

New York State Commission for Social Justice
2019 Summer Plenary Session
Report

Brothers and Sisters;

I want to thank all our Brothers and Sisters for their support for our CSJ.

CSJ Luncheon

We are in the process of planning our Annual CSJ Luncheon, which will be held on February 23, 2020. It will take place at Russo's on the Bay. Some of the honorees will be our Immediate Past President Robert Ferrito and our soon to be National President Nancy DiFiore Quinn. Other honorees will be decided in the near future. Please place this date on your calendars.

Update on our efforts to preserve Columbus Day

The fight continues to defend and preserve our Columbus holiday. We all must remain strong in this fight by those that want to go around and spread falsehoods and outright lies about Columbus. Our job at hand is to give everyone the tools they need to fight back against the false narrative that is being pushed by those in the education field, on the campuses and universities and by certain, politicians that are just pandering for votes.

Our coalition is now in the process of going national to spread the correct story of Columbus and to fight the falsehoods being placed in the various states and cities.

In Southampton, the taxpayers were successful in electing another pro-Columbus member of the school board. Thanks to the hard

work of Rocco Corriero, Lou Gallo and a group of Southampton citizens this was accomplished. Rest assured, the Columbus holiday will be placed back on the schoolboard calendar next year.

Columbus, as Taught in the Schools

The sub-committee that I set-up has been working extremely hard in investigating what the various history textbooks are saying about Columbus. They have already found that one publisher says something positive in one part of our Country while saying the opposite in another part of our Country. This work that is being conducting is a very arduous job and will take many hours to complete. I want to thank Lou Gallo for chairing this committee and his committee members, Vince Marmorale and Carl Ciaccio. Once this part of the assignment is completed, we will begin to arrange meetings with the State Board of Regents, the Board of School Supervisors, the Association of History Teachers and the publishing companies.

Our New Columbus Brochure

The CSJ has produced a brochure called “The True Legacy of Christopher Columbus”. This brochure puts in the hands to all who come across those that want to attack Columbus. Our brochure gives them the ammunition to respond to the many false narratives and charges they make about Columbus. We printed 500 copies of this document and they were gone in a flash at our convention. We have since printed thousands more to make them available to anyone who requests them. I want to thank Marianne Bortone Prince, Keith Wilson and Lou Gallo for the hard work in getting this brochure completed.

New York Times Apology

I am still pressing the New York Times for an apology for their reporting of the New Orleans Massacre. To date, they have ignored our requests. We are working on the next steps that need to be taken and I will keep you informed of any future actions.

Suffolk County Presiding Officer Dwayne Gregory

Presiding Officer Dwayne Gregory made inflammatory remarks against Italian American Officials at a Council meeting. These remarks were carried live on News12 and were in Newsday. The issue revolved around the appointment of Sgt. Gigante to a promotion in the DA's office. There was a problem of nepotism because Gigante's uncle is the Chief of the Suffolk County Police Department. In his remarks Gregory said, "I will not be intimidated by these Soprano type gangsters". Myself and some of our executive board members attended their next meeting of the Council and demanded a public apology from Gregory for his bigoted remarks. After our testimonies, Gregory responded that his remarks were not meant to offend the Italian American Community and that his son is an Italian American. This issue is part of a criminal case involving certain elected officials and corruption in the Police Department regarding hiring. He then said, "if I offended you, I apologize to you. For us there was no "if" I offended you, Gregory did offend the Italian American Community with his bigoted and stereotypical remarks that we hear so often. Another meeting was attended and again he was asked for a public apology but again he refused.

Mother Cabrini Statue

Mayor DeBlasio announced that we need statues of prominent women in New York. In a survey that was conducted by the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, Mother Cabrini garnered the most votes, 219 votes. Jane Jacobs came in second with a mere 93 votes. The Mayor and his wife decided that statues should be constructed

in honor of Shirley Chisholm 91 votes, Katherine Walker 68 votes, Elizabeth Jennings Graham 17 votes, Billie Holiday 16 votes and Dr. Helen Rodrigues Trias 7 votes. A few months ago, I sent a letter to the Mayor requesting a meeting with him and our current president and our past presidents. That letter received no response. I had a meeting with Joe Sciame and other community leaders to find ways to add Mother Cabrini to that list. I will keep you informed of our progress.

A New Bookmark

A new bookmark for Basketball legend Hank Luisetti has been printed and was available at this year's convention. In 1936, Hank reinvented the sport of basketball. He popularized the one-handed shot and the behind the back dribble. Hank is known as the man who changed basketball.

CSJ has updated our complaint report and directory. This new form was sent to all lodge presidents to be copied and given to all members. We are asking our members to use this form when notifying us of issues.

In closing, I am urging all to stay united and involved in our fight to defend our heritage. If you hear of any issues negatively affecting our heritage, please get it to us ASAP.

Our CSJ is only as great as the brothers and sisters on our executive board and our lodge liaisons. Each of them is totally committed to defending and promoting a positive image of our heritage. I thank each of them.

Brothers and Sisters, I want to thank you for your support to CSJ.

Fraternally,
John A. Fratta