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**Buffalo's Italian Cultural Center Graciously Accepts \$125,000 Grant From The John R. Oishei Foundation Towards Community Programming Initiatives**

BUFFALO, New York - The Centro Culturale Italiano di Buffalo (CCI Buffalo), which will soon open its doors in the heart of North Buffalo, recently received a \$125,000 grant from The John R. Oishei Foundation in support of the organization's renovation efforts and educational and community programming.

The historic North Park Library, which for years sat vacant at 2351 Delaware Avenue, will once again open its doors as the new home of Buffalo's very first Italian cultural center. Since CCI's acquisition of the historical structure in 2017, their adaptive reuse plans have returned the property to its former splendor at the corner of Delaware and Hertel Avenues. Over two years after launching its \$2 million capital campaign in 2019, the cultural center is finally poised to welcome the community at its ribbon cutting next month.

By way of generous funding from The John R. Oishei Foundation, CCI is now enabled to further enhance its programming capabilities, which focus on advancing education, self-sufficiency, health, and neighborhood stability, as well as helping to promote arts and culture in the Western New York region. The new facility will be host to language lessons, cooking classes, community lecture and film series, genealogy research and much more.

"The John R. Oishei Foundation understands the value of investing in community and remembering those who laid the foundation for a prosperous Buffalo," said former Buffalo Mayor and CCI Campaign Chairman, Hon. Anthony Masiello. "Their founder, John Oishei, was an Italian inventor-capitalist who was among the first to market the windshield wiper widely, transforming the auto industry here in Buffalo. That story, along with so many others who paved the way for a greater Buffalo, is what our Italian Cultural Center is all about."

CCI's Executive Director, John Vecchio, recognized the Oishei Foundation's generosity by adding: "On behalf of our Board, Donors, dedicated staff and volunteers, I wish to express our profound gratitude to Mr. Robert D. Gioia, Program Officer Esther Annan and the Board members of the John R. Oishei Foundation for their generous support to rejuvenate this historic neighborhood anchor."

The John R. Oishei Foundation enhances the economic vitality and quality of life for the Buffalo Niagara region through grantmaking, leadership and network building. For more information about The John R. Oishei Foundation, visit [www.oishei.org](http://www.oishei.org).

The Centro Culturale Italiano di Buffalo will open its doors to the public on Saturday, October 9, 2021 with a ribbon cutting ceremony taking place at 2351 Delaware Avenue at 11:00am. Festivities celebrating the center's opening and Italian Heritage Month can be attended and enjoyed by people of all ages.

**About Centro Culturale Italiano di Buffalo:**

The Centro Culturale Italiano di Buffalo is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded by Dr. Francesco Giacobbe and his late wife, Renata Giacobbe in 2010. For over ten years, the CCI has been sharing and promoting the achievements of education, opportunity, and family values with audiences of many diverse ages, ethnicities and educational backgrounds. CCI Buffalo's mission is to preserve and promote Italian culture, heritage and language through educational opportunities and community engagement in the Western New York region. For more information visit, [ccibuffalo.org](http://ccibuffalo.org).