

Consulate General Presents Run with Excellence

Kayla Pantano (November 09, 2016)



The Run with Excellence team presented its project at the Consulate General of Italy in New York with a group of inspiring speakers, many of whom ran in the New York Marathon just days following this reception.

Just two days before the [New York Marathon](#) [2], the [Consulate General of Italy in New York](#) [3] presented [Run with Excellence. With Italy. Around the World](#) [4]'s 2016 activities followed by a reception showcasing the tastes of the northern Italian region of Liguria. The evening was full of stories, discussing the likes of nutrition, sports education, the NYC Marathon, and the excellences of Liguria. It was a passionate Italian affair and a beautiful send-off for the runners participating in the race.

Run with Excellence balances three different passions: sports, Italy, and healthy food. The project aims to link sports to cultural institutions and local businesses in order to raise awareness on the importance of a healthy lifestyle, also in terms of nutrition and ecology.



As part of the initiative, the team takes part in major sporting events and engages Italian athletes as ambassadors of Made in Italy. The program also promotes Italian products, brands, and companies around the world. Furthermore, it organizes conferences and workshops involving national and international associations, like [Slow Food](#) [5] and [Let's Move](#) [6]. The overarching goal is to promote Italian handicraft, agri-food, and culture at various sporting events, founded by [CNA Liguria](#) [7] and Il Chinotto nella Rete and Abaton, and sponsored by the Liguria Region and the Municipality and Chamber of Commerce of Savona.

The project has been presented at the Turin Marathon, as well as at the Giardini dei Chinotti di Savona inauguration, where the Run with Excellence team announced they would be representing the Ligurian town at the NYC Marathon. The team also had a stand at the Javits Center as part of the [TCS New York City Marathon Health and Wellness Expo](#) [8] running from November 3 to November 5. Run With Excellence will also participate in the Firenze Marathon on November 27.

[Ferrero](#) [9] is one of the many companies that has embraced the initiative. Chief Operating Supply Officer [Aldo Uva](#) [10] explained, "Sports have a lot to do with our company. Ferrero has always been committed not only to making delicious desserts but also to supporting sports and a healthy lifestyle and diet."

[Leonardo Cenci](#) [11], who has been battling with cancer for four years, was also in attendance. As of Sunday, Cenci became the second cancer patient in the world and the first Italian to run in the event—his ninth time participating in the race. In 2012, he was diagnosed with lung cancer and subsequently decided not to run; however, the event ended up being canceled because of Hurricane Sandy. "A sign of destiny, like saying I had to wait, but then I could return."

At the Consulate, Cenci gestured to his oncologist and expressed his thanks for her ongoing support. "If I am well, it's thanks to her. Without this woman I could not be here, ready to race on Sunday."

Alex Toselli of [Albergo Etico](#) [12], a hotel and restaurant where people with disabilities work together to offer costumers high quality service, gave a moving speech before bringing to the stage Niccolò Valais, a boy with Down Syndrome who works at the hotel.

"Albergo Etico creates paths of autonomy and independence for people with intellectual disabilities, but through a road that makes us see what we can do."

He went on to proudly announce that Vallese will be running with him at the marathon.

"I do not know if we will arrive at the finish line, but we will be there to participate and to tell this story."

Famed marathon runner, [Franca Fiacconi](#) [13], who won the NYC Marathon in 1998 with a time of 2 hours and 25 minutes, closed the evening with her inspiring tale.

"I had not come to New York that year, in the sense that I already finished second in '96, but then they did not accept me into the Olympics, so I was a little angry. In '97, I came in third. Then '98 was a special year for me. I won the Rome Marathon, the championship in Turin, and then 10 days before the European Championship, I had a health problem and only placed in fourth. So I said, 'I just have to redo'. And that's what happened thanks to the New York Marathon."

Guests then experienced the real tastes of Liguria with food and drinks before sending off the team of Italian runners in their 26.2-mile endeavor.

Of the many runners, Consul Francesco Genuardi was one of them, finishing the marathon with a time of 3 hours and 55 minutes.

"It was an exciting race, even though I started feeling my injury again. At the 26th mile I began to suffer from cramps and harsh pains because of the inflammation in my leg muscles. However, the atmosphere created by New Yorkers and their encouragement transported me to the finish. A unique



and unforgettable experience, it brought me home to Italy, filled with beautiful emotions and the desire to continue to fight against the difficulties of life," he shared.

Sara and Nicola of the San Patrignano running team also shared their day's experiences, finishing together with a time of 3 hours and 44 minutes.

"A wonderful day, it started well especially because of the favorable weather conditions. A beautiful race, even if it represents one of the most insidious marathons ever for the ups and downs of the bridges, of the streets, of New York. The atmosphere remains the same as always, the children with their mothers, the African Americans with their music and all of the inhabitants of New York that carry you to the finish," Sara said.

"An unforgettable experience, the national spirit of the event pulls you and helps you in the distance of the 43,195 kilometers. I carry in my heart this image: the net of differences of the neighborhoods that we passed during the course is canceled thanks to the marathon," Nicola added.

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- [1] <http://newsite.ility.org/files/marathonnewyorkitalianmembersanpatrignano.jpg>
- [2] <http://www.tcsnycmarathon.org>
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- [4] <http://www.runwithexcellence.com/en/with-italy-around-the-world/>
- [5] <https://www.slowfoodusa.org>
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- [12] <http://www.albergoetico.it>
- [13] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franca_Fiacconi