

## **Mobilization to sustain the AP Italian exam**

Since the 2005-2006 academic year, with the support of the Italian Government and the Italian American community, the College Board introduced the Advanced Placement Program Italian, which reached in May 2008 its third edition.

The AP program already exists for other subjects; it allows high school students to obtain College credits during their last year of High School: this is a considerable opportunity to save time and money during their university years.

The exam is prestigious, thanks to its reliability and the vast recognition conferred to it by universities.

For this reason the Italian Government and many of the Italian American Associations have been strongly committed to the establishment of the program. Among these individuals and organizations are Matilda and Margaret Cuomo; the Columbus Citizens Foundation; the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) the Order Sons of Italy in America; UNICO; and the American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI).

Now, though, due to the well known financial difficulties of the American education system, this big opportunity for students and this symbol of American esteem for Italian language and culture is in danger of being discontinued after 2008-09 unless external funding can be secured to supplement the original investment.

The meeting between the Italian Ambassador to the United States, Giovanni Castellaneta, and the College Board President Gaston Caperton to discuss possible solutions concluded with a call for the creation of a task force dedicated to improving the number of applicant students, reducing expenses, raising needed funds to help sustaining the AP courses and exams in Italian.

The initial need of 6 millions has been reduced to 4 millions following the decision to convert the exam from Pencil and Paper into “on line” process, reducing administrative costs.

To save the exam, one million US Dollars must be collected by next October, the remaining by the end of June 2009.

Commitment by all of us is of the greatest importance, we must reach the following two goals:

1. increase number of students taking the exam, both by augmentung the number of schools which offering the AP exam, and encouraging home schooled students to take this opportunity;
2. raising funding so that AP Italian can continue for years and generations to come.

Therefore we appeal to Italian and Italian American communities for the achievement of so important a goal.

Ms. Matilda and Ms. Margaret Cuomo have announced that a new foundation, with qualified financial and legal support, has been created, the “Italia Language Foundation”, and an escrow account will be soon available.

At the same time, Italian Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta has decided to make the new Foundation “Villa Firenze” available to the fundraising.

The Embassy in Washington and the Consular network in the US will make info available on the two foundations.

