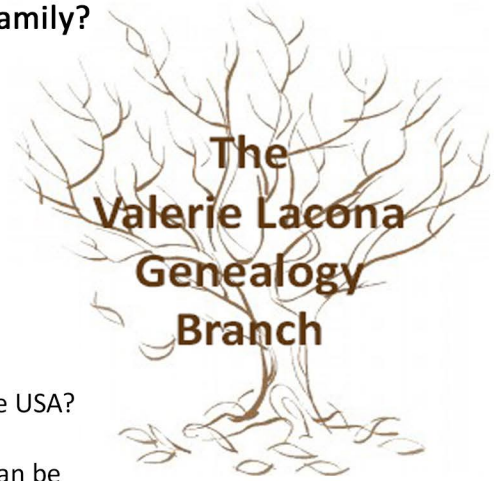


How Well Do You Know Your Italian Family?

by Kathy Foggia

- From where in Italy did your family come?
- Has the family last name changed?
- Do you know who, if anyone, they left in Italy?
- Did your immigrant ancestor become a USA citizen?
- Do you know when your immigrant ancestor came to the USA?
- When they came do you know who they were coming to meet?
- How much money did they bring on their voyage from Italy?
- Do you know what occupation your ancestors had in Italy?
- Do you know what street your family lived on when they first came to the USA?



If you don't know the answer to some of these questions, it is information that can be found in historical records available online through free and subscription websites.

Knowing more about your family history and passing down family stories to younger generations will give them a higher sense of self worth and a stronger connection to family.

If you would like to learn more about your family's history, come join us for an Italian research day at The Italian Cultural Center on October 20, 2018. Email: foggia@iaccofia.org or call 515-490-2957 to reserve a spot.

What Is Genetic Ancestry Testing?

by Susan DeFazio

Genetic ancestry (DNA) testing is a way for people interested in family history to go beyond what they can learn from relatives or from historical documentation. Examination of DNA variations can provide clues about from where a person's ancestors might have come and about relationships between families. Certain patterns of genetic variation are often shared among people of particular backgrounds. The more closely related two individuals, families, or populations are, the more patterns of variation they typically share. Three types of DNA testing are commonly used for genealogy:

Y chromosome testing: Variations in the Y chromosome, passed exclusively from father to son, can be used to explore ancestry in the direct male line. Y chromosome testing can only be done on males, because females do not have a Y chromosome.

Mitochondrial DNA testing: This type of testing identifies genetic variations in mitochondrial DNA. Although most DNA is packaged in chromosomes within the cell nucleus, cell structures called mitochondria also have a small amount of their own DNA. Both males and females have mitochondrial DNA, which is passed on from their mothers, so this type of testing can be used by either sex. It provides information about the direct female ancestral line.

Single nucleotide polymorphism testing: These tests evaluate large numbers of variations across a person's entire genome. The results are compared with those of others who have taken the tests to provide an estimate of a person's ethnic background.

What can you expect to learn from your results? An individual's DNA test provides little information on its own. It is not possible to take these numbers, plug them into a formula, and find out who your ancestors are. The marker numbers provided in your DNA test results only begin to take on genealogical significance when you compare your results with other people and population studies. If you don't have a group of relatives interested in pursuing DNA testing with you, your only real option is to input your DNA test results into many DNA databases on the Net, in the hopes of finding a match with someone who has already been tested.

In conclusion, it is vitally important to keep in mind that DNA testing for the purpose of proving ancestry is NOT a substitute for traditional family history research. Instead, it is a tool to be used in conjunction with family history research to aid in proving or disproving suspected family relationships. It is definitely an exciting new tool!