

WINDYER #21

Frank Finocchiaro Memorial Scholarship

Sponsored by the Italian Society of Savannah

St. Vincent's Academy (Grade 11 Only)

Scholarship Entry Form

Name: Jeffers Hayley E
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Home Address: 104 Halifax Road

City: Savannah State: Georgia Zip: 31410

Telephone: 912-660-9132 Email: hayley7601@gmail.com Birth Date: 7/8/99

Teacher's Name: Ms. Hance Email: hayley7601@gmail.com

Personal Statement

I attest that the attached Essay is my original work and that all personal information is true. I understand that once the Essay and Resume have been submitted, they become the property of The Italian Society of Savannah for whatever use they deem appropriate. When asked, I agree to cooperate with The Italian Society of Savannah in any and all promotional activities related to the scholarship competition, and should I be selected a winner, I give them my permission to use my name and photograph in their promotional activities.

Signed by: Hayley Jeffers Date: 2-15-16

Teacher Verification

I have read the enclosed essay and attest that the above named student is in good standing and verify that the Essay reflects the student's original work.

Signature: Bonnie Hance Date: 2-15-16

All entries must be submitted to the Guidance Office by March 15th, 2016

WINNER — H J 1

Hayley Jeffers

March 1. 2016

Italian Scholarship essay

Louis Zamperini

Louis Zamperini, an incredible athlete, and courageous WWII veteran had an extraordinary life full of unbelievable experiences. Throughout his life he served as a role model for the American people, and society itself. Although he faced many hardships, he was able to overcome them all while demonstrating faith, selflessness, and bravery. These outstanding qualities as well as his profound athletic abilities served as an outstanding example to the American people. Louis' efforts for the United States Olympic team, and strength throughout the war left a significant mark on America.

Zamperini, the son of two Italian Immigrants from Verona, was born on January 26, 1917 in Olean, New York. Growing up in a family that spoke only Italian and almost no English, Louis was often teased at school for his lack of knowledge of the American language. However, the sport that he would soon fall in love with served as a productive outlet. From an early age he learned of the sacrifices that his mother and father had made to give him and his siblings a better life. Although he was grateful for this opportunity, he had a flair for trouble, and was constantly causing it. After continuous visits to the jail house for minor crimes like stealing, his brother Pete, decided to help by giving him a "distraction". Louis found his love for track when attending a practice with his brother. The first time Zamperini decided to run the mile at a high school track practice, he finished with a sluggish time of 8:82. Determined to improve,

Zamperini showed a strong work ethic, and decreased his time by four minutes. Demonstrating the basis of the American dream, Zamperini had faith in himself, set a goal, and worked hard until he achieved that goal. His hard work and dedication eventually paid off when he was offered a spot on the 1936 United States Olympic team. Although, he placed 8th, he ran a record time of 52 seconds, for the last lap of his race and contributed greatly to the United States athletic reputation. Even with this placement Louis inspired runners on his own team as well as runners from other countries. Even today, 80 years later, American athletes as well as ordinary Americans are encouraged to follow in the hardworking, resilient footsteps that Zamperini's athletic career displayed.

Although he had an immense love for track, Zamperini's career ended after he decided to enlist in the air force and serve his country during WWII. Even though Louis grew up in an Italian home, barely speaking English, he still cared for the country that he lived in. This action displays the selflessness of Zamperini that all Americans should have- the willingness to drop his or her passion to support the United States in a time of distress. One day while Zamperini, and a fellow crew member were on an ordinary Renaissance mission, their plane crashed in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Floating upon a life raft with small portions of food and water the soldiers struggled to survive. Even with the small portion of supplies that the raft contained, Louis used his skills and was able to keep himself and one other soldier alive. Louis stayed calm and collected during his time at sea. Although he was horrified at the situation, he found bravery within himself, and using the same determination that helped him athletically, he was able to survive. After 47 days Zamperini and his crew member lay on the raft barely alive. The life raft had floated into Japanese territory and the two soldiers were taken captive by Japanese soldiers. When they arrived at camp they were beaten, starved, separated and treated like animals. While

some people would crumble under these sort of conditions Louis stayed strong, realizing that it was all worth it to defend his country.

Zamperini was eventually sent to another camp where his strength and bravery were again tested. A man known by the title of "the Bird" was the Japanese army sergeant at the new Prisoner of war camp. An already brutal man, the Bird found Zamperini a particularly intriguing victim. Using Zamperini's athletic achievements to mock him, the bird tried to break Zamperini physically and mentally. Although this torture was almost unbearable, Louis bore it, and with little complaints. After the war ended Louis went back to Japan to see The Bird. Even though The Bird did not want to see him, Louis left a message for him, forgiving him. This act of mercy demonstrated by Zamperini, shows his meek and humble personality.

Although Zamperini didn't invent an innovative product used by all Americans his contributions to The United states of America were much greater than any physical item. The virtues that Zamperini displayed throughout his life, gives American society a great image to mimic. His determination inspires the original belief that America is where hard work means something, and that where or what you come from doesn't predispose your outcome.