

National Italian American Foundation

Italian Language and Culture Teacher of the Year Award

Information for the Year 2011

The National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) was founded in 1975 as a non-profit, non-partisan organization in Washington, DC. The NIAF is the major advocate in Washington, DC for nearly 26 million Italian Americans, the nation's fifth largest ethnic group. Its mission is to preserve and protect Italian American heritage and culture. One of the NIAF's top priorities is the promotion of the Italian language. In this effort, in 2011, the NIAF will honor a teacher for excellence in Italian language and culture classroom education. (See the NIAF website at www.niaf.org.)

A selection committee will select the NIAF Italian Teacher of the Year. The NIAF Italian Teacher of the Year award recipient will be announced in September of 2011 and recognized at the NIAF Education Luncheon held in conjunction with the NIAF Annual Gala and Convention on October 29, 2011. In addition, the recipient will receive a scholarship for tuition, travel and living expenses to enroll in a continuing education course for teachers of the Italian language to foreigners at the University of Perugia (see Award section for details).

Purpose

The purpose of the award is to annually recognize an outstanding educator in Italian language and culture. The recipient will have shown dedication and contribution in the field of teaching Italian. The award of a continuing education stipend aims to provide the instruments (content, methodological and bibliographical) to teachers so they can continue their professional development.

Eligibility

- All nominees must be employed by an accredited American school during the 2010-2011 school year to be eligible for nomination.
- Nominees must have a minimum of three (3) years teaching experience.
- Nominees can be teachers at public, private and/or parochial schools.
- Nominations for elementary and secondary teachers will be considered.

Candidates should be skillful, dedicated teachers who plan to actively continue classroom teaching. Most importantly, a candidate should demonstrate an ability to inspire a love of learning the Italian language and culture in students of any background.

Application Process

Teachers must be nominated by their school principal.

The application consists of two parts: 1) a cover sheet to be filled out by the school principal (nominator) and 2) the application to be filled out by the nominated teacher. The application should be typed or word-processed, and essay questions should be double-spaced. When additional pages are added, the question number and essay topic should appear at the top of each page. Limit answers to the number of pages requested in each section (type size no smaller than 10 point).

Please provide all information requested in the application form.

Material should be either single-stapled or submitted with a clip/clasp, with no binding.

The completed applications and any support materials submitted can not be returned to the applicant or nominator. We suggest the applicant keep a copy of all submitted material.

All applications must be submitted by mail in their entirety, including all attachments and letters of support. Partial or incomplete applications will not be evaluated.

Once the application has been submitted, no changes or additions will be permitted.

Applications must be post-marked by Friday, June 24, 2011. No exceptions to the deadline will be granted.

Applications should be mailed to:
NIAF Italian Teacher of the Year
1860 19th Street NW
Washington DC 20009

IMPORTANT DATES:

Application post-mark deadline:	Friday, June 24, 2011
Notification date:	September 2, 2011
Acceptance date:	September 16, 2011
Award ceremony (Washington, DC):	October 28-29, 2011
Study in Italy*:	July 15-August 2, 2012 (approximate dates)

* 2011 recipient may defer study in Italy for one year. Award expires summer 2013.

Selection Process

An Award Committee, made up of a panel familiar with Italian language, Italian culture, foreign language education and the NIAF, will meet in July 2011 to discuss the nominees and applications.

The Award Committee will evaluate applicants on a number of criteria including:

- *Creativity and innovation* in teaching Italian language and Italian culture;
- *Interdisciplinary approach*: the degree to which the connection is made between Italian language and culture and other subjects/disciplines;
- *Student impact*: evidence of a teacher's impact on inspiring students, student attitudes and on overall learning;
- *Dedication* to the advancement of teaching Italian language and culture, and *community impact*: evidence of a teacher's impact on the community (related to Italian language and/or Italian culture);
- *Professional development*: Desire to stay informed about current educational theories, foreign language education, and Italian language and culture; and
- *Letters of support* (3).
- Each applicant will participate in a *colloquium session* with the academic evaluators designated by NIAF. The colloquium will be in Italian and cover topics relating to academics, history, culture, and other relevant contemporary topics.

All nominees will be notified by September 2, 2011 of the selection of the Award Committee.

Award

- NIAF Teacher of the Year will be presented at the NIAF Education Lunch in Washington DC on Friday, October 28, 2011. Winner will be provided with roundtrip transportation to/from Washington, DC, 3 nights hotel accommodations, ticket to NIAF Awards Gala (October 29), and a stipend to cover other related travel expenses.
- NIAF Teacher of the Year will be allotted a continuing education stipend to participate in the University of Perugia's "Corso di Aggiornamento per Insegnanti D'Italiano All'Estero." Expenses paid include transportation between the US and Perugia; tuition and course fees; accommodations; and daily stipend for food at the University cafeteria.
- NIAF Teacher of the Year will participate as a speaker for NIAF Students and Graduates to Leaders Programs as requested by NIAF, during the 2011-2012 academic year, schedule permitting.
- NIAF Teacher of the Year will serve as a goodwill ambassador for NIAF promotion of the Italian language through online webinar programs and other opportunities as directed by NIAF.

For more information, visit www.niaf.org/TeacherOfTheYear or email anne@niaf.org

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