

**Name of Interviewee: Anthony P. Caggiano Jr MD**

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**Interviewer: Christopher Matthews, Montclair State Student**

**Location: First Montclair House Community Room on 56 Walnut St, Montclair, NJ**

### **Introduction:**

Anthony P. Caggiano, Jr. grew up in Montclair, following in his father's footsteps to become a physician with a Montclair practice. His father was a family doctor; Dr. Caggiano specialized in obstetrics. Dr. Caggiano, Jr. later taught at UMDNJ/now Rutgers New Jersey Medical School.

His grandparents arrived in Montclair from Italy in 1905. He shares a harrowing story of his grandmother, Anna, collecting coal in her apron on the nearby railroad tracks near Bay Street, as was the custom of the Italian women in the neighborhood. She was struck by a train and lost a leg; nonetheless, with a wooden leg, she raised a family of seven children.

Dr. Caggiano speaks with great respect for the "Great Generation" -- his parents' generation -- and all that they endured and achieved.

He speaks of the Italian immigrant and Italian American community in Montclair, its traditions, the important role of the church and family. He notes several times how close he remains with the large group of cousins with whom he grew up. And he notes towns in Italy from which many of Montclair residents' ancestors hail—Cerami, Sicily and Lacedonia.

The Caggiano name is well known in Montclair and graces the name of multiple businesses including a funeral home. He jokes, "in Montclair, for two generations, we've had them covered 'From the womb to the tomb.'"

### **Timestamps:**

[0:10] Dr. Caggiano explains that his family has been in Montclair since 1905, when his grandfather and grandmother came over from Italy. He explains that he was born and raised in Montclair. He grew up at 137 Grove Street. It was his home as well as his father's medical office; his father was a physician, as is Dr. Caggiano. He notes that his father and six siblings were raised here. Dr. Caggiano has his grandparents' Certificate of Matrimony from Italy, his grandfather's birth certificate, and a picture of the boat on which his grandmother traveled to the U.S.

[00:02:05]: "So we go all the way back to the early 1900s. My father was the first of seven; there were four boys and three girls. My grandmother, when she was three months ...post partum --of my father, was doing what the Italian women did here, in Montclair..."

"The Italian women would go with large aprons and go up to the railroad tracks, and pick up coal, because the Italian engineers and firemen knew that this was a 'little Italy' section... and they knew that the people were pretty poor, so they would slow the train down, and throw coal out on the tracks.

[00:03:07]: "And these women would go up, after the train went by and would pick up the coal, put it in the aprons, and bring it home. There were quite a few [women] up there...my father was only three months old at the time. And my grandmother's name was Anna; the women said, "Anna! Step back! The train is coming!" And she stepped back; the train came the other direction, cut off her leg."

"Here she is, a young woman with a new baby, and the leg was cut off. They took her to Mountainside Hospital, they stopped the bleeding, and they gave her a wooden leg. They didn't have prostheses like we have today. And this woman went back, got better, and had six [sc. 'more'] children with one leg.

"Now you talk about people, ...this was the generation ...their children were the sons and daughters of the "Greatest Generation," ...my father and his brothers and sisters were children of the ones that came from, whether it was Russia, Germany, Italy, France, Ireland, wherever, they came over [from], they were the immigrants.

"It was 'their' [the immigrants'] children... that were The Great Generation, and the reason they call them 'the Great Generation' is because they lived through the Depression, where they learned frugality ... and they lived through the Second World War, where they learned responsibility."

[00:04:53]: "My father was a physician by that time, and during the war he enlisted, in spite of having four children. And he served as a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy on Guam for 26 months, administering to the casualties of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. ...They loved the country so much, that they gave, they risked their lives. ..."

"As a child of The Great Generation, we were not coddled, we were to be seen and not heard. Not today where everybody, you know, devotes everything to the children. They taught us responsibility. And, ... if you were fourteen or fifteen years old and you didn't have a summer job, they wouldn't even let you in the house, ... that kind of thing.

[00:06:06]: "So, there's a real history here. This is not just endemic, to Montclair, but [in] Montclair we have two cadres of people that came from Italy. One was from a little town in...the province of Avellino; the town was called Lacedonia. A little town in the mountains." [The name is pronounced 'La-chay-do-nia,' and Dr. Caggiano helpfully spells it out for the interviewer.]

"Things were rough in the end of the 19th century, going into the 20th century, and it was very hard for these people. So they just picked up, very little belongings, and came across the ocean. And they were greeted by other people who had been from the same area. And that's why we have a whole lot of what we call "Chedonays (sp?)." [presumably a nickname for those hailing from Lacedonia; he mentions Montclair History Center Trustee, "Donny" DiGeronimo whose family was also from Lacedonia.]

[00:07:13]: "They came over, and they all hung around together. In Montclair, my grandfather was a grocery store owner and also a winemaker. And his brother, one brother, had merchandise, like textile merchandise, and shoes, clothes, and stuff like that, and the other one had a liquor store.

"So, if you drive down by the church, on Pine Street, which was the center, the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, that was the center of where they lived, and they built that church, all of

them. It was a wooden church before, and then they came, the masons and people from Italy who had talent, they built the church.

"That's a beautiful church; I don't know if you've ever been in there or not. You oughtta stop in some time: It's gorgeous. The statues and all.

"And those people came from [the Province of] Avellino, which was in the Campania region, and which is ... right around Naples. There's five provinces in the Campania region... Avellino, ... Benvenuto, ... Salerno, Naples, and, the other one is Caserta. There's the five provinces, in [emphatic] the region.

[00:08:50]: "So these people from ... the Avellino area. So those are people from Italy, and then there's another group of Italians here in Montclair from Sicily."

"Mostly from Cerami, in Sicily...because the ones would come over initially in maybe a small group, and they would settle in an area, and they liked the area, and they sent for their.. sisters and brothers, and cousins and everybody else."

[00:09:22]: "My grandfather came first, with his brother, and they initially went up where there were some Ceramiés (sp?) up in Boston. Then they heard about ... Montclair, and they came to Montclair. See that's Little Italy in Montclair, that's where we came from, you know.

"So, as time went by, my father, and his brothers and sisters were raised in Montclair--went to Immaculate Conception Grammar School and Montclair High School... I am deeply indebted to a high school teacher...her name is Mrs. Bollinger. [Sp?] And I'll tell you an interesting story about her."

[00:10:07]: "My father's teacher recognized that Anthony--that's my father's name; I'm Junior--was very very bright, a very brilliant young man. And she knew that in those days, that the economic reasons.

"And Mrs. Bollinger said to, my father, 'I want you to bring your dad to school 'cause I want to talk to him.' He was doing well in school, so he ... wondered [what it was about]. So Mr. Caggiano gets his bow tie and his hat...He's an immigrant, you know...he's scared, because the teacher wants to talk to him about [his] son. And you'll love this story.

"So, he comes in, he sits down and they said, 'Mr. Caggiano, we're very glad that you came, we want to tell you, you, we know that the Italians, new Italians, when the boys get 16, they have to quit school, and go to work. Your son is brilliant, he should not quit school and go to work. He should continue as a student, and he should go to college.

"Now this is...unheard of! My grandfather was so excited. He thought it was going to be something bad! He was so excited he went home, and he told the rest of them, 'Anthony doesn't do any work in the house anymore. All he has to do is study!' (Laughter.)

"And, he's going to college!

"Mrs. Bollinger followed up on him. She really became attached to him, and she wanted to make sure. She's the one that talked him into going to Georgetown University, because it was a Catholic school, and Italians are usually mostly Catholic. It's a Jesuit school, actually. She filled

out the application with him and everything, and he got accepted. He was a brilliant student, and he decided that he wanted to be a physician. He graduated Georgetown.

"He got there in 1926, he graduated in 1932. So, you being very sharp, you said, well, that's six years; usually it's four years college, and four years grad school. What happened? What happened, was, that there were four people in his class, two of them were Italian-Americans, very brilliant students.

The Jesuit who was in charge of transition to medical school ... Monseigneur Pronczac (Sp.?) ... called the boys in and he said to the four of them, 'Next year you will not be in the undergraduate school. Next year, you're going to the medical school.' Because they were innovating in those days. [Dr. Caggiano then notes two contemporary institutions – Seton Hall and Hoffman-LaRoche that were currently being established as three-year medical schools.]

[13:40] "And then he came back, to this area. He did an internship at St. Mary's in Passaic, and he wanted to be a specialist in obstetrics and pediatrics. There was a residency in New York called New York Family Hospital, so he went over and applied there. And he got it. But, he ended up doing his internship at St. Mary's in Passaic. Then he started with the residency, and everybody in this neighborhood--this was the first one out of our neighborhood that became a doctor--they said, 'What is this-a residency thing? You come, you take care, you deliver da babies, you do everything!' [Dr. Caggiano affectionately mimicked the speech pattern of recent immigrants.]

"And so, after six months, he gave that up, and he came, and he did everything. You know, in those days GPs did everything. And that's what he was... a general practitioner. But he always had a love for obstetrics and... female surgery... Interestingly enough, I was in high school at the time, he decided that he was going to stop his practice and become a resident in obstetrics and gynecology, which is what he did. Then he took his Boards, and he got Board-certified at age 55, which was wonderful!"

[00:15:00]: "So people said to me, 'When did you decide that you wanted to be a doctor?' I said, 'I decided that I want to be a doctor when my father's spermatozoa hit my mother's oocyte. (sic)'" (Laughter)

"It was predetermined that I was going to be a doctor, and I was going to be an OB-GYN doctor. I was addicted, just like him, to delivering babies, and that was very good to me, because I assisted over 7,300 women bringing new life into the world. And he did about 6,000 himself..."

[15:45] "...Interesting about Mrs. Bollinger: Many years later, I delivered her granddaughter."

"In Montclair, ...you'll see the liquor store [Caggiano's Wine & Liquor Store, 65 Glenridge Avenue], but if you go down further here on Grove Street, you'll see Caggiano Memorial [Home for Funerals, 62 Grove Street]. So, in Montclair, for two generations, we've had them covered 'From the womb to the tomb.' (Emphatic pause.) I bring them in, and my cousin Michael brings them out." (Background laughter.)

[16:25] "The truth of the matter is, when my... father opened up, he took care of everybody. And when I got out and finished, I, too, felt very strong about the armed forces, and I was drafted.

"I had finished my internship. You see when we were seniors in medical school--of course I went to Georgetown too -- but I went to Seton Hall for college. My mother had a condition at the time;

we thought we were going to lose her, and I didn't want to go away. And then she got better; she had a great doctor... Then I wanted to go where my father went, and Georgetown's a great school. I'm still active on the alumni board down there, but that's another story.

"There's a feeling in this town, especially among the Italian-Americans...and by the way, my mother is Irish. My father met my mother during his internship at St. Mary's and fell in love with this beautiful redhead, blue-eyed Irish person. It was great, because she was a nurse, and she was an OB nurse. And that's why I said, when the spermatozoa hit the oocyte (chuckling), she was an OB nurse [obstetrics], and he was...an obstetrician gynecologist.

[18:12] It was great, because so many people came to us as, as doctors. It was all the people in the neighborhood.

"Now our neighborhood ... included First Montclair [the multi-unit residential building where the interview was taking place]. A couple of my cousins were here when this was opened up. It really is a very tight-knit, close community:

"They wanted to close the church. I don't know whether you heard about that...but Our Lady of Mount Carmel...they wanted to close it. And it was Bishop Myers, who was the Archbishop of Newark at that time. We raised money, we went down, we talked to the Bishop, but he still was going to close it."

"And then, he retired, and they brought in ...Cardinal Tobin...he was from Indianapolis. He listened to us, and the church is still open, but it's combined with Immaculate [Conception Church].

Dr. Caggiano noted that people who were raised in the neighborhood but moved away, still came back to the church. "You got married in the church."

"Italians go to church three times. Italian men, not Italian women. Italian women go to church a lot, but Italian men go to church when they're baptized, when they're married, and when they're put in the ground. Those are the three times they go. (Suppressed laugh.)

"This is, you know not really real, because that's not true. My father was very religious, and I was religious, and I still go. I'm retired. I practiced for 40 years, and my last 12 years I taught, at UMDNJ, in Newark. It's now Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, and I was a Clinical Professor of OB/GYN."

[00:20:07]:

"And it was wonderful. I enjoyed that. And I practiced here 40 years, it was 50 years, that I did. And then when I retired, I go to lots of lacrosse games, and soccer...when you're a grandparent, and I have nine grandchildren...I spend a lot of time with them. But I was getting a little restless, so now I work for the Catholic Charities.

"Which means, that, I make points in heaven. You don't get paid for this, they cover your malpractice insurance (laughter in background), but that's pretty much it.

[00:21:00]: There is a discussion of photos that Dr. Caggiano has brought to be copied/scanned.

[21:31] In response to a question about what Montclair was like during World War II, Dr Caggiano responds:

"My father was color blind, so initially he went to the Army and the Army said they wouldn't take him because he's colorblind, and then someone told him that the Navy didn't care, so he enlisted in the Navy.

"He was stationed up in Rhode Island. He was with the Seabees. My brother was only three months old when he went overseas to Guam. And he was gone for 26 months.

"So here's my mother, with four little babies, and he's over there. My brother Joe was almost two and a half when my father came back. Because he was three months old when my father left. So there was sacrifice, there was responsibility.

"Let me tell you, Italian-Americans all were enlisted or drafted and did what they could for their country.

"Now my situation...I was a senior at Georgetown during the Vietnam War. I graduated in 1964 and then I did my internship and residency, so it was four years. So 1968 was when Vietnam was at its zenith, so to speak. 1968-70, and then, in 1972, it was over. Nixon said, 'We're outta there,' so that was it. But, I got a letter from Uncle Sam. And all physicians are put into a different pool, so you're drafted, you could get drafted only into the Army. If you go to the Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard, or whatever, you volunteer. And that's what people did.

"With us, it was where the physicians were needed, because a lot of physicians...didn't volunteer, at that time, for Vietnam, or whatever. You put down what branch of the service you want to go to, and where you would like to be. So I put down 'Navy' because of my father. I put 'Navy' first, 'Air Force' second, 'Army' third.

[00:24:10]: "I got my second choice, which was Air Force. I had put down that I wanted to go to either Florida or California. I ended up in the middle of the country: Altus, Oklahomas (sic). [Background laughter.] I spent two years there. Every woman on the base was pregnant, so I did a lot of deliveries.

"I also was involved as a flight surgeon, so I took care of the pilots, and delivered their children, and took care of their wives. So, it was--great. ...Because we were a military airlift command base, I was able to go to Southeast Asia many, many, many times: Japan, Cambodia, Bangkok, Vietnam ... I never got to China; I never got to Hong Kong. So, it was always where we had soldiers. ... One of my children was born while I was in the Air Force--that's crazy.

[00:25:09]: "What I'm saying is, the Montclair people are the bread and butter people... great, hard-working. I'm talking about our neighborhood, but it was the same up by Immaculate Conception Church: All Irish- and German-Americans. And on the south end, all the African Americans.

"So, this is a cosmopolitan town. They call this the West Side Extension of Manhattan."  
(Laughter in the background.)

[25:50] In response to "Did everybody get together?" "All the time," Dr. Caggiano replies, Our cousins were like our siblings. We were together every weekend. Whether it was a holiday or not, we were at somebody's house, always big. It's not that way too much anymore. We \*/do/\* on the holidays, the big holidays like Easter, and Christmas, we get together, and the Italians still do the fish on Christmas Eve.

"I have an aunt who's still doing the fish on Christmas; she's close to 90. We go there, and we eat. It's very family oriented, very family oriented.

[26:33] And the patients too...it's amazing: I [ask] my patients ...'Well, who referred you to me?'

"Well, I was the only one in my office that didn't go to you; there's eight girls in the office and I was the only one--so I have to come to you." [Laughter]

[27:00] When asked what he did for fun and where he hung out, Dr. Caggiano replied:

"Grove Street School. Well, there's a playground, a diamond... I went to Immaculate [Conception Elementary School] which is off of Claremont Avenue on North Fullerton. But, then I went to St. Benedict's for high school. I didn't go to Montclair High School.

"Then I went to Seton Hall, and then I went to Georgetown.

"Now, what did I do? We played ball. There was no Little League... It was 'Eeny, meeny, miny, moe,' [to] decide which way it went: Was he safe? No, he was out. That kind of thing.

I played also CYO basketball, which Our Lady of Mount Carmel had; we played different, church groups, so we had a lot of fun, but the biggest thing was the cousins. We were always together. I have cousins of mine that, even to this day, we are really, really close.

"There were four [in Dr. Caggiano's family]: I had two sisters and a brother. My Uncle Pete had four as well, two girls and two boys, and Aunt Tessie had a boy and a girl. Uncle Mike, he had two girls. So we were always together. And we were very protective of each other.

"The other thing is, the Sicilians, and the Cerames [sp?], have saints, patron saints. So, they have feasts during the summertime. The Sicilians, it's Saint Sebastian. And with the Avellino people, it's Our Lady of Mount Carmel. So that's the church, but she was also the patron saint.

"So you have a big feast in the summer. You have parades, you have bands, you have food, you have rides and all that. Also because of the saint you have mass, and then they take the saint [statue], and walk the saint through the streets here.

"And we go up and put money on the saint [statue]. (Suppressed chuckle.)

"By the way, you can still see it here in Montclair, in the summertime... The grandchildren of the people who originally did that [continue them.]"

[00:30:00]:

"In the old days, the old Italian ladies, the widows, in black, they used to walk in bare feet behind the saint [statue].

"My cousins all went to Montclair High, I went to Saint Benedict's, but we [Montclair] had great football teams in those days. And the secret was, we had Italian linemen, and Black backs."

That's what it was [chuckling]: Italian linemen and Black backs.

"So, you're asking what we did. Yeah, lots of guys went to college, but a lot of them became firemen, policemen. My cousin Carmine became a captain in the police force here in Montclair. See, there was a love of family first, but a love of neighborhood. I mean in the old days when I

was really young--I'm talking eight, nine, ten years old--you went into the stores, they talked in Italian."

"Well, I speak a very crazy dialect, which is what I learned when I was a little kid. However, when I went to Italy a few times, it got me through. They sorta laughed at me, but ...they understood what I was saying...It's like somebody from Kentucky coming and talking English. (Laughter)

"And I felt bad, because I was a doctor, but that's what I knew, and I remembered it. In fact I was in Bellagio... a few years ago, and I was talking dialect. And the woman says, 'Tu sei Avellino!' [He pronounces her 'sei' as 'zee'.]

"I said, 'No...Americano.' [she replied] 'No! Avellino!' (Laughter) She was convinced that I was from Avellino. But I was born and raised here.

[00:32:30] When asked when members of the Avellino and Sicilian communities started moving out of the neighborhood, Dr. Caggiano refers to Caldwell as one destination for many:

"They started moving in the late fifties, early sixties."

But they always came back to the church, they always belonged to the church. So that was the nucleus...People are proud...you can go on the internet...'The Italians of Montclair.' There's pictures of the older people, there's even videos on there of the feasts, and the saints, and coming out with the saints.

[00:34:00] "I was very active with Mountainside Hospital. I got out of the Air Force in 1970, and I started my practice in 1970...God was good to me.

"Of course my father had practiced before me, people knew the name, they knew the family. I started in 1970; in 1975, I was doing 400 deliveries a year by myself.

"I had gone for a physical exam [to] a friend of mine--I had been in medical school with him....I was so tired. I was exhausted. And I went to see Joe, and he ran me through all the tests, EKG, sigmoidoscopy, the whole thing. And he said, 'You are the most burned out human being I've ever seen in my life. And my prescription for you is that you go home and go to sleep for two weeks.'

[00:35:00]: "He said, 'You don't need a partner. You need partners. [Friendly murmurs in background.] So, in two years, I went from being a soloist to having three partners, so we were a four-person group."

I retired from the practice in 2001 and went to the medical school. I was always connected to the medical school because I had done my residency down there, in the sixties. I was fighting with the HMOs...They wanted to give you half of what you got 10 years before.

"So, I was unhappy with that, and my friend Joe Puzo, who was the chairman of OB/GYN always was telling me, come down [UMDNJ/now Rutgers New Jersey Medical School,]. So I went; I loved it. Loved it, loved it. And one of the things I'm very very proud of, is that I was given the golden apple by the medical school for the Teacher of the Year."

"I did other things, but when the medical students recognize you, that's the big one..."



"So! Little boy from Montclair did well."

[00:36:48] Dr. Caggiano recounts his father's medical practice, which began in their house but then moved to a Park Street office. After his residency and Air Force service, Dr. Caggiano, Jr. joined his father's practice at another Park Street location, 326 Park Street. His father retired and moved to Florida shortly thereafter and Dr. Caggiano, Jr. took over the practice. He later moved to a professional office building near Mountainside Hospital.

[00:38:44] "Right before I left to go to the university [UMDNJ], I served as President of the medical staff. I enjoyed it. But then I wanted to go into academic medicine. I always had a good feeling about academic medicine, I always liked to teach. Now I teach in the operating room and in the delivery room.

"I do didactic lecture, too; I just like hands on with the students and the residents.

[00:39:33] "When I first got out of the Air Force, I was thinking of academic medicine. I went down to the University at that time, and the Chairman said to me, 'Tony,' he knew me, he trained me--

"He said, 'Tony, you don't make any money in academic medicine. You got three kids now--I ended up having six....He said, 'Look. I want you to go out into private practice. If after a year or two you're dissatisfied, or you want to come into academic medicine, I'd love to have you.' Well, the rest is history."

[00:40:18] "I went many years later, after he was gone... But I did want to do it. And that was the icing on the cake. Because you know what a thrill it is to be an educator, and in my field, people are taking people's lives in their hands, so they better know what they're doing."

[00:40:51] When asked what about Montclair is special to him, Dr. Caggiano replies:

"It's all special. And when I think of the sacrifice that they made, and my grandmother, you know, having six kids with one leg. And as an obstetrician, I know...it's not easy, poor woman. And she was a little bit of a thing. In this day and age, she would have ended up with a Caesarian, but she delivered those babies ... in the house. [with emphasis] In the house. They had the midwife, would come, they paid five dollars."

Question: Do you know why your father wanted to go into obstetrics?

"He always liked working with the pregnant ladies and babies. That's when he was a general practitioner. Today they call them 'family doctors.'. But at that time it was 'general--GP.' And that was his favorite part of medicine, delivering babies.

"I was addicted. I wouldn't give up. Even when I was working at the University, we did night call; the attendings, we did night call, and we worked with the residents and the medical students. And, the last weekend that I worked, before I was going to retire, I told them, 'Nobody is going to do any delivery except me.' So I did all the deliveries...maybe 10 or 12, one way or the other."

"Yeah, but that's a gift! The good Lord gives you that gift. And it really is. When I pray, I thank him. I say, 'You allowed me the privilege of doing that.'

"Obstetrics is a great specialty. Eighty-five to ninety percent of the time, it's a happiness exchange. However, when it's sad, it's really sad. You know, like stillborns, malformed kids.... But you work hard, you work with the patients."

[00:43:18] "So, what do I like? I love Montclair. Montclair was a great place to be raised--and, and it still is a great town. Cosmopolitan town, go in Upper Montclair, all the restaurants, the shops, and everything; so that's why they call it 'the west side of Manhattan.'

"And we have Montclair State; that was Montclair State Teacher College. When I was in college, at Seton Hall, we used to go to mixers up there. In fact I dated a nice girl, she was a History Major, and I had to do a paper for...European History, on Germany under Bismarck. I said, you want to help me with the research on this? She did the whole paper. (Laughter.) I got an 'A.' ....At that time at Seton Hall, the only females on campus were nursing students."

As the interview draws to an end, the interviewers encourage Dr. Caggiano to share the story about his grandmother collecting coal on the railroad tracks with the local TV 34 camera crew on-site.

Dr. Caggiano mentions that his cousin owns a restaurant in Woodland Park, the town where he himself resides [PJ Rufo's]. He also notes that his uncle Pete was the Superintendent of Sanitation at one time. When the interviewer notes that there are Caggianos all over town, Dr. Caggiano quips: "From the womb to the tomb. And in between we'll get you drunk," he adds, "and we'll feed you too. We got a restaurant." The name of the restaurant was Roberto's Colony, and it was catty cornered from the liquor store, near the new apartment buildings.

"That's the neighborhood," Dr. Caggiano states. "I think it's about 12 or 13 square blocks including where we are right now."

[00:48:40] "Not just Montclair," Dr. Caggiano adds, "but I will tell you, it was, tough, but it was a pleasure, being the child of The Greatest Generation. I realize how good they were. At the time, it wasn't so [chuckling]...my father was very very strict, and anything that I did, he had already done, and done better, you know--one of those things.

"So, when I became President of the Medical Society of New Jersey, he wrote me a letter and he said, 'You are the man that I always wanted to be.' But he said, 'I think I laid down the foundation for you!'" (Laughter)

"So what I was talking about with PJ's [PF Rufo's restaurant in Woodland Park]: We do Italian Culture Night...probably once a month, or once every two months. I have another cousin, who is a chef, and he comes up...from South Jersey--and he'll do the region, like if it's Campagna, or Sicily, or whatever, and do the food from the region. We also did the wines from the region. And then I'll get up and give a little talk about the region, or a lot of times, I talk about my grandmother, and what they did. And we try to keep it alive, the culture."

"I told you, we bring 'em in, and we bring 'em out, we get 'em drunk, and we feed 'em!"