



theKF

**KOSCIUSZKO
AT WEST POINT**

*Boleslaw Jan Czedekowski
Oil on canvas, 1947*

Kosciuszko overseeing
the construction of
West Point during the
American Revolution.

**THE
KOSCIUSZKO
FOUNDATION:
A CENTURY OF CULTURE & EDUCATION**

Czedekowski 1947



OUR MISSION

Founded in 1925, the Kosciuszko Foundation is dedicated to promoting and strengthening understanding and friendship between the peoples of the United States and Poland through educational, scientific, and cultural exchanges and other related programs and activities.

Each year, we award scholarships, fellowships, and grants to students, scholars, scientists, professionals, and artists. We also promote Polish culture and broaden understanding of Poland in the United States by organizing and sponsoring exhibitions, film festivals, recitals, lectures, and other educational and cultural programs, while supporting partner institutions that share these goals.

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THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION:

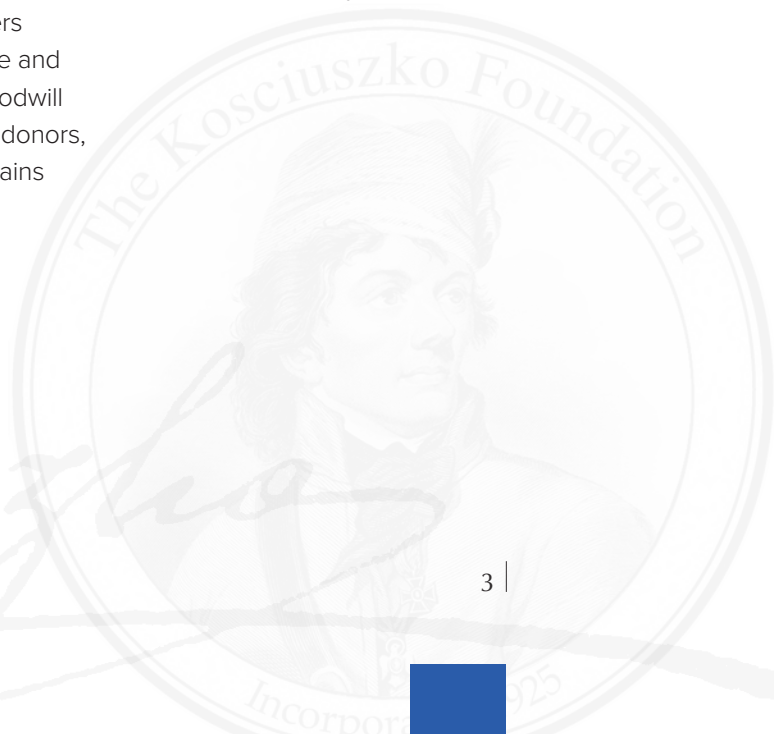
A CENTURY OF CULTURE & EDUCATION

Tadeusz Kosciuszko was a visionary who raised his sword in defense of liberty for all. This Polish-American hero played a significant role in the history of the United States. It was his battle plan that won the Battle of Saratoga, the turning point of the American Revolution. He also designed and oversaw the construction of Fortress West Point, which he proposed be used as the United States Military Academy. After helping to free the United States from British rule, he fought for the rights of all people

against the tyrannical monarchies of Europe. A bulwark of the Polish Enlightenment, Kosciuszko's last will left his estate for the liberation and education of indentured serfs in Europe and enslaved Africans in America. His generosity has served as a template that the Kosciuszko Foundation has followed since its inception in 1925.

As the Foundation celebrates its centennial, it remembers Kosciuszko's benevolence and bravery, as well as the goodwill of our founders, trustees, donors, and members, which sustains

this mission. The Foundation has awarded tens of millions of dollars to scholars, students, artists, professionals, and scientists, sponsoring groundbreaking research, technological innovations, musical excellence, and artistic exhibitions. It has strengthened ties between the United States and Poland, offering a forum for leaders who have helped shape history.



STEPHEN MIZWA'S VISION



It all began with the audacity of a peasant boy from a village called Rakszawa, who left the milk cows in his family's pasture in 1910 and set sail for Ellis Island with just \$16 in his pocket. Poland had been wiped off the map for over a century by Russia, Prussia, and Austria. The Poles had freedom on their minds. Stephen Mizwa, born Szczepan Mierzwa, heard about a Polish hero, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, *"who stuck his neck out fighting somewhere in a big country called Ameryka."* Mizwa wondered why "AMERYKA" was worth fighting for. When he arrived in New York, he boarded a train to Northampton, Massachusetts, where Polish immigrants helped him start his career. He worked menial jobs and studied English at American International College, graduating from Amherst College on a full scholarship. He earned a master's degree at Harvard University. In 1921, he was hired as a professor of economics at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa.

Poland regained its independence after WWI and was rebuilding after a more than a century of foreign occupation. Grateful for the help he received, Mizwa saw it was his duty to repay the favors he had received from the Polish community by establishing a scholarship fund. He asked Polish Ambassador **WŁADYSŁAW WRÓBLEWSKI** to serve as the committee president. Having such an esteemed figure at its head gave the Scholarship Committee the legitimacy it needed.

Mizwa joined forces with Vassar College President **HENRY NOBLE MACCRACKEN**, who had visited Poland and was inspired by the dynamism of Kraków's Jagiellonian University. They formed the Polish American Scholarship Committee, which raised funds to send students to leading American universities such as Amherst, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Syracuse, and Yale. Mizwa and MacCracken also invited industrialist **SAMUEL VAUCLAIN**, President of Baldwin Locomotive Works, to help establish the Foundation. Vauclain had sold locomotives to Poland when Ignacy Jan Paderewski was Prime Minister.



Stephen Mizwa
(born as Szczepan Mierzwa)



Władysław Wróblewski Polish
Ambassador



THE FIRST BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION 1926

From left: Dr. Henry Noble MacCracken, Samuel Vauclain, Willis H. Booth and Colonel Cedric E. Fauntleroy

MacCracken encouraged Mizwa to resign from Drake University and dedicate himself full-time to the creation of the Kosciuszko Foundation. Mizwa brought in Vauclain and other Americans to serve on the Board of Trustees. Among them were banker **WILLIS H. BOOTH**, Vice-President of the Guaranty Trust Company of New York (who promoted Poland among American industrialists and received the Polonia Restituta medal from the Polish Government), **COLONEL CEDRIC E. FAUNTLEROY**, leader of the Kosciuszko Air Squadron who fought in the Polish-Soviet War in 1920, and **ROBERT H. LORD**, a Harvard History professor and author of *The Second Partition of Poland*. Lord served as an advisor to President Wilson at the Paris Peace Conference on Poland's boundaries.

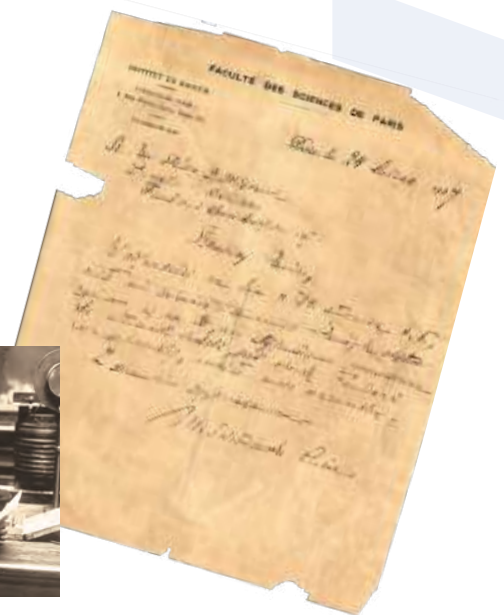
Mizwa sent an appeal to forty Polish newspapers, 800 Polish pastors, and the presidents of Polish American organizations across the country. He outlined a plan to establish a new foundation that could *"make it possible for future generations in reborn Poland to study in America and learn something about the nation for whose freedom Kosciuszko fought, and to make it possible for young Americans to study in Poland and learn something about the nation which produced Kosciuszko."*

Mizwa and MacCracken incorporated the Kosciuszko Foundation in New York in 1925. Its purpose was to raise funds to provide financial aid to deserving Polish students studying in America and American students desiring to study in Poland; to promote and support the exchange of professors, scholars, and lecturers between Poland and the United States; and to foster closer intellectual and cultural connections between the two countries. Thanks to the generosity of its donors, the Foundation successfully brought thirty Polish students to the United States to study.

Mizwa set an ambitious goal for the Foundation: to establish a \$1 million endowment to sustain its mission forever. Many scoffed at Mizwa's aim to raise such a large sum, but he remained undeterred. During the Great Depression, he passed around a hat at his talks, collecting even the smallest donations. From 1925 to 1945, Mizwa traveled 200,000 miles across the United States collecting contributions, big and small, to support the Foundation's mission.

After this initial fundraising, the Foundation received \$43,575 in donations, mostly from Americans, except for one Pole, Professor C.D. Zdanowicz, a specialist in French literature at the University of Wisconsin. In 1927, Mizwa wrote to **MARIA SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE**, the renowned Polish chemist and physicist and two-time Nobel Prize winner, asking her for permission to name a scholarship after her. Madame Curie agreed. Her international fame boosted the Kosciuszko Foundation's visibility.

Right:
Maria Skłodowska-Curie
gives her permission
to name a scholarship
after her



1928

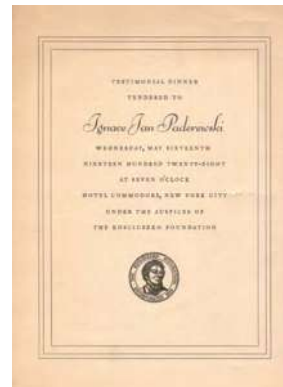
THE ANNUAL DINNER AND DEBUTANTE BALL



Foundation's debutante presentation continued for decades, featuring young women accompanied by their fathers, West Point Cadets, or midshipmen from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point.

Guests are entertained by a performance of Polish folk dances, culminating in the Grand Polonaise, during which guests are invited to join on the dance floor. The Ball brings together Poles and Americans, providing a unique opportunity for connections to flourish. These bonds have led to lasting professional, friendly, and even romantic ties that have strengthened our community and the Foundation for generations to come.

In 1928, the Kosciuszko Foundation hosted a dinner at New York's Commodore Hotel to honor **IGNACY JAN PADEREWSKI**. By 1933, the Foundation began holding an annual fundraising ball to support its activities. The first ball was held at the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York and was later relocated to the elegant Waldorf Astoria in 1936. In 1941, young women aged 16 to 25 with academic achievements were invited to participate as debutantes. The



POLAND'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM DURING WORLD WAR II

When Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia invaded Poland in September 1939, the Foundation was forced to pause the exchange program. With Poland under Nazi and Soviet occupation, Mizwa sent aid to Poland through covert channels. More than 800 Polish soldiers and refugees were interned in Switzerland, and Mizwa sent funds to educate them. And with Polish soldiers trained in Edinburgh, Scotland, for the invasion of Normandy, Mizwa sent medical journals to Polish students with them. The Foundation rescued Polish scholars, scientists, and artists from occupied Europe and assisted them in finding new opportunities at American universities.

Although the invasion of Poland temporarily halted the exchange program, the Foundation continued to promote Polish culture in the United States. By hosting regular lectures, presentations, and fundraising efforts, the Foundation kept Polish issues in the minds of Americans. In May 1943, on the 400th anniversary of the death of **NICHOLAS COPERNICUS**, the Kosciuszko Foundation held a series of lectures and commemorative events, including one at Carnegie Hall where **ALBERT EINSTEIN** was the keynote speaker. He explained that Copernicus was of Polish, not German, origin, contradicting Nazi propaganda.



Above: Lecture at Carnegie Hall on May 24th, 1943, commemorating the 400th anniversary of the death of Nicholas Copernicus

“The Foundation rescued Polish scholars, scientists, and artists from occupied Europe and assisted them in finding new opportunities at American universities.”



Right: Henry Noble MacCracken with Prof. Albert Einstein and other guests during the event

THE VAN ALLEN MANSION AND THE FOUNDATION'S NEW HOME

The Foundation reopened the exchange program between Poland and the United States after World War II, and Mizwa searched for a permanent headquarters. He found his dream location on New York City's Upper East Side. The Van Allen mansion at 15 East 65th Street was designed to resemble a building in St. James Square in London. It was built in 1917 for **JAMES JOHN VAN ALLEN**, a Harvard-educated socialite who inherited a fortune from his father, a Union Army general in the American Civil War who made his wealth in real estate. Van Allen married Emily Astor, a member of a prominent American family. After his wife's death, he adopted a playboy lifestyle and became known as "the American Prince of Wales."

When Congress passed the Prohibition Act banning alcohol, Van Allen sold this stately residence near Museum Mile, along Fifth Avenue to the industrialist **RUFUS PATTERSON** and moved to England. After Patterson's death, his widow, **MARGARET PATTERSON**, put it up for sale. Mizwa was captivated by the building but lacked the money to buy it. He told Margaret Patterson that he wanted to use the mansion to celebrate

Polish and American culture. Persuaded by Mizwa and the Foundation's mission, Mrs. Patterson sold it for a fraction of the price. Later, she donated additional money to help pay off the mortgage. Once the Foundation succeeded, members of the Polish American community who had initially scoffed at Mizwa's idea joined as members. Mizwa had won Polonia's support and generosity, ensuring that the Kosciuszko Foundation was well-positioned to continue its mission in a postwar world.

Another person who helped pay off the mortgage was **STANISŁAW PETERA**, a retired General Electric employee. In 1950, he told Mizwa that he had left \$25,000 in government bonds to the Kosciuszko Foundation in his will. However, because of the Foundation's upcoming 25th anniversary, Petera wanted to make the gift sooner. His attorneys drew up a living trust transferring his assets to the Foundation. The funds were invested in stocks, and Petera received a 2.5% yield to cover his living expenses.

Today, the mansion serves as the headquarters of the Kosciuszko Foundation, a Polish art museum, and an important meeting place for scholars, politicians, and professionals.



Above: In 1951, Henry N. MacCracken ceremonially burned the paid-off mortgage for the KF House at the ball



Above: Mrs. Margaret Patterson, former owner of the Kosciuszko Foundation House, with Stephen Mizwa (center)



Above: Interiors of the KF House



**VAN ALLEN MANSION,
HOUSE OF THE KOSCIUSZKO
FOUNDATION, 1945**

THE CULTURAL GROWTH OF THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION



Mizwa was adamant that the Kosciuszko Foundation be a secular organization that accepted members of any background. The only requirement was an appreciation for Poland and its culture. The Foundation's Board of Trustees announced 1949 as the year of **FRYDERYK CHOPIN**. It sponsored a series of concerts honoring the centennial of the Polish composer's death. **THE CHOPIN CENTENNIAL** began with a concert at Carnegie Hall by **WITOLD MAŁCUŻYŃSKI**, one of Poland's most renowned pianists. Abram Chasin, a composer, pianist, and music director of The New York Times radio station, served as master of ceremonies and said, *"The Kosciuszko Foundation is the only institution in America which promotes cultural relations between Poland and America on a non-political basis. It has helped to understand the debt which mankind owes to Poland's men of genius."*

One legacy of the Chopin Centennial was the creation of music scholarships, with the most prestigious awarded at the **CHOPIN PIANO COMPETITION**. The competition, first held on June 15, 1950, was open to all U.S. citizens aged 17 to 25, regardless of background. Thirty young pianists entered, and the judges unanimously awarded **ROY EATON** the top prize of \$1,000. Eaton was a 20-year-old African American student at the Manhattan School of Music and City College of New York. He had already received scholarships to study at the University of Switzerland and Yale. Eaton's victory was covered in newspapers like The New York Times, making his success particularly notable in a pre-Civil Rights era United States.

Many renowned musicians have won the competition, including **VAN CLIBURN**, **IAN HOBSON**, **DANIEL POLLAK**, **MYUNG-WHUN CHUNG**, **KEVIN KENNER**, and **MURRAY PERAHIA**. The internationally acclaimed Chopin Piano Competition represents a significant milestone in the lives of young pianists.

Kevin Kenner (Foto: Sim Juho)



Stephen Mizwa with Roy Eaton



Witold Małcużyński



Stephen Mizwa with Van Cliburn

With a permanent home on New York's Upper East Side at the beginning of Museum Mile, and thanks to the generosity of donors, the Foundation's art gallery boasts an impressive collection of paintings by Polish masters, including works by **JAN MATEJKO**, **JÓZEF CHEŁMOŃSKI**, **JACEK MALCZEWSKI**, **JULIUSZ KOSSAK**, **JÓZEF BRANDT**, and **JAN STYKA**. In 1950, Matejko's "*Garmrat and Stanczyk*" was added, making it the only Matejko painting on display in America. Józef Brandt's masterpiece "*Light Cavalry Lisowczycy*" became part of

the collection in 1958. The Gallery of Masters showcases paintings depicting significant historical figures and pivotal battles. Prominently featured is **BOLESŁAW JAN CZEDEKOWSKI'S** portrait "*Kosciuszko at West Point*," a painting commissioned by Mizwa. In 2017 and 2018, "*Kosciuszko at West Point*," Józef Brandt's "*Light Cavalry Lisowczycy*," and Jan Matejko's "*Garmrat and Stanczyk*" were displayed at Warsaw's Łazienki Palace. The Gallery of Masters museum is open to the public.

Paintings from the KF Gallery of Polish Masters



THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION AND COMMUNIST POLAND

*“There have
been lights and
shadows, but
the shadows
have begun
to deepen.”*



The Kosciuszko Foundation has fostered cultural, professional, and scholarly connections between the United States and Poland. However, after World War II, when Poland was under Soviet occupation, those relationships became strained. The U.S. and Polish governments grew suspicious of each other. Poland's communist regime made it difficult for Polish scholars to travel to the West, frequently denying them passports even if they submitted the requisite paperwork correctly. Mizwa lamented, writing, *“There have been lights and shadows, but the shadows have begun to deepen.”* What else could the Foundation do to keep true to its mission? *“What is — or what should be? The position of the Kosciuszko Foundation?”* Mizwa asked.

While student and scholar exchanges became more challenging to navigate, Mizwa continued supporting Polish libraries and universities. Inspired by the American Relief for Poland program, which provided Polish children with food and clothing, Mizwa provided educational institutions that had been devastated during the war with books. He launched the **“BOOKS TO POLAND”** campaign. Mizwa contacted American university libraries, requesting book donations. Many responded positively, including Brown, Vassar, Yale, Harvard, and the California

Institute of Technology. The books were sent to the council of Polish university presidents and distributed to libraries based on each school's needs. In the first year, the Kosciuszko Foundation sent sixty boxes of books, weighing nine tons.

In 1955, after serving as the Foundation's executive director for three decades, Mizwa became its President. The biggest issue that plagued Mizwa's presidency was the growing distance between the United States and Poland. Though he worked hard to maintain good relations in the postwar period, increasing discord between the two nations led many to be suspicious of Polish scholars coming to the United States.

Mizwa realized his dream of raising a \$1 million endowment, with the interest paying for scholarships and grants. Forty-five years after the Board of Trustees had voted to approve the endowment's capital campaign, Mizwa's goal was accomplished. The Auditors' report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1969, indicated that the Foundation's capital fund reached \$1,029,248. The following year, Mizwa stepped down as President after dedicating forty-five years to the Foundation. He passed away in 1971 and is buried in Holy Mother of the Rosary Cemetery in Chicopee, MA.



Above: The Kosciuszko Foundation Group Tour to Poland, June 10th, 1963

THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION AFTER MIZWA

Mizwa's death was a devastating loss for the Foundation. It marked a new era for the Foundation, where a new generation of leaders had to step up with innovative ideas for promoting Polish-American relations. Mizwa's assistant, **DR. EUGENE KUSIELEWICZ**, an Associate Professor at St. John's University and a former student of Oskar Halecki, succeeded him in 1971. Kusielewicz restored relationships with Kraków's Jagiellonian University and reestablished the summer exchange programs. Throughout the 1970s, the Kosciuszko Foundation brought 2,500 American students to Kraków and Lublin to study Polish language, history, and culture.

While the summer programs that brought thousands of American students to Poland to study the Polish language, history, and culture were a great success, questions arose about some of the Polish students and scholars arriving in the United States. Concerns about Poland's political situation and its relationship to Moscow continued to make some uneasy. Were students and professors coming to American

universities as spies? Would that compromise the Kosciuszko Foundation's cultural cache? These questions were not new. Mizwa faced them, and so did Kusielewicz. Both men dismissed these anxieties, believing instead that exposing Polish citizens to American democracy and capitalism would help them fight for change behind the Iron Curtain. These scholars played a significant role in the collapse of communism.

One of the people who would become critical in this battle was **CARDINAL KAROL WOJTYŁA**, who visited the Foundation in 1976, two years before he was elected Pope, taking the name John Paul II. During his visit, the Cardinal told its members that the work of the Foundation is "*particularly important at this time. We realize that culture creates a national identity, and in the end creates the nation itself.*" He also complimented, "*The Kosciuszko Foundation diligently serves the interests of the Polish people. We must be grateful to everyone who has contributed to these efforts and to those who continue to work towards these goals. This work is one of the greatest components of our national identity.*"



Above: Dr. Eugene Kusielewicz, President of the Kosciuszko Foundation



Above: Cardinal Karol Wojtyła at the KF in September, 1976

Left: Summer Study Abroad, Krakow 1973

THE FOUNDATION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNISM



regime killed dozens of protesters and arrested thousands. When Polish universities were temporarily shut down, Juszczak remained a stalwart supporter of these institutions, advocating for their independence and reopening.

Juszczak strengthened the Foundation's profile by sponsoring a national tour for **WŁADYSŁAW BARTOSZEWSKI**, a former soldier in the Armia Krajowa, the Polish Underground, and co-founder of Żegota, the Council for Aid to Jews during World War II. Thanks to the Foundation's support, Bartoszewski traveled across the United States speaking on Polish-Jewish relations during World War II. Juszczak also organized assistance for the combatants of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in April 1943 and invited **JAN KARSKI** to speak at the Foundation.

In 1979, **DR. ALBERT JUSZCZAK**, a professor of Polish literature, was elected President. Juszczak's tenure coincided with the start of the Solidarity revolution, which demanded free speech and sought to overthrow communism. But there was a horrible backlash against the movement by the Soviet imposed autocratic government. On December 13, 1981, the Kremlin's puppet, Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, declared Martial Law and outlawed Solidarity. The Communist



Top left: President Albert Juszczak with Zbigniew Brzezinski at the KF

Left: Prof. Władysław Bartoszewski at the KF in 1984

Bottom left: Jan Karski speaking at the KF

Bottom right: Opening of the exhibition "The Landscape of Poland" by Cz. Czaplinski

"Juszczak's tenure coincided with the start of the Solidarity revolution, which demanded free speech and sought to overthrow communism."





JOSEPH E. GORE, ESQ. AND A NEW, INDEPENDENT POLAND

“Gore brought a different, much-needed analytical and detail-oriented skill set to the Foundation.”



Poland, which had been under Soviet occupation since 1945, was the front line in the Cold War between the East and West. Poles struggled for decades to drive Russian troops from their territory. U.S. President Ronald Reagan called the Soviet Union the Evil Empire and sent underground support to keep the Solidarity movement alive. The Kosciuszko Foundation also played a part in the resistance to autocracy. In 1987, Reagan traveled to Berlin and said, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.” That same year, following a series of professors leading the Foundation, the Board of Trustees elected attorney **JOSEPH E. GORE, Esq.** as the next President of the Kosciuszko Foundation.

Gore brought a different, much-needed analytical and detail-oriented skill set to the Foundation. He expanded the Foundation’s bylaws, rules, and regulations, and established the Kosciuszko Foundation’s office in Warsaw at Nowy Swiat. He opened new Kosciuszko Foundation chapters throughout the United States in Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Ohio, New England, and the Rocky Mountains. Gore reinstated the National Advisory Council to help carry out the Foundation’s mission. He also led the fund-raising efforts for the restoration of the Kosciuszko Foundation’s home (the former Van Alen mansion) on East 65th Street in NYC and personally supervised a \$1.5 million renovation of the mansion. To help offset growing operational expenses, he established a rental program for outside events to be held at the mansion. Gore created a legal framework for donors to write last wills and living trusts. This legal business-like approach helped the foundation to raise millions of dollars for scholarships.

The Solidarity movement had been outlawed in Poland by the communist government, and Gore made it clear that the Foundation was on the side of freedom, inviting Solidarity leaders such as **JACEK KURON** to speak in New York. Gore sponsored a reception for Poland’s outspoken movie directors, such as **ANDRZEJ WAJDA**, **KRZYSZTOF ZANUSSI**, and Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship recipient **JULIUSZ MACHULSKI**, who made

The New York Times Real Estate Sunday, July 12, 1992 Section 10

Kosciuszko Foundation House An Inside Job

The Kosciuszko Foundation House, a three-story, 1917 limestone building at 15 East 65th Street with a fourth-floor setback, stands as grand as ever from the street, but inside the usually quiet center for Polish culture and education is in the middle of a more quiet \$1.5 million renovation. The work is expected to be done by October — in time for the first concert by the Chopin Trio of Warsaw, in its classical music series. The building has always been maintained and painted, said Joseph E. Gore, president and managing director. “But it has lacked a modern air-conditioning and heating system. We’re taking great pains to maintain interior features,” said William G. Jurek, a Manhattan architect. “There’s sliding doors and doors behind walls, and in some instances, using old floor-plate flues.”

The circular rotunda will be extended from the roundabout into the basement. The former storage area will have two rooms, a classroom and an 18-by-20-foot book display area with 100 Polish titles in English. Upstairs, floors and oak-paneled public rooms will be repainted and offices renovated. The building, distinguished by a marble inset Palladian window, was donated by Henry Allen Jacobs for James J. Van Alen, whose initials, the letters, lived down the block. Van Alen sold it two years later to Julius L. Distenfeld, president of the American Machine and Foundry Company. The foundation, which bought the building in 1945, sponsors an annual Chopin competition and has a preserved collection of 10th- and 19th-century Polish paintings, many now in storage.



Kosciuszko Foundation House.

The Kosciuszko Foundation NEWSLETTER Volume XXXVIII, No. 3 (1987) Editor: Mary Van Starck



Joseph E. Gore, President

Fifth President of The Kosciuszko Foundation and Five New Trustees Elected to the Board

The Kosciuszko Foundation is a standing memorial to the meaning of the word — American. Established in 1925 and named in honor of the hero of two nations, Thaddeus Kosciuszko, who stood by the side of Washington in a critical period of American history and who decades before Lincoln’s time, took an initial step toward freeing American

slaves. His arrival in Philadelphia a few weeks after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, to offer his services to General Washington in the cause of liberty, his work in the impregnable fortification of West Point, his devoted service in the Army of the South under General Greene, depicted

Continued on page 4

films that navigated the fine lines of censorship in Poland to speak truth to power.

After the collapse of the communist bloc, Gore created the Teaching English in Poland summer program, attracting hundreds of volunteers of various ethnic backgrounds to staff English immersion summer camps across Poland. The 1990s also saw the expansion of music and vocal competitions, as well as the growth of scholarships for funding in science and technology fields. To strengthen the scholarship review process, Gore initiated the Polish and American Review Commissions and required applicants to attend personal interviews. In the early 2000s, Gore initiated the discussion to establish a Chair of Polish Studies at Columbia University.

He published Polish Masters from the KF Collection and the 2-volume Polish-English/English-Polish dictionary. Gore leveraged other outlets to expand the reach of the Kosciuszko Foundation by negotiating an arrangement with WQXR radio to conduct live broadcasts of cultural and classical music events from the KF's gallery on Sunday afternoons.

During his more than two decades of service as President, Gore established numerous scholarship funds, broadened opportunities for donors to create living trusts, and advanced planned giving initiatives that enabled benefactors to leave enduring legacies to the Foundation through bequests in their wills. In March 2021, THE JOSEPH E. AND EUGENIA F. GORE LAW STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP FUND was established with an endowment of approximately \$1 million.

Right: Jacek Kuron at the Kosciuszko Foundation on May 5th, 1989

Far right: Joseph E. Gore presents the Kosciuszko Foundation Dictionary to Prof. Hubert Izdebski



Left: Joseph E. Gore being honored at Jagiellonian University

Bottom left: with Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski

Bottom right: with President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in Warsaw



Above: Polish filmmakers at The Kosciuszko Foundation celebrating the opening of the festival "Revelation and Camouflage: Polish Cinema from 1930 to the Present"



STOROZYNSKI GIVES THE FOUNDATION A NEW VOICE

*“Inspired by the
brilliance of Polish
scientists, Storozynski
oversaw the creation
of the Collegium of
Eminent Scientists.”*



The 2008 stock market crash was the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, leaving the Foundation’s budget with a deficit. In November of that year, the son of decorated World War II veterans, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist **ALEX STOROZYNSKI**, was elected President. As the author of the award-winning biography of Tadeusz Kosciuszko, *The Peasant Prince*, Storozynski chronicled the Polish hero’s commitment to liberty and education. A Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship helped pay for Storozynski’s master’s degree in Journalism from Columbia University, so he put his writing on hold to repay the favor.

As an editorial board member of the New York Daily News, Storozynski authored editorials on ways to spur the economy and streamline New York’s state and city governments. He brought that pragmatic approach to the foundation. His first priority was rebuilding the endowment, which had been impacted by the financial crisis. Storozynski invited the President of Poland’s National Bank, Sławomir Skrzypek, to the mansion for a fundraiser with over 100 Polish Americans working on Wall Street. Several of them joined the Foundation and advised the Finance Committee on prudent investments.

Storozynski moved to expand the Foundation. In 2010, the The American Center of Polish Culture dissolved and donated its mansion on O Street in Washington, D.C., to the Kosciuszko Foundation. With a foothold in the nation’s capital, Storozynski worked to set the record straight on Polish history, organizing a conference at the Library of Congress about the Katyn Massacre. Speakers included noted historians, former National Security Advisor Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Senator Barbara Mikulski, and Polish Ambassador Robert Kupiecki. The Foundation persuaded the U.S. Senate to display an exhibit about Katyn in its office building. A year later, the U.S. archives released documents that showed that President Franklin Roosevelt concealed details about the massacre, allowing the world to believe that the Nazis, not the Soviets, perpetrated this act of genocide.

Another historical inaccuracy was the American media’s use of the phrase “Polish concentration camps” when referring to WWII death camps built and run by Nazi Germany. Storozynski wrote a petition asking



*The Kosciuszko Foundation
townhouse in Washington DC*



Left: Alex Storozyński and Zbigniew Brzezinski during the Katyn Massacre conference at the Library of Congress in 2010

newspapers to revise their stylebooks to ban the erroneous phrase. Three hundred thousand people signed it, and newspapers took notice. The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, San Francisco Chronicle, and Associated Press officially prohibited the use of the misleading term, “Polish concentration camps.”

In 2011, the Foundation was registered in Poland as Fundacja Kościuszkowska Polska, with its headquarters in Warsaw, enabling Polish citizens and companies to make tax-deductible donations to the Foundation. Maintaining the Foundation’s commitment to non-partisanship, Storozyński has earned the respect of Polish presidents from across the political spectrum. President Lech Kaczyński awarded him the Gold Cross of Service of the Republic of Poland, and President Bronisław Komorowski presented him with the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland. He was also honored by former President Lech Wałęsa with the Lech Wałęsa Media Award. In honoring Storozyński, Wałęsa said, “*I present this award to an honoree who has done much for Poland... listen and read what today’s honoree writes and says. I ask you to read and listen to this man.*”

In 2013, Storozyński organized an economic conference at the Foundation titled “The Polish Phenomenon,” in collaboration with Marek Belka, the President of the National Bank of Poland, the Warsaw Stock Exchange, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MSZ), Standard and Poor’s, The Wall Street Journal, and prominent corporations. The event was so successful in highlighting Poland’s economic strength that it resulted in an upgrade of Poland’s credit rating, saving the country millions in borrowing costs in bond markets.

Storozyński streamlined the scholarship application process and modernized the Foundation’s website. He expanded scholarship programs in science and

medicine, realizing Mizwa’s dream of endowing a scholarship in the name of Marie Skłodowska-Curie. Inspired by the brilliance of Polish scientists, Storozyński oversaw the creation of the Collegium of Eminent Scientists. The Collegium honors eminent scientists of Polish origin and ancestry who have achieved recognition in the United States, invites speakers to share their research and contributions to various fields of science, and shares those innovations.

As the former Chairman of the Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union, Storozyński signed a deal to make the Kosciuszko Foundation one of the PSFCU’s sponsoring organizations, making it easier for customers to donate to education. Storozyński’s moves doubled the endowment’s size and left the Foundation with an operating surplus. With a passion for writing, Storozyński resigned as President to make a documentary film about Kosciuszko and penned a memoir about his family, which included soldiers, spies, and assassins. He joined the Board of Trustees, serving as Chairman, and published the book *Spies in My Blood: Secrets of a Polish Family’s Fight Against Nazis and Communists*.



Above: Alex Storozyński with President Lech Wałęsa



MICGIEL SERVES AS PRESIDENT

*“Micgiel oversaw
the final stages
of the creation of
the Polish Studies
Chair at Columbia
University”.*



In April 2014, Professor John Micgiel of Columbia University assumed the presidency of the Kosciuszko Foundation at the KF's 79th Dinner & Ball. Micgiel spent twenty-five years teaching at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs and also directed both the Institute on East Central Europe and the East European, Russian, and Eurasian National Resource Center. Over the course of his academic career, he played an important role in advancing the study of Poland and East Central Europe within one of America's leading universities. He also oversaw the final stages of the creation of a Polish Studies Chair at Columbia University's Department of History. The effort to establish this endowed position began in 2003, when Kosciuszko Foundation President Joseph Gore and Chairman of the Board of Trustees Witold Sulimirski began

working with Micgiel to secure funding for the professorship. Thanks to the support of the Kosciuszko Foundation and the Semper Polonia Foundation, as well as a campaign to raise \$3 million devised by the Consulate General of Poland, the Polish Studies Chair at Columbia University was finally established in 2014. Historian Dr. Małgorzata Mazurek was selected as its inaugural holder and assumed the position in July of that same year.

During his tenure, Micgiel also organized two important conservation projects aimed at protecting and preserving the Kosciuszko Foundation's holdings and physical legacy. First, he coordinated a restoration campaign to refurbish the nearly hundred-year-old Van Alen Mansion, including essential repairs to the building's façade, basement, and kitchen, all of which were necessary to maintain the historic headquarters in good condition. He also arranged for selected artworks from the Gallery of Masters to undergo professional conservation and restoration, helping to preserve the Foundation's important art collection for future generations.



*Top: Winners of the
2014 Chopin Piano
Competition*

*Far Left: John Micgiel
with Alex Storozynski*

*Left: John Micgiel with
Walter Zacharasiewicz
at the KF*

SKULIMOWSKI BRINGS BUSINESS SAVVY & DIPLOMACY

“Skulimowski has expanded Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship opportunities in STEM fields.”



In December 2016, Marek Skulimowski, a diplomat, businessman, and philanthropist, was elected President of the Kosciuszko Foundation. Having served as Deputy Consul General of the Republic of Poland in New York, Skulimowski was well-acquainted with the Polish American community. As the former Director of U.S. Operations for INGLOT Cosmetics, overseeing the company's nationwide expansion, he brought a keen business sense to the Foundation's operations.

Having spent two decades tracking down and recovering Polish art looted by the Nazis during World War II, Skulimowski became known as the “Indiana Jones of Poland.” Over the years, he has helped retrieve notable artifacts, including: “Portrait of a Lady,” by Melchior Geldorp, “St. Phillip Baptizing Queen Kandaka’s Servant” by Johann Seekatz, two paintings by Julian Falat, “Before Going Hunting Rytwiany” and “The Battue Hunt at Nieswiez,” along with a 15th-century breviary and a pre-war Polish Regimental Standard.

Following the footsteps of his recent predecessors, Skulimowski has expanded Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship opportunities in STEM fields. In September 2017, he invited Polish President Andrzej

Duda to visit the Kosciuszko Foundation to meet with representatives of the Kosciuszko Foundation’s Collegium of Eminent Scientists. The meeting provided an opportunity for current leaders and thinkers to explore ways to support the education of science students in Poland who wish to study in the United States. It was the first time a sitting Polish president visited the Foundation’s headquarters.

Skulimowski’s tenure has faced two major global crises. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Kosciuszko Foundation was forced to close its doors; however, its activism and support for students did not cease. Under Skulimowski’s leadership, the Foundation transitioned its events online, continuing to host a wealth of webinars, lectures, and concerts. These virtual programs opened the Kosciuszko Foundation to audiences around the world. Exchange programs were temporarily halted during the pandemic, but scholarships continued to be awarded to hundreds of students.



Top: Marek Skulimowski helped to track down and recover Polish art looted by the Nazi



From Left: Polish President Andrzej Duda at the KF, Marek Skulimowski at the National Archive in Lviv, Marek Skulimowski helping Ukrainian refugees in February 2022

As the COVID pandemic slowed and the world began to reopen, Skulimowski was at his mother's funeral in Poland when Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022. His home was near the border, so Skulimowski hurried to the store and bought thermoses, filling them with hot tea and soup. He brought them to Ukrainian women and children trudging through the snow as they fled Russian bombs. Skulimowski opened the doors to his mother's house and his own to refugees who had left everything behind.

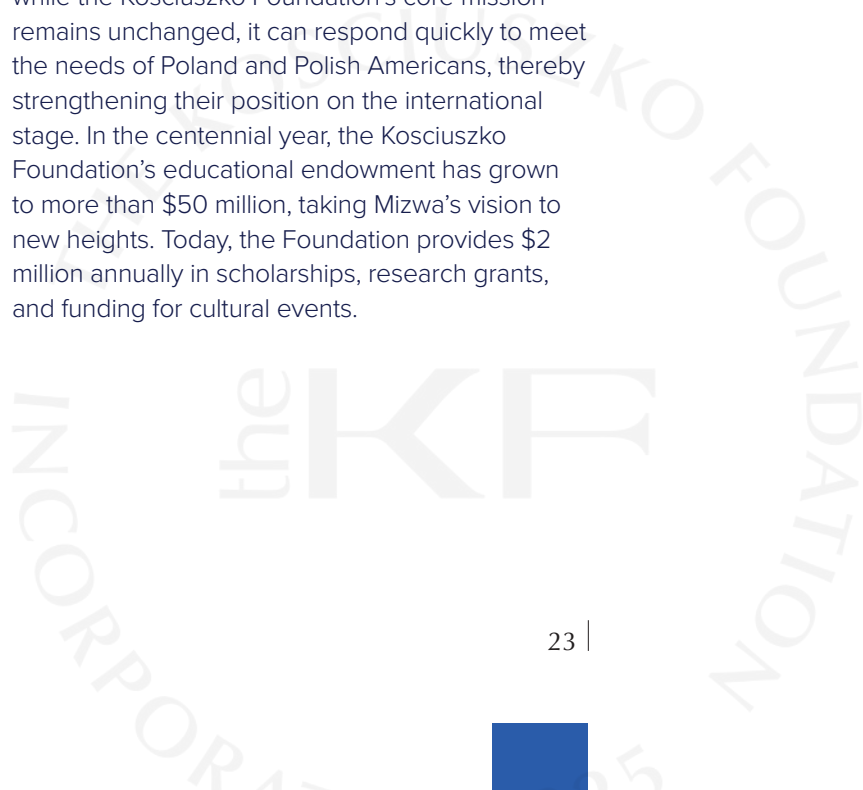
The Kosciuszko Foundation immediately came to the aid of those in need, just as it had done during the days of the Second World War. The day after the invasion started, Skulimowski called an emergency meeting of the Board of Trustees and launched a fundraising campaign to bring relief to Ukrainian refugees, many of whom fled to neighboring Poland. Just five months later, by July 2022, thanks to the generosity of Foundation members and others, the campaign had raised nearly \$2 million in relief funds. In addition to this fund, the Board approved the creation of the "FREEDOM STARTS WITH YOUR MIND" Program to support students, artists, and scholars from Ukraine by offering online social science and humanities courses.

Skulimowski's dedication to providing relief to Ukraine did not stop with financial support. At the border, he partnered with Fundacja Folkowisko to set up medical tents, find housing, and provide clothing and other essentials for the refugees. A strong supporter of Ukraine's sovereignty, Skulimowski continues to make regular visits to Ukraine and has found donors to provide computers and multimedia equipment to schools as well as humanitarian aid to cultural institutions for Ukrainian students in Poland. He entered a partnership with the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative to

preserve and store Ukrainian artwork and historical artifacts to protect them from Russian bombs. In November 2024, Skulimowski was nominated for the prestigious Jerzy Giedroyc Award for his unrelenting dedication to Ukraine. This distinguished nomination honors his tireless efforts in building bridges between the Polish, Jewish, and Ukrainian communities and his unwavering commitment to public service in the spirit of Jerzy Giedroyc's values.

In addition to championing Polish-Ukrainian relations, Skulimowski works tirelessly to keep Polish Studies alive at American universities. In 2021, he observed the unfortunate reality that several historic Polish Studies programs had closed due to dwindling financial support. Thanks to grant money from the Kosciuszko Foundation, Polish Studies programs at Hunter College, Brown University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Loyola University Chicago, Daemen University, and Canisius College are thriving.

Skulimowski's leadership has demonstrated that while the Kosciuszko Foundation's core mission remains unchanged, it can respond quickly to meet the needs of Poland and Polish Americans, thereby strengthening their position on the international stage. In the centennial year, the Kosciuszko Foundation's educational endowment has grown to more than \$50 million, taking Mizwa's vision to new heights. Today, the Foundation provides \$2 million annually in scholarships, research grants, and funding for cultural events.



KF PROMINENT ALUMNI



**PROF. MAGDALENA
ABAKANOWICZ**

Polish sculptor and fiber artist, widely regarded as one of the most influential figures in contemporary sculpture. Internationally recognized for her monumental textile sculptures known as Abakans and later for large-scale installations of headless human figures, her work explored themes of individuality, collectivity, and the human condition. She exhibited extensively worldwide, including at the Venice Biennale, and her works are held in major museum collections such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Tate.

©Abakanowicz Arts and Culture Charitable Foundation and Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, Photo Artur Starewicz



**PROF. LESZEK
BALCEROWICZ**

Polish economist, statesman, and professor, best known as the architect of Poland's post-communist economic transformation. As Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in 1989–1991, he designed and implemented the sweeping market reforms known as the “Balcerowicz Plan,” which helped transition Poland from a centrally planned economy to a market-based system. He later served as President of the National Bank of Poland and has remained an influential voice in economic policy and institutional reform.



**AMBASSADOR
MARK BRZEZINSKI**

American diplomat who has served as the United States Ambassador to Poland. Over the course of his career,

he has held senior roles in U.S. foreign policy, including positions on the National Security Council and as U.S. Ambassador to Sweden, focusing on transatlantic relations, security, and democratic cooperation. His work has consistently centered on strengthening alliances and advancing U.S. engagement in Europe.



PROF. EMIL CHROBOCZEK

Polish agricultural scientist who became one of the country's foremost specialists in vegetable cultivation, quality, and storage. After earning a doctorate in the United States at Cornell University, he returned to Poland and served as head of the Department of Vegetable Cultivation and Breeding at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences. His work helped establish modern research infrastructure for vegetable production in Poland and laid the foundations for long-term horticultural research and education.



PROF. ANNA M. CIENCIALA

Polish-American historian specializing in twentieth-century diplomacy and East-Central European history. A longtime professor at the University of Kansas, her research focused on Polish foreign policy, World War II diplomacy, and Soviet-Polish relations. She was also a leading authority on the Katyn massacre, contributing scholarly expertise to international investigations and helping advance historical understanding of Soviet wartime crimes.



ELIZABETH MUNK CLARK

American poet and scholar of English and Slavic literature whose life and work bridged the cultural worlds of the United States and Poland. A graduate of Syracuse University and the University of Wisconsin, she studied Polish language and literature at the Jagiellonian University in

Krakow under the sponsorship of the Kosciuszko Foundation, developing a lifelong devotion to Polish culture. During and after World War II, she worked as a senior translator and humanitarian administrator, while privately writing poetry and translations that express individual love, artistic devotion, and enduring attachment to an occupied homeland.



PROF. NORMAN DAVIES

Polish-British historian widely recognized as one of the foremost scholars of Polish and European history. A longtime professor at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at University College London, his influential works - including *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, *Europe: A History*, and *Rising '44* - have helped bring the history of Poland and Central Europe to a global readership. Through his scholarship and public engagement, Davies has played a major role in advancing international understanding of Poland's historical experience.



JAN DOBKOWSKI

Artist best known for his vivid, neo-figurative paintings that explore themes of nature, vitality, and human sensuality through bold color and organic form. Emerging as a key figure of Poland's postwar avant-garde in the 1960s, his work challenged the boundaries between abstraction and figuration. Supported early in his career by the Kosciuszko Foundation, Dobkowski went on to exhibit widely across Europe and the United States. His works are held in major European collections as well as the Guggenheim Museum in New York, attesting to his enduring international impact.

Foto: Włodzimierz Wasyluk



PROF. ROMAN DYBOWSKI

Philologist and literature scholar focusing on literary history, textual analysis, and cultural interpretation. Throughout his academic career, he has held professorial posts, published extensively in scholarly

journals, and played an active role in shaping literary studies through teaching and mentorship. His research is noted for its rigorous engagement with language, tradition, and the broader cultural contexts of literature.



**PROF. KAROL
ESTREICHER JR.**

Polish art historian and cultural historian who played a pivotal role in recovering Polish cultural heritage looted during World War II. As director of the Jagiellonian University Museum in Kraków, he led efforts to locate and repatriate thousands of artworks and historical objects taken by Nazi Germany. His work helped restore major national treasures to Poland and laid the groundwork for modern scholarship on wartime art restitution.



FELIKS FALK

Polish film and theater director, screenwriter, and one of the leading representatives of the “Cinema of Moral Anxiety” movement in 1970s Poland. His films often explore ethical dilemmas, social responsibility, and the tensions of everyday life under late communist rule. Falk’s work has received numerous awards at international film festivals and has contributed significantly to the development of contemporary Polish cinema.



OSKAR HALECKI

Oskar Halecki: A leading Polish historian of Central and Eastern Europe who built an international reputation through his scholarship and academic leadership, first at the University of Warsaw and through his work with the League of Nations. In 1938, with support from the

Kosciuszko Foundation, he traveled to the United States, where he remained during and after World War II, teaching at institutions including Fordham University and Columbia University. His scholarship, particularly on the Polish–Lithuanian Union, remains foundational to the study of European history and Central-Eastern Europe’s place within it.



**PROF. ERIC
PHILBROOK KELLY**

American author, educator, and journalist best known for his children’s historical novel *The Trumpeter of Krakow*, which won the 1929 Newbery Medal. Deeply interested in Polish culture and history, Kelly traveled to Poland on a Kosciuszko Foundation fellowship, experiences that inspired much of his writing. A professor at Dartmouth College who also lectured at the Jagiellonian University, he later served as chairman of the Pulitzer Prize selection committee for the novel in 1951, 1952, and 1953.





CHRIS KEMPCZINSKI

American business executive serving as the President and Chief Executive Officer of McDonald's. A recipient of a Kosciuszko Foundation Tuition Scholarship. He studied at Duke University and Harvard Business School, and built his career at organizations including Procter & Gamble, Boston Consulting Group, PepsiCo, and Kraft Foods. His professional trajectory reflects a strong foundation in strategy, operations, and global business leadership. In 2024, Kempczinski was awarded the KF Medal of Recognition.



DR. ADAM KENT

Concert pianist and educator who specializes in the works of Frederic Chopin as well as Spanish and Latin American repertoire. His concert career has taken him across the United States, Europe, and Latin America. He holds degrees from the Juilliard School and the Manhattan

School of Music and teaches at both institutions. As a winner of the American Pianists Association Fellowship and Simone Belsky Music Awards, he has also received top prizes in the Thomas Richner, Juilliard Concerto, and Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competition. Additionally, he is a recipient of the Arthur Rubenstein Prize and the Harold Bauer Award.



SZYMON KOMASA

Polish classical baritone singer, a graduate of the Juilliard School and Guildhall School of Music & Drama. He is a winner of the Kosciuszko Foundation Marcella Sembrich International Voice Competition, a recipient of the KF Pioneer Award, and a finalist of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World. His career is marked by international performances of both newly commissioned works and the classical repertoire, underscoring his commitment to expanding the expressive range of contemporary classical music.

Foto: Jakub Plesniarski



PROF. ZBIGNIEW A. KRUSZEWSKI

Polish-American political scientist, philosopher, and Professor Emeritus at the University of Texas at El Paso whose life bridged wartime resistance, scholarship, and civic engagement. As a teenager, he joined the "Minor Sabotage" resistance group and later took part in the Warsaw Uprising as a member of the Home Army (Armia Krajowa). After the war, he came to the United States as a Kosciuszko Foundation exchange scholar, launching an academic career that combined political science, border studies, and sustained engagement with the Polish-American community.



DR. LUDWIK KRZYŻANOWSKI

English philologist, translator, and prominent figure in the Polish émigré cultural community. He played a central role in shaping Polish

intellectual life in the United States, notably as the co-founder of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America in 1942. He was also the editor-in-chief of *The Polish Review* for three decades, taught Polish Studies at Columbia University and political science at New York University, and was a leading expert on Joseph Conrad, editing *Joseph Conrad: Centennial Essays*.



PROF. JOHN KULCZYCKI

Historian of modern Poland and East-Central Europe and Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois Chicago, where he taught East-Central European history for several decades. His work has made a lasting contribution to Polish studies in the United States, with a particular focus on nationalism, ethnicity, migration, and state-society relations in twentieth-century Central Europe.



DR. JULIAN KULSKI

Polish-American architect, scholar, and educator whose life bridges wartime resistance and academic achievement. As a young member of the Polish underground, he fought in the Warsaw Uprising before emigrating to the United States, where he built a distinguished career as a professor of architecture and urban planning. Through his scholarship and public speaking, he has shared both his professional expertise and firsthand testimony of Poland's wartime history.

Foto: Pangea Magazine



NATALIA LL (LACH-LACHOWICZ)

Polish conceptual and feminist artist whose work in photography, performance, and video positioned her among the most influential avant-garde figures of her generation. Her career was closely connected to the United States through exhibitions,

residencies, and institutional collaborations, including ties with the Kosciuszko Foundation, which helped promote her work and facilitate her presence in the American art world. Through these transatlantic exchanges, her work reached U.S. audiences and became part of broader conversations on conceptual and feminist art.



RULKA LANGER

Polish-born author, translator, and chronicler of World War II. Her writing and translations helped bring the experience of wartime Poland and Polish literature to international audiences. A recipient of a Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship to study at Vassar College, she lived in Warsaw during the German invasion and later wrote *The "Mermaid and the Messerschmitt: War Through a Woman's Eyes, 1939–1940"*, a firsthand account of the siege of Warsaw.



JAN LENICA

Polish graphic designer, poster artist, and experimental animator whose work helped define the Polish School of Poster art. He created influential animated films and posters, taught graphic and film arts in Europe and at Harvard University, and pushed the boundaries of visual communication through his innovative use of cut-out animation and graphic design. His posters and films were exhibited internationally and earned numerous accolades, including a BAFTA Film Award nomination.

Foto: Who's Who in Graphic Art (1962)



JULIUSZ JAN MACHULSKI

Polish film director, screenwriter, and producer whose work helped shape modern Polish popular cinema. Known for films such as *Vabank* and *Sexmission*, his films combine satire, genre storytelling, and social commentary that resonated widely with audiences in Poland and abroad. His career has included

transatlantic engagement through studies at the California Institute of the Arts and teaching film directing at Hunter College in New York, helping introduce Polish cinema to American audiences.

Foto: By Sławek - Machulski Juliusz, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org>



DR. AGNIESZKA MORAWIŃSKA

Polish art historian, curator, and cultural administrator who served as director of the National Museum in Warsaw. Through major exhibitions, institutional reforms, and international partnerships, she helped strengthen the museum's global presence and promote Polish art abroad. Her work has contributed to expanding cultural exchange between Polish museums and leading institutions in Europe and the United States.



ANDREW NAGORSKI

Polish-American journalist, author, and international affairs commentator

whose career has bridged Europe and the United States. As a longtime correspondent and senior editor at *Newsweek*, he reported from several European capitals on Cold War politics, German reunification, and the transformation of post-communist Europe. Through his writing and public commentary, he has helped bring the history and politics of Central and Eastern Europe to American audiences.



ZDZISŁAW NAJDER

Polish essayist, journalist, and public intellectual best known for his work on Joseph Conrad and his role as a prominent dissident during the Cold War. A Kosciuszko Foundation grant recipient, he served as chief of the Polish-language section of Radio Free Europe in Munich, where he played a key role in supporting independent thought and free expression behind the Iron Curtain. His scholarly and civic contributions left a lasting impact on Polish intellectual life, democratic opposition, and transatlantic dialogue.

Foto: Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe



ROMAN OPALKA

Artist whose work focused on time, continuity, and human existence. His career was closely connected to the Polish cultural community in the United States, including his collaboration with and support from the KF Foundation, which played an important role in promoting his work internationally. His work was exhibited worldwide and is held in major museum collections, establishing him as a key figure in postwar conceptual art.



JAKUB J. ORŁOWSKI

Internationally acclaimed Polish countertenor renowned for his interpretations of Baroque repertoire and charismatic stage presence. A Juilliard graduate and laureate of the Kosciuszko Foundation Marcella Sembrich International Voice Competition, he has appeared at leading venues including the Metropolitan Opera

in New York and the Royal Opera House in London. Beyond opera, he is also a breakdancer and gained global attention by performing at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, embodying a rare fusion of classical excellence and contemporary performance.

Foto: © Kamil Szkopik



PROF. WIKTOR OSIATYŃSKI

Polish legal scholar, constitutional expert, and public intellectual known for his work on human rights and democratic institutions. He taught at universities in Poland and abroad, including Central European University and several American institutions, contributing to international dialogue on constitutional law and democratic governance. His scholarship and civic engagement played a significant role in shaping discussions on democracy and civil society in post-communist Europe.

Foto: Andrew Testa/Panos for the Open Society Foundation



PROF. JAN PAMUŁA

Polish painter, printmaker, and pioneer of computer-generated art in Poland. Associated with geometric abstraction, his work explored the relationship between color, mathematical structure, and digital technology, making him one of the first Polish artists to incorporate computer software into artistic practice. A longtime professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków, he also served as the institution's rector and played an important role in shaping contemporary Polish visual art.

Foto: Gazeta Krakowska



PROF. SZCZEPAN PIENIAZEK

Pioneering Polish pomologist and professor of agricultural sciences who helped modernize fruit cultivation and horticultural research in Poland. During World War II, he participated in exchange programs to the United

States and pursued doctoral work at Cornell University. The knowledge and research methods he gained during his time abroad in the U.S. later informed his leadership in rebuilding and modernizing Polish pomology and horticultural science.



DR. DONALD PIENKOS

American historian and political scientist, and a Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he taught and helped develop programs in Polish and Eastern European Studies. His scholarship focuses on Polish-American political history, diaspora institutions, and transnational advocacy, producing foundational studies of Polonia's role in U.S. and European affairs. A respected community leader and scholar, he has also played a role in Polish-American civic engagement and received the Officer's Cross of Merit from the President of Poland for his contributions to Polish-American historical understanding and advocacy.

Foto: Kuryer Polski



ANDRZEJ PITYNSKI

Polish-American monumental sculptor known for powerful public works commemorating Polish history and freedom. His career included iconic memorials such as the Katyn Memorial in Jersey City and the National Katyń Memorial in Baltimore, as well as The Partisans in Boston and other monuments that address patriotism and wartime sacrifice. Pitynski's work was exhibited widely in the United States and Poland, and his sculptures have become significant cultural landmarks in both countries.

Theresa Leggio, courtesy of the artist



LIEUTENANT GENERAL EDWARD ROWNY, U.S. ARMY (RET.)

Polish-American military officer and diplomat who played a key role in U.S. national security policy during the Cold War. A decorated U.S. Army general, he served as chief U.S.

negotiator in strategic arms control talks with the Soviet Union and later as Special Advisor to the President for Arms Control. His career reflects decades of leadership in military strategy, diplomacy, and transatlantic security policy.



JERZY SKOLIMOWSKI

Polish film director, screenwriter, actor, playwright, and painter whose career spans Europe and the United States. A recipient of a Kosciuszko Foundation grant, he has received some of cinema's highest honors, including the Venice Film Festival Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement, the Cannes Film Festival Jury Prize, and an Academy Award nomination for Best International Feature Film. His films emphasize individuality, push boundaries, and escape conformity, leaving a lasting artistic impact and a powerful social legacy of individualism under conditions of political and cultural oppression.

Foto: Muzeum Kinematografii w Łodzi



ANNA SMOLOWIK

Polish actress working across theater, film, and television. She is a graduate of the Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw and has appeared in a range of contemporary Polish productions, earning recognition and critical acclaim for her nuanced, emotionally grounded performances. She continued her professional development in the United States, supported by a grant from the Kosciuszko Foundation for film school.



ALEX STOROŻYŃSKI

Polish-American author, Pulitzer-winning journalist, and President Emeritus and Chairman of the Board of The Kosciuszko Foundation. A former president of the White House Correspondents' Association, he reported for major American media outlets and later authored historical works on Poland and Polish-American relations. His leadership at the Foundation expanded educational programs and strengthened cultural and academic ties between Poland and the United States.



MARIANNA STUHR

Visual artist whose practice spans painting, printmaking, and installation, with a particular emphasis on screen printing and material experimentation. Her artistic exchange in the United States significantly expanded her approach to materials and techniques, introducing her to environmentally sustainable printmaking methods – knowledge she brought back to Poland, extending the impact of the exchange beyond her individual work.

Foto: Piotr Orłowski



FRANCISZEK STAROWIEYSKI

Polish painter, graphic designer, and poster artist associated with the internationally renowned Polish School of Poster. His work combined surrealism, historical imagery, and baroque aesthetics to create visually distinctive posters and illustrations exhibited internationally. Through exhibitions and collaborations abroad, his work helped bring Polish graphic art to a global audience.



RABBI MICHAEL JOSEPH SCHUDRICH

Chief Rabbi of Poland and a central figure in the revival of Jewish religious life in post-communist Poland. Originally from the United States, he has devoted decades to rebuilding Jewish institutions, education, and community life across the country. His leadership has been instrumental in restoring Jewish heritage and fostering interfaith dialogue in Poland.



JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

Polish photographer and wartime photo-reporter best known for his visual documentation of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising, capturing frontline scenes under fire as a member of the Polish underground. After the war, he published the influential anthology *Episodes from the Warsaw Uprising* and exhibited his photographs internationally. His work was also presented at the KF Foundation, contributing to the preservation of Polish historical memory in the United States.

15

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WHAT'S NEXT?

Well, that depends on you. You've read this brochure and hopefully are a member of the Foundation. If not, why not? You care about Polish culture, having made it this far, reading about our mission. We've been following the examples set by Kosciuszko and Mizwa in championing Polish-American relations, freedom, and education. Their dedication and generous donations to this cause have inspired us to do the same. So help us keep this legacy of paying it forward. Join us, get involved, and let us know about talented Polish scholars and artists who deserve support. We can't do it without you, so please consider donating as we continue this vital mission into our second century.



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