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IL MIRACOLO

*"And They Came to Chicago: The Italian American Legacy" to be
screened October 2 at Presidential Museum*

Springfield, IL — The Italian-American experience, termed "Il Miracolo" (the miracle) by many, will be featured during a screening of "And They Came to Chicago: The Italian American Legacy," a film narrated by Tony Award-winner Joe Mantegna, to be presented Tuesday, October 2 at 7 p.m. in the Union Theater at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. The screening is free and open to the public, and will be followed by a panel discussion and question and answer session with author Dominic Candeloro and other commentators.

"We are pleased to offer this insightful and inspiring documentary as we look ahead to the Columbus Day holiday," said Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum Executive Director Rick Beard.

The documentary, which had previously been shown on Chicago's WTTW-TV and NBC-5, traces the 150-year Italian-American experience in Chicago. It begins in the 1850s, when Italian entrepreneurs first built thriving businesses around today's Loop. From there, the film examines the struggle to gain acceptance on the factory floor; the establishment of Italian parishes; the anti-immigrant backlash and Prohibition; aviator Italo Balbo's flight from Rome to Chicago during the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition; and the heroism of Italian American servicemen and women during World War II, even as their family loyalty was being questioned on the home front.

The film explores the lives of ten significant members of the Chicago Italian-American community, and features rare archival photographs and footage. Modio Media, LLC produced the program with WTTW-TV Chicago in partnership with the Chicago History Museum.

Dominic Candeloro is the author of two books on the subject: *Chicago's Italians: Immigrants, Ethnic, Americans* (2003) and *Italians in Chicago* (2001).

"And They Came to Chicago" is the latest free public documentary screening at the Presidential Museum, following the September 6 showing of "Central Illinois World War II Stories" to a capacity crowd. For more information on these and other Museum programs, visit www.alplm.org.

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