



## Honoring Italian American Women @ the 2016 NOIAW Gala

I. I. (April 27, 2016)



The National Organization of Italian American Women Honors Alisyn Camerota and Jeanne Mariani Sullivan April 16 at the St. Regis New York

The National Organization of Italian American Women (NOIAW), the only national organization for women of Italian ancestry, celebrated its 35th Anniversary with a Luncheon and Silent Auction at the St. Regis New York on Saturday, April 16, 2016. The event honored two accomplished Italian American women: Alisyn Camerota and Jeanne Mariani Sullivan.

Ms. Camerota is CNN anchor and co-host on CNN's morning show *New Day* with Chris Cuomo and Michaela Pereira. NOIAW Chair Maria Tamburri introduced Ms. Camerota. In accepting her award, Ms. Camerota emphasized the importance of her family's support throughout her life, saying, "Not only were the Italian women in my family wonderful role models on various levels, they were also great cheerleaders. They told me I could do whatever I aspired to do when I grew up. No one ever said, oh, maybe you shouldn't pick broadcast journalism, maybe you shouldn't set your sights on becoming a



national newscaster, that's just too competitive. No, they completely supported me, and believed in me and cheered me on, for which I'm eternally grateful today."

Ms. Sullivan is a founding principal of StarVest Partners, a New York City-based venture capital firm that invests in outstanding expansion stage technology-enabled B2B companies.

As Chief Inspiration Officer at Sullivan Adventures, Ms. Sullivan advises venture backed and multi-national companies seeking to promote opportunity, access to capital, board seats and entrepreneurship for women. NOIAW Treasurer and Luncheon Co-Chair, Maria T. Vullo, introduced Ms. Sullivan.

In her speech, Ms. Sullivan spoke eloquently about the lessons she learned from growing up in a large Italian American family, and touched on the importance of overcoming gender bias in order to get access to capital for female entrepreneurs, saying, "What made me a fierce advocate for women is this: I learned that we are 50% of the world, and we make more than 85% of the household decisions...We have clout with our \$11.5 trillion of investible assets. This is the power of the purse." In conclusion, Ms. Sullivan noted, "I am the one honoring you today - those of you who are with me to make the world a better place for young women and grown women, as role models, opening doors and funding women-led businesses, helping to fix a big problem of access to capital."

NOIAW's Founder and Chair Emerita, Dr. Aileen Riotto Sirey, recounted how NOIAW began in 1980, sparked by a conversation she had with the late Hon. Geraldine A. Ferraro. In her remarks, Dr. Sirey recognized all of the historic members of NOIAW's board present at the event, including Barbara Gerard, Joann Sicoli, CMP, Diana Femia, Judge Saliann Scarpulla, Lucrezia Gallelli, Linda Carlozzi, Justice Angela Mazzarelli, founding member Donna de Matteo, and founding member and distinguished board member, Matilda Raffa Cuomo.

Anne Marie D'Attelo, Luncheon Co-Chair, presented NOIAW's 2016 scholarship awards to Sarah Capasso (the Honorable Geraldine A. Ferraro Scholarship Award donated by John A. Zaccaro), Vanessa Corcoran (35th Anniversary Award), Victoria Calabrese (award in honor of Barbara Garodnick, sister of Dr. Aileen Riotto Sirey, NOIAW Founder & Chair Emerita).

Unable to be present were scholarship award winners Maria Marotti (35th Anniversary Award), and Stefania Patinella (award in honor of David A. and Rita D. Martone, donated by Patricia Martone.)

175 guests enjoyed a beautiful silent auction with a wide array of items, featuring gift certificates to some of New York City's best restaurants and cultural institutions, travel and heritage discovery packages in Italy, handbags by Jennifer Tattanelli, Era Balestrieri, and Cole Haan, books by Lidia Bastianich and Adriana Trigiani, deluxe gourmet baskets with the highest-quality Italian artisanal products, and a raffle of fine jewelry and handbags.

"Since our founding in 1980, NOIAW has supported and inspired Italian American women," said Maria Tamburri, NOIAW Chair. "As we celebrate our 35th anniversary, we are extremely proud to have honored Alisyn Camerota and Jeanne Mariani Sullivan, two women of the highest caliber and distinction. Alisyn and Jeanne join a long list of distinguished NOIAW honorees, including our founding member, the late Hon. Geraldine A. Ferraro; Lidia Mattichio Bastianich; Lisa Lemole Oz; and many more."

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## ABOUT NOIAW

The National Organization of Italian American Women is the only national organization for women of Italian ancestry. Its mission is to unite and connect women through Italian culture and heritage; to celebrate the achievements of women of Italian ancestry; to inspire and enrich members with shared interests in cultural programs; and to empower and advance the educational and professional aspirations of current and future generations.

For more information about NOIAW, its members and programs, or to become a member, visit



[www.noiaaw.org](http://www.noiaaw.org) [2], call (212) 642-2003). The National Organization of Italian American Women, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by law.

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