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**CONFERENCE**

Celebrating the centennial of  
Poland's rebirth as a sovereign  
nation  
&  
American–Polish diplomatic  
relations

ORGANIZED BY

**VSU DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

9 November 2018

UNDER THE HONORARY PATRONAGE OF

H.E. Piotr Wilczek, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States



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Embassy  
of the Republic of Poland  
in Washington, DC

## CONFERENCE IDEA:

Why celebrate? Americans remember 11 November 1918 as “Armistice Day,” the end of fighting during World War I. Poles also celebrate this day, not only for a successful conclusion to the Great War, but to honor the restoration of Polish independence. After more than a century of subjugation, Polish patriots took back control of their lands. This started a new struggle, one that lasted another three years before independence was guaranteed. America strongly supported these efforts, starting with President Woodrow Wilson’s powerful endorsement of Polish independence. Less than two months after Armistice Day, America and Poland established diplomatic relations. From that point onward, even during the height of the Cold War, the two nations maintained cordial relations. Today Poland and America have excellent ties, and our conference hopes to illuminate the historical antecedents of these connections.

## CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

Ewa Barczyk, John P. Dunn (VSU), Anna Mazurkiewicz (UG), and Ivan Nikolov (VSU).

Student volunteers: Courtney Boone, Austin Danielski, Eric Henderson, Kevin Lancaster, Connor McCarthy, Hunter Tanner, Sam Tucker, Joey Matt Dillon Bell, Grier Rogers, and Tahbius Hughes.

## RELATED CONFERENCE EVENTS at VSU:

### ➤ EXHIBIT

**Highlights of POLAND:** Poster collection on loan from the Polish Embassy in Washington -- on the second floor of the Ashley Hall rotunda for one week. Images of Poland: its natural wonders, biggest cities, points of interest and more...

### ➤ STUDENT CONTEST

POLISH TRACES IN THE AMERICAN SOUTH – Student photo & essay competition. VSU students were invited to search for different sites or buildings which are/were important to Polish Americans or honor their contributions to the US history by the Polish American Historical Association (PAHA). This academic organization has launched an important and exciting initiative to publish a book tentatively called *Guide to Polish Historical Sites in North America*. The editor of the volume – Mrs. Ewa Barczyk’s – serves as the Chair of the Awards Committee. Successful essays will be published; the best will win cash awards of \$50-\$100 each sponsored by VSU History.

### ➤ FILM SCREENING

An award winning documentary “**FOURTH PARTITION**” that recounts the story of four million Polish immigrants who came to America circa 1870-1920, and how they played a part in building a community in Chicago. The film mentions first Poles in America (Jamestown 1608) as well as contributions to the American Revolution by Thaddeus Kosciuszko and Casimir Pulaski. The latter died in 1779 near Savannah, GA. The film ends with Poland becoming a free nation in 1918 after having been erased from the maps of Europe for one hundred twenty-three years. Today, the Polish American community is the eight largest ancestry group in the US with estimated number of ten million people of Polish descent.

# PROGRAM for November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

## SCHOLARLY SESSION: THE UNITED STATES & POLAND

Ashley Hall Rotunda, 9:00 AM to Noon. Free & open to public

KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

**"Polonia Restituta: The Centennial of Polish Independence, and its Significance in Modern History,"** by Neal Pease, History, Professor of History, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and Editor-in-Chief of *The Polish Review*

UNITED STATES & POLAND

**1. "A Georgian in Poland's November Insurrection, 1831"**

John P. Dunn, Professor of History, Valdosta State University

**2. "Fords, Food, and Flyers: Americans in Poland 1918-1921,"**

Mathew Adams, Asst. Prof. of History, Savannah State University

**3. "Free Again: The United States and Poland's way out of Communism,"**

Anna Mazurkiewicz, Assoc. Prof. of History, University of Gdansk, Poland, and President of the Polish-American Historical Association

## THE TASTE OF POLAND

Honor's College, Noon – 1 PM. Free & open to public

1. "Students quest students" trivia game;
2. VSU Study Abroad Program info desk (Gdansk, Poland for May-June 2019);
3. Presentation of the East Central European cuisine.

## AWARDS CEREMONY

Odum Library Auditorium, 2:00 – 3:45 PM. Free & open to public

Winners of the Photo&Essay competition announced. Awards bestowed.

## THE FOURTH PARTITION – FILM SCREENING

Odum Library Auditorium, 2:30 – 3:45 PM. Free & open to public

Film, 75 min. No admission fee. Open to public.

**FACULTY BANQUET** (Faculty & Guests. By invitation only)

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## CONFERENCE PARTNERS:



### **POLISH AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

The Polish American Historical Association is a non-profit, tax-exempt, interdisciplinary organization devoted to the study of Polish American history and culture. PAHA publishes a scholarly peer-reviewed journal, Polish American Studies, and disseminates information about its activities via a newsletter, blog, and a Facebook group. Membership is open to all individuals interested in the fields of Polish American history and culture, and immigration studies.



### **THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION**

THE AMERICAN CENTER OF POLISH CULTURE

15 E 65th Street  
New York, NY 10065

Founded in 1925, the Kosciuszko Foundation promotes closer ties between Poland and the United States through educational, scientific and cultural exchanges. The KF awards approximately \$1 million annually in fellowships and grants to graduate students, scholars, scientists, and artists, and promotes Polish culture in America.



Wydział  
Historyczny  
Uniwersytetu  
Gdańskiego

### **FACULTY OF HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GDANSK, POLAND**

With eleven faculties and close to twenty-eight thousand students, doctoral students and post-graduates the University of Gdańsk (UG) is one the largest educational institutions in Poland. In 2017 UG and VSU have inaugurated exchange programs that include Study Aboard Trips to Gdansk organized by respective departments of history. This academic year (2018/2019) the VSU is hosting two visiting professors from UG.