Washington DC for both the Columbus Day Proclamation and the NIAF 2026 gala...

We work hard to maintain relationships at all levels in the USA and beyond. Regional, National and International relationships are very important to increasing the visibility of our Italian American community in Arizona.

Proclamation:

At the White House, we stood with many other groups and leaders as the President Proclaimed Columbus Day. We saw old friends and made new friends. We do our best to attend each year, regardless of who is in office.



Columbus Day proclamation at the White House

NIAF Gala:

At the gala, we were able to celebrate with roughly 1,600 attendees from around the world. Sebastian Maniscalco and the other honorees were great to see. As always, Chris Macchio's voice was perfect and it's tough to get a better Mistress of Ceremonies than Maria Bartiromo.

The National Italian American Foundation is an incredible organization...we recommend you consider joining.

<https://www.niaf.org/>



NIAF gala

City of Glendale Proclamation...thank you to Mayor Jerry Weiers!

We had a great night at Pizzicata Glendale as Mayor Jerry Weiers and Chief of Staff Adam Santiago read the proclamation of the City of Glendale on Columbus Day. We're appreciative of owners Freddie & Viola for hosting. Special thanks to our Ambassador Mario Licciardi for all his hard work as well.



City of Glendale proclamation

3 New members joining the Chamber!!!

Western Alliance Bank - Matt Benidt and his team are exceptional. Western Alliance Bank delivers deep industry expertise and personalized solutions with the financial strength of a top-performing national commercial bank, backed by strong liquidity and high insured-deposit levels that give businesses a stable, resilient banking partner. westernalliancebankcorporation.com



Leyton - Leyton USA is a global consulting firm specializing in financial incentives, tax services, and innovation funding solutions. The Chamber thanks Neil DeLucia for his commitment and looks forward to their future business growth. leyton.com



Leyton

Chef Brandon Gioffre - Chef Brandon Gioffre is a big part of the magic that makes DiMaggio's NYC Italian dishes so spectacular. He moved to AZ from New York some years ago and had a dream that is becoming a reality. He's of Calabrian descent and he incorporates his family's recipes into the menu. Welcome Brandon! Dimaggiosrestaurant.com



Chef Brandon Gioffre

Chamber Renewals:

Of course...our renewing members that have strongly helped build the Chamber...

Deaf Protection - Thank you to Marlene Buffa and Deaf Protection. We're grateful for the years of support. We're always very appreciative of you and your company.

Our gala sponsor list is growing again!

APS has committed to sponsor our gala!

We'd like to thank APS for their support. Having a strong local company that serves so many in our area means a lot to us. We work hard and so do they! APS.com

Italian American candidates...

The Chamber is not a very political group, but we do wish our candidates success and luck. To be clear, we are nonpartisan and political party is not as relevant as it is to support those of our culture and heritage. Representative Leo Biasiucci, Robb Olivieri, Michelle Ugenti-Rita, Frank Abasciano, Danny Mazza, Mike Mazzocco, Joe Pizzilo, Mike Del Prete, Matt Orlando and many others are on the ballot. Maybe some of them have beliefs that align with you.

Financials for September:

\$7,612 revenue / \$5,977 expenses

\$25,456 cash / Zero debt

* The AZ Italian American Chamber receives no public funding.

* All Chamber personnel are 100% volunteers



NIAF gala stage



Upcoming Italian American Events

(Chamber event dates are highlighted)

Oct 27

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

ASU Poetry & Picnic

Feb 6

6:00 pm – 10:00 pm

6th Annual Arizona Italian American 2027 Gala

Feb 20

5:00 pm – 10:00 pm

Leonardo DaVinci Lodge 2992 – CARNEVALE DI VENEZIA 2027

Corporate Members

- The Maggiore Group (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- Western Alliance Bank (Professional & Business Services)
- BMW Chapman (Professional & Business Services)
- GCON (Professional & Business Services)
- First International Bank & Trust – (Professional & Business Services)
- Riot Hospitality Group (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- ICAP Italian Citizenship Assistance Program (Professional & Business Services)
- Greco & Sons (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- WIPFLI (Professional & Business Services)

Small Business / Non-Profit Members

- Leyton – Neil DeLucia (Professional & Business Services)
- Chef Brandon Gioffre (Individual Member)
- DiMaggio's - Frank DiMaggio (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- MDF Development - Frank DiMaggio (Professional & Business Services)
- The Agency - Frank DiMaggio (Professional & Business Services)
- Go Media - Gregg Ostro (Professional & Business Services)
- Workplace Integrity Institute - Gregg Ostro (Professional & Business Services)
- Pizzicata - Federico Venturini (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- Matteo Bellesi - Juventus Academy Prospect (Individual Member)

Small Business / Non-Profit Members continued

- Italian Dual Citizenship - Marco Permunian (Professional & Business Services)
- Sal Guagliardo - (Individual Member)
- Grand Canyon Valuations - Frank Ugenti (Professional & Business Services)
- Corporate Insurance Solutions - John Mustacci (Professional & Business Services)
- Rizzo Financial Group (Professional & Business Services)
- Latest Craze Productions (Professional & Business Services)
- Aristocrat Architectural Facade Systems (Home Services & Supplies)
- Crescita Management Group, Inc. (Professional & Business Services)
- Arizona Roofing Systems (Home Services & Supplies)
- Ryan Austin & Associates, LLC (Professional & Business Services)
- Creations in Catering (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- Pasta Rea (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- Optimum Vision and Eye Care (Healthcare & Healthy Lifestyle)
- Paragon Contracting, LLC (Professional & Business Services)
- Dahir Tax and Accounting Firm (Professional & Business Services)
- Anchor Funding (Mortgage Lending)
- Arizona Real Estate Investors Association (Professional & Business Services)
- Deaf Protection (Professional & Business Services)
- Mario Licciardi (Real Estate Sales)
- Marco's Tankless LLC (Home Services & Supplies)
- Greenlink Human Capital Management (Professional & Business Services)
- The Fiorini Agency (Professional & Business Services)
- Tutti Santi (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- Prime Mechanical Solutions - A Caruso Company (FULL-Service air conditioning and refrigeration company)

Small Business / Non-Profit Members continued

- D-MAK Productions (Business & Professional Services)
- Valentino Signature Services - Investigations & Consulting (Professional & Business Services)
- Soto Law Firm -Sheala De Martini (Professional & Business Services)
- Universal Strategies Limited (Professional & Business Services)
- Desert Dimensions (Real Estate Sales & Rental)
- Always This Good (Professional & Business Services)
- Comparion Insurance Agency (Professional & Business Services)
- Virtu Honest Craft / Pizzeria Virtu (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- Laundry Wheel (Professional & Business Services)
- Dolce Vita (Specialty Food & Beverage)
- Phoenician Properties Realty LLC (Real Estate Sales & Rental)
- WestPac Wealth Partners (Business and Professional Services)
- Canyon State Landscape Co (Home & Garden)
- Gustavo Dalotto (Individual Member)
- Remember The Name (Advertising Specialties)
- Total Gavone Clothing - (Arts, Culture, & Entertainment)
- Italian Harmony [Bakery, Cucina, & Deli] - (Specialty, Food, & Beverage)
- Arizona Pain and Posture (Healthcare & Healthy Lifestyle)
- Affronti & Sons (Real Estate Sales & Rental)
- Fantastica Italia - Customized Vacations (Tours and Vacation Service)
- The Italian Daughter (Restaurant, Food, & Beverage)
- Magnum's Cigar, Wine, & Liquor (Specialty Food & Beverage)
- ExtraVirgin Properties (Real Estate Sales & Rental)

Here are some the many Italian American organizations in the national community that we support and collaborate with...let us know if you need any help with introductions or would like to recommend others:

NIAF	National Italian American Foundation
IALF	Italian American Leadership Forum
IACC	Italy America Chamber of Commerce
UNICO	Unico National
ITA	Italian Trade Agency
CCF	Columbus Citizens Foundation
IACRL	Italian American Civil Rights League
IEHS	Italian Enclaves Historical Society
HCIA	Honorary Consulate of Italy in Arizona
CCCIAC	Carefree & Cave Creek Italian American Club
FHIIG	Fountain Hills Italian Interest Group
IACSN	Italian American Club of Southern Nevada (Las Vegas)
The Founders	Arizona Italian Business Group
IABA Colorado	Italian American Business Association of Colorado
IAMLA	Italian American Museum of Los Angeles
OSDIA	Order Sons & Daughters of Italy in America
IABF	Italian American Baseball Foundation
Phoenix Sister Cities	Catania
IAOA	Italian Association of Arizona
SFIAC	San Francisco Italian Athletic Club
ICOCNC	Italian Chamber of Commerce of Northern California
LISJ	Little Italy San Jose
LILAA	Little Italy of Los Angeles Association
Il Circolo	Italian Cultural Society
Casa Belvedere	The Italian Cultural Foundation
IIA	Italic Institute of America
NOIAW	National Organization of Italian American Women
ASILM	American Society of Italian Legions of Merit
ICSS	Italian Cultural Society of Sacramento
IP	Italian Portland
COPOMIAO	Council of Presidents of Major Italian American Orgs.
IAFL	Italian American Future Leaders

CEO's Message

This month let's address Columbus Day... the differing opinions and why.

Please go ahead and research the day itself and how it came about.

In summary, it initially began in 1792 in NYC to mark the 300th anniversary of the landing.

The day was later proclaimed by the US government after the lynchings of a group of Italian Americans in New Orleans in 1892.

There has been controversy because of the more barbaric nature of the times. Columbus and many others of his day have done things that we would not deem acceptable today.

Thus, some prefer that the day's name is changed to "Italian Heritage Day" or perhaps named after a different Italian to celebrate.

The Italian American community also understands that some in the Native American community are sensitive to the history. Italian Americans consider Native Americans friends in the modern era.

Many Italian Americans feel that this has been our day for a long time, it was given to the Italian American community in recognition of our contributions, and they feel coerced into changing it. Columbus "the man" and Columbus "the day" are the same but different. The pride in the day is more so what Italian Americans are attached to and with good reason. There are many locations, cities, etc. named after Columbus as well. The man is less of a focus but is attached. With that said, his voyage and bravery are celebrated. His less civilized actions are not. There is also some misinformation. It's a complicated issue and becomes more complicated when we try to look at Columbus stories through the lens of the modern day.

In the end, this is our day... regardless of the namesake or history. I believe history is to be learned from. To erase or modify it may not yield the result intended.

Sincerely,

Pete