COLUMBUS CITIZENS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2026 COLUMBUS DAY PARADE LINEUP FOR WORLD'S LARGEST ITALIAN AMERICAN CELEBRATION

82nd Annual Parade to feature more than 100 groups, musical performances, Italian cultural delegations and a new Influencer Lounge on Fifth Avenue.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, October 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Columbus Citizens Foundation announces the lineup for the 82nd Annual Columbus Day Parade, taking place Monday, October 12, from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. along Fifth Avenue from 47th to 72nd Streets, with the broadcast beginning at 12pm. The world's largest celebration of Italian American heritage and culture will bring together more than 100 participating groups, with over one million viewers watching live.

During America's 250th anniversary year, the Parade will celebrate the contributions of Italian Americans to the nation's history, culture and achievements through marching bands, floats, musical performances and delegations from Italy and across the United States.

This year's Grand Marshal is Ray Dalio, founder and mentor of Bridgewater Associates, philanthropist and bestselling author. His son, Matt Dalio, founder of Endless and CEO of Endless Studios, will represent him at the parade.

Joining Matt Dalio near the front of the procession will be Parade Honorees Ambassador Leandro Rizzuto, U.S. Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States, and Evelyn C. Granieri, M.D., MPH, MSEd, renowned geriatrician and Emerita Professor of Medicine at Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons.

The opening contingent will also include 2025 Grand Marshal Joe Moglia, former Chairman and CEO of TD Ameritrade and former Head Football Coach at Coastal Carolina University; Italian Consul General Giuseppe Pastorelli; and Columbus Citizens Foundation President Christopher Loiacono and the Foundation's Board of Governors. Governor Kathy Hochul is also scheduled to participate.

Among this year's featured participants is Dominick Critelli, a 105-year-old World War II veteran and saxophonist whose national anthem performance became a viral sensation. The lineup also

includes a delegation representing Naples Mayor Gaetano Manfredi, Italian soccer legend Roberto Baggio, beloved Italian flag throwers, and Il Risveglio degli Dei, a Sicilian theater group appearing in costume. La Stampa, one of Italy's most prominent news outlets, will march in the Parade as it launches in the United States. The Knights of Columbus will bring 250 knights to participate in honor of America's 250th anniversary.

Spectators can expect marching units from the NYPD, FDNY, DSNY and other public service organizations, the U.S. Marine Forces Reserve Band, Italian police and firefighter delegations, school marching bands, cultural associations and university groups. Vehicle contingents will include the Vespa Club of New York, La Famiglia Cadillac Club and Todd & Ozzy, featuring a dog riding on a Vespa.

Red-Carpet Performances and Featured Floats

Float and red-carpet performances will feature two acts from America's Got Talent: Salvatore Romania, "Struckboy Sal," a breakdancer and former Columbus Citizens Foundation scholarship recipient, and Sal "The Voice" Valentinetti, whose viral Golden Buzzer audition captivated audiences. Valentinetti will perform tracks from his upcoming album from Keep Good Company Records. A delegation from Piccolo Coro dell'Antoniano, the renowned children's choir featured in Italy's beloved Zecchino d'Oro children's song competition, will travel to the United States for the first time in its history and perform alongside Simona Rodano. Additional performers include Jessa V. Band; Luciano Lamonarca; Alissa Salvatore; Vanessa Racci; James Valenti; Amici Band; and Lisa Messina and Angelo Venuto.

Filippo Berio serves as the Foundation's presenting sponsor. Additional sponsors include longtime supporters Gabelli Funds and Casa Building, as well as new sponsors Italian Owned Businesses of NJ and Invest in Education.

New Influencer Lounge

New this year, an Influencer Lounge north of the red-carpet stage will bring together television personalities, comedians and digital creators to celebrate Italian American culture. Featured guests include host Paul Costabile, singer Sal Valentinetti, comedian Tara Cannistraci, and Sicilian cooking sensations Roe and Pina Sparacio. The creators will also be available for media interviews.

The Parade is the centerpiece of Columbus Celebration Weekend, October 9–12, which includes the Foundation's black-tie Gala at Cipriani Wall Street on Saturday, October 10, and a Wreath-Laying Ceremony honoring first responders and public servants on Sunday, October 11.

At the heart of the celebration is the Columbus Citizens Foundation's mission to expand educational opportunities for deserving Italian American students. Since the inception of its scholarship program, the Foundation has awarded approximately $45 million in scholarships,

helping students pursue their educational goals while preserving a connection to their roots.

EVENT: 82nd Annual Columbus Day Parade
WHEN: Monday, October 12, 2026, 11:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. ET
WHERE: Fifth Avenue, from 47th to 72nd Streets, New York City

ABOUT COLUMBUS CITIZENS FOUNDATION
Columbus Citizens Foundation is New York City’s leading Italian American nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering an appreciation of Italian American heritage and achievement. Through a broad range of philanthropic and cultural activities, the Foundation provides opportunities for advancement to deserving Italian American students through its scholarship and grant programs. The Foundation organizes New York City’s annual Columbus Celebration and Columbus Day Parade, which has celebrated Italian American heritage on Fifth Avenue since 1929.

MEDIA CONTACT

Taylor Taglianetti | Impact Marketing Manager
Columbus Citizens Foundation
ttaglianetti@columbuscitizens.org

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