



# QuEd up for Education

*People and programs impacting our QCSD community*



Florence DiPasquale Bruno, surrounded by her family, proudly displays honorary diploma from the School Board.

## At 96, an honorary diploma

By Gary Weckselblatt

**F**lorence DiPasquale Bruno has had many amazing experiences in her 96 years, and the Quakertown Community School Board added another to her extraordinary life by awarding the former Quakertown student with an honorary diploma.

The reward came on September 13th, 78 years later than it should have after family circumstances forced Mrs. DiPasquale Bruno to drop out of Quakertown High School. During the 10th grade, she was needed to stay home and care for an ill mother, her father and six brothers as they worked the family farm in Milford Township

"It means the world to me, really," Mrs. DiPasquale Bruno said Thursday night as she was presented a diploma by Board President Steaven Klein, just after her family helped her into a blue cap and gown and handed her roses. "I just can't believe this is happening at my age."

Michele Roman, who alerted the Administration to



Quakertown Community School Board President Steaven Klein hands Florence DiPasquale Bruno her honorary diploma.

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## DIPLOMA

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her grandmother's story, said "It's the moment she's waited for nearly a lifetime."

Board members were more than willing to oblige. Klein called the event "Heartwarming," as Mrs. DiPasquale Bruno was surrounded by a dozen family members. "The fact that we can make her smile and give this experience to her, we're just so happy to do it," Klein said. "She seems like a lovely person."

Mrs. DiPasquale Bruno's energy belies her age. Indeed, she remains quite active. Roman says her grandmother is young at heart, and plays rummy, Four square, and Corn Hole with her great grandchildren. She never misses a sporting event for any of her great grandchildren, and rarely misses an Eagles, Phillies or Sixers game on TV. She bakes, cooks, and dotes on her family to show her love and support.

"It's pretty awesome," Board Vice President David Ochmanowicz Jr. said. "I'm glad she finally got the honor. She's been a great citizen, an amazing parent and a great daughter."

She is the daughter of Italian immigrants, Pasquale and Caterina DiPasquale, who owned a farm of approximately 70 acres in Milford Township. The farm was eventually sold and the property is now the Quakertown Interchange of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Northeast Extension at Routes 663 and 476.

"Being the only female, she was the primary caregiver to her mother and took care of the men in her life who did all the farming," Roman said.

The sacrifices of Mrs. DiPasquale Bruno are not lost on her family. Daughter Dr. Barbara Bruno-Golden said she remembers her mother working the graveyard shift at the local factory. "My sister and I were in elementary school and she was there to send us off to school, greet us from school and put us in bed. As we became older and more independent she took a daytime job in the factory. When my sister and I were adolescents, I will always remember the excitement of her advancement to being the office assistant in the new advertising department which required her to expand her skill set by attending night school.

"Her dedication and commitment provided a model for my sister and I to emulate. Each of us have given this same example to our children who have all graduated from college. In addition, they have achieved multiple masters degrees and one received her doctorate and is serving in the United States Air Force."

Several media outlets covered the event. One reporter was so taken by Mrs. DiPasquale Bruno charming nature that she leaned over and kissed her on the cheek. "That was amazing," Roman said. "We loved her. She was great!"

The reporter, Shannette Wilson of Fox29, stated on Twitter that "She is a wonderful lady! Brought tears to my eyes."

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**Escorted by family, Florence DiPasquale Bruno leaves boardroom with her honorary diploma. Below, wearing her Eagles green, and meeting with the media.**

