

Q. What is UNICO National?

A. UNICO National is a nationwide service organization. Its membership is exclusively US citizens of Italian heritage, or married to those of Italian heritage, of good character and reputation. Local Chapters across the country are united in a national chain. They work on local and national projects, to uplift the prestige of the Italian American community. UNICO is non-political and non-sectarian.

Q. What does UNICO do?

A. UNICO grants scholarship awards, promotes Italian study chairs, observes Columbus Day with fitting activities, supports programs aiding underprivileged and handicapped children charities, community and civic activities, mental health, cancer and Cooley's anemia research. It also promotes good fellowship among members.

Q. What does the name UNICO mean?

A. The name, translated from the Italian language, means "unique", "one", "only", or "only one of its kind." Additionally, the letters are interpreted as U-Unity, N-Neighborliness, I-Integrity, C-Charity, O-Opportunity.

Q. Why was UNICO organized?

A. UNICO was organized to provide scholarships to worthy students and to give strength and force in fighting the discrimination against Italian Americans which is a deeply ingrained facet in our American Society. Italian Americans have been discriminated against and have suffered many humiliations. The founder of UNICO established the mission to do good deeds in the community to offset this situation. Thus the motto: "Service Above Self" which has been the guiding principle of UNICO since its founding.

Q. When was UNICO organized?

A. UNICO was first organized in Waterbury, Connecticut in 1922 when a group of individuals headed by Dr. Anthony P. Vastola organized the first Chapter and began providing service to the community. The idea then spread slowly to several other cities in the East where additional local chapters were chartered. But it was not until 1930 that the first UNICO convention was held in New York City. A similar idea, unknown to the Eastern group, was started in Omaha,

Nebraska in 1931, as the National Italian Civic League, and spread to about 15 cities in the West. Both groups continued their fine work during the ensuing years and, in 1946 efforts were begun to effect a merger into one national organization. This was completed (and note the significance of the date) on July 4, 1947, at a convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin when UNICO National was born.

Q. How many members are needed to form a Chapter?

A. Fifteen members are needed to start a Chapter. UNICO is not necessarily concerned about large numbers, but rather the quality of its members – people who will devote time, energy and resources to its activities. UNICO wants the best people, individuals who will sincerely practice UNICO's motto "Service Above Self."

Q. Who screens charter members of a new Chapter?

A. Charter members screen themselves since each is selected by the other. You know that only people of good character and reputation are wanted in UNICO and you are careful in your selection insuring that each member meets the qualifications of UNICO National.

Q. Who screens members who join after the charter night?

After the charter is closed, you will have a Membership Committee screen all applications and approve them.

Q. Are donations to UNICO tax exempt?

A. Donations to, UNICO's charitable arm, the UNICO Foundation, and donations as well as membership dues to UNICO National are tax deductible. Both entities are 501(c)3 corporations. However, individual Chapters may or may not be.

Q. How does UNICO National function?

A. UNICO has duly elected officers who serve without pay. It is their responsibility to administer the affairs of UNICO National. These officers are elected at the annual convention by the Chapter delegates in attendance. The officers are accountable to all the Chapters, which comprise UNICO National. Each Chapter is represented by its president and delegates. All actions of the officers must confirm to the UNICO National Constitution and by-laws.

Q. How does a chapter function?

A. Each Chapter is governed by local officers and a Board of Directors. All actions must be approved by majority vote of the general membership in accordance with its Chapter Constitution and the UNICO National Constitution. All such actions are under the Chapter's exclusive control, so long as they conform to the UNICO National Constitution.

Q. Will a UNICO Chapter compete with other groups of Italian heritage in our community?

A. No, there is no reason for such competition. UNICO wants to work together with these groups and, by good example in UNICO's accomplishments, join in increasing the prestige of Italian Americans in the community. There is no conflict of interest.

Q. Would membership in UNICO National affect our Americanism or relations with other ethnic groups in the community?

A. Positively not! UNICO members are Americans first. As we work to improve our image through charitable acts, scholarships and civic accomplishment, we are helping to make better citizens and, thereby, a better America. UNICO is tolerant and will cooperate with any community group that works towards the improvement and welfare of that community.

Q. What does a Chapter gain by being a part of? UNICO National?

A. By joining this great UNICO movement, Chapters and their members become a part of a National effort to promote Italian American heritage. By its increased membership and by national cooperative achievement, UNICO is stronger in combating discrimination. Members become a part of a National group in which you can make many lasting friendships with UNICANs. UNICO National also provides: (1) *ComUNICO* newspaper, a publication reporting UNICO activities and featuring articles of interest to the entire membership; (2) participation in the National Scholarship Program; (3) various Chapter forms and standard items; and (4) assistance from the National Office.

Q. Has UNICO National any control over our chapter funds?

A. No provided the Chapter carries out the provisions of the Constitution in meeting its financial obligations to UNICO National by sending representation to National meetings and carrying out its responsibility as a chapter.

Q. What does UNICO National expect from a Chapter?

A. UNICO National expects all its chapters to abide by the Constitution, meet regularly, serve their communities, and bear its responsibilities to UNICO National by meeting financial obligations, attending National and regional meetings and supporting the National organization and its programs.

Q. What can we expect to develop through a UNICO Chapter in our community?

A. Members will develop a better understanding and respect for each other and for Italian Americans as a whole. They will develop a desire to do things for others, giving of your time and support, in the pursuit of that most rewarding virtue – charity. Members will develop a better citizenship by community activity, reinforcing the well-deserved recognition of the innumerable contributions made by Italian Americans to the American way of life.

Q. What has UNICO accomplished?

A. UNICO has done so many things on a National and Chapter level that it would be impossible to list them all. Generally, it has awarded thousands of college scholarships and established Italian Study Chairs in colleges and universities throughout the country. UNICO has provided grants for cancer research, sent thousands of children to camp, raised millions of dollars for local charities, recognized many individuals throughout the nation for outstanding achievements, sponsored a mental health program, a Cooley's Anemia program, formed a partnership with The 'V' Foundation for Cancer Research, and annually encouraged and participated in the observance of Columbus Day. UNICO National has come to the defense of the Italian name in many instances through its strong Anti-Bias Program. It has assisted in improving immigration laws. It has provided financial assistance to disaster relief such as the nationwide campaigns that raised millions of dollars for reconstruction in areas devastated by natural disasters including the United States, Italy and Haiti.

For the location of a UNICO Chapter near you, e-mail, call or write UNICO National using the contact information on the front of this brochure.

Visit our website at www.unico.org.

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WHAT IS UNICO?



**THE LARGEST
ITALIAN AMERICAN
SERVICE ORGANIZATION
IN THE UNITED STATES**

UNICO NATIONAL

**FAIRFIELD COMMONS
271 US Hwy 46, WEST-Suite F-103
FAIRFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07004**

In New Jersey (973) 808-0035

Out of State (800) 877-1492

(973) 808-0043 FAX

E-MAIL: uniconational@unico.org

www.unico.org