



New Book Portrays History of Italian Americans on Staten Island

(February 14, 2008)



“The Staten Island Italian-American Experience,” by Jerome Krase, ed. Tevah Platt, foreword by Richard Guarasci. Published by the Wagner College DaVinci Society, Grymes Hill, Staten Island, N.Y. Release date: Sept. 25, 2007. Paperback; color photos; 228 pages.



“Five hundred years ago an Italian discovered America; five hundred years later Americans have yet to discover Italians.” (Jerome Krase, *The Staten Island Italian-American Experience*).

The Italian American community constitutes nearly forty percent of the total population of Staten Island, yet much of what has been written about the members of that community to date is little more than caricature.

Now, for perhaps the first time, a distinguished social scientist has written a comprehensive study of the history of Italian Americans on Staten Island.

Jerome Krase’s new book, *The Staten Island Italian-American Experience* was unveiled at a Sept. 24 scholarship fund-raising dinner by the Wagner College DaVinci Society, which had commissioned the project. Krase completed his work on the book while he was a visiting scholar at Wagner College, during the 2005-06 academic year.

The book combines Krase’s eight-chapter, 112-page survey with 29 individual histories of prominent Staten Island Italian-American families and a 32-page album of historic family photos.

Jerome Krase, former chairman of the Sociology Department at Brooklyn College, is currently professor emeritus. He is a frequent visitor, researcher, and lecturer to Italy, where he has held short-term visiting professorships at the University of Rome, La Sapienza and the University of Trento. He has also lectured or presented papers at the Universities of Bari, Genoa, Padua, Perugia, Pisa and Trieste.

Among the many books Krase has edited or co-authored are *Italian Americans in a Multicultural Society* (editor, with Judith N. De Sena — Stony Brook, N.Y.: Forum Italicum, 1994), *The Review of Italian American Studies* (with Frank Sorrentino — Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2000), and *Race and Ethnicity in New York City* (editor, with Ray Hutchison — Elsevier, 2005).

Krase continues to be involved in the study and interpretation of Staten Island’s Italian-American community. On Sunday, Oct. 21, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., he and architectural historian Francis Morrone will lead a tour for the Municipal Art Society of New York, entitled “More Than Pizza: Staten Island’s Italian Heritage.” For program information, visit the Municipal Art Society Web site at www.mas.org, click on “Walking, Bus and Boat Tours,” then scroll down to the Staten Island tour description.

The DaVinci Society of Wagner College, which commissioned Krase’s study of Staten Island’s Italian-American community, was established seven years ago to promote greater understanding of Italy and the contributions of Italian Americans to America’s vibrant democratic culture. The society sponsors two important scholarship programs: Since its founding in 2000, the DaVinci Society has sent more than 40 of Wagner’s best honors graduates to Italy, courtesy of the society’s “City as Text” scholarship.

Two years ago, the DaVinci Society — in partnership with the Columbus Citizens Foundation and Wagner College — established the “Adopt-a-Scholar” scholarship. Each year, the partnership awards a four-year, \$60,000 Wagner College scholarship to a Staten Island student of Italian heritage who has demonstrated academic excellence and financial need.

The DaVinci Society has also donated \$30,000 toward the placement of a full-time Italian-language professor at Wagner College. This year, that gift helped bring Colclough Sanders to Wagner as a visiting professor of Italian.

Copies of “*The Staten Island Italian-American Experience*” are now available for purchase at \$30 per copy, including shipping and handling. Make all checks payable to Wagner College. Mail your order to:

Betty McComiskey
Reynolds House



Wagner College
1 Campus Rd.
Staten Island, NY 10301

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