

Fraternal: Sons of Italy

Now, strictly speaking, this is not technically a “fraternal” organization. In Anthropology, we’d call this a “regional” association (one whose membership is based on the same region of origin); it would also qualify as an “ethnic” association (one whose membership is based on a common ethnic origin)...but, I’m willing to bet that anyone who collects all Fraternal would have the Sons of Italy (in America) thrown into this group.

“OSIA was established in the Little Italy neighborhood of New York City on June 22, 1905, by [Vincenzo Sellaro, M.D.](#), and five other fellow immigrants from Italy who came to the United States during the great Italian migration of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During its history, OSIA has been involved in promoting immigration legislation; assisting in the assimilation process; supporting cooperation, trade, and diplomatic relations between the United States and Italy; initiating social and fraternal events; encouraging educational achievement through scholarships; serving local communities through a variety of cultural events and raising funds for local charities; and providing low-cost group financial investments and insurance programs for the benefit of members nationwide.

Today, OSIA is the oldest, largest, and most demographically diverse association of American men and women of Italian descent. Since the organization's beginning, men and women have shared equal status within the organization, as do individuals of all ages and professions.

OSIA, through its 750 community-based chapters, 21 state chapters, two subsidiary organizations--the Sons of Italy Foundation and the Commission for Social Justice--and its National Office in Washington, D.C., works to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Americans of Italian descent. OSIA also works

with other organizations to unite all Americans in our multicultural society so that we may live in greater harmony and enjoy the benefits of the principles for which the United States was founded and for which immigrants settled in America--life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in a nation where all men and women are presumed to be created equal.

Through a variety of philanthropic and social programs, OSIA represents the interests of America's 25 million Italian Americans and cooperates with U.S. and Italian officials to strengthen trade, diplomatic, and educational opportunities.

Its objectives, as conceived by its founders, are to enroll all men and women of Italian heritage under one banner in order to preserve and disseminate the rich cultural heritage of Italy; and to promote and advance their progress everywhere within the framework of American society. The OSIA continues to thrive, meeting the initial objectives of its founders through a wide variety of community, cultural, social, charitable, educational, patriotic, youth, and civic activities.” *[From the OSIA web site]* With 750 current chapters and a beginning date of 1905, you’d think there might be a significant number of resulting covers, here, but I have a grand total of one; I’ve only recently begun to collect these smaller organizations, though.

