

## **Fellowship and Scholarships Administered by the Polish Studies Program**

### **Franciszek Lachowicz Fellowship**

A fellowship for a full-time, matriculated undergraduate student engaged in a research topic associated with the study of Polish or Polish American history, culture, or language. The Lachowicz fellow will be expected to present the research findings and insights at a public lecture scheduled by the CCSU Polish Studies Program and offered to the community.

### **Scholarships**

- Stanislaus A. Blejwas Memorial Scholarship
- Grzyb Memorial Scholarship
- Alexander Fedorowicz Scholarship
- The Koproski Family Scholarship
- Polish Invitational Golf Scholarship

For more information about all aspects of the Polish Studies Program go to: <https://www.ccsu.edu/polishstudies> or contact Renata Vickrey at [vickreyr@ccsu.edu](mailto:vickreyr@ccsu.edu), (860)832-2085.



## **50th Anniversary of the Polish Studies Program**

**1974-2024**



**“A SYMPOSIUM ON POLISH AMERICAN  
HISTORY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS  
FOR OUR TIMES”**

**Wednesday, October 9, 2024  
Founders Hall, Davidson Building  
Central Connecticut State University  
New Britain, Connecticut**

# 50th Anniversary of the Polish Studies Program

The Polish Studies Program at Central Connecticut State University has served thousands of CCSU students, Connecticut residents, scholars, and researchers for five decades. It offers academic courses that equip students with knowledge of the history, literature, language, and culture of Poland and Polonia.

Courses, research opportunities, and community outreach promote cross-cultural understanding and appreciation of the relationship between Poland and the United States. From the beginning, the program included a community-outreach dimension, which involved evening lectures and cultural events offered free to the public. In its first year alone, the program hosted seventeen speakers from Poland, England, and the United States. Through its community outreach, the program connects the university with the broader population of Polish people in Connecticut and beyond, fostering a deeper awareness of Poland's rich heritage and its ongoing contributions to global culture.

The university's academic library houses the Polish Heritage Collection, which includes over 35,000 cataloged books, periodicals, and media. The Connecticut Polish American Archives preserves and makes available research materials that document the establishment of Polish communities, organizations, parishes, and societies in Connecticut and the United States.

The Polish Studies Program partnered with the New England Air Museum to create a permanent exhibit honoring the heroic pilots of the Kościuszko Squadron, who distinguished themselves during World War I and World War II, particularly in the Battle of Britain.

The program also offers several scholarships for applicants interested in Polish and Polish American history. Administered by the CCSU Foundation, these scholarships support many students.



# Polish Studies Endowed Lectures

## **Alex and Regina Rudewicz Polish Music Series**

The Rudewicz Polish Music Series was endowed in 2000. The inaugural concert featured Andrzej Anweiler who performed music of Rachmaninoff, Chopin, Bacewicz, Szymanowski, and Paderewski. In addition to the music series, Alex and Regina Rudewicz funded the Medal of Merit for distinguished service to Poland.

## **Boguslaw Nowakowski Conversation About Poland**

The family of the late Boguslaw Nowakowski endowed the Nowakowski Conversations about Poland in memory of their beloved husband and father. The first Nowakowski Conversation on March 12, 2001, featured Adam Michnik, *Gazeta Wyborcza*; Professor Piotr Wandycz, Yale University; and Dr. John Micgiel, Columbia University.

## **Fiedorczyk Lecture in Polish American Studies**

Right Reverend Monsignor Alphonse J. V. Fiedorczyk endowed an annual Lecture in Polish American Studies in memory of the Fiedorczyk family. The lecture was inaugurated in 1988, delivered by Reverend Anthony J. Kuzniewski S.J., and titled "Francis Dzierozynski and the Jesuit Restoration in the United States."

## **Godlewski Evening of Polish Culture**

The Godlewski Evening of Polish Culture was funded by a bequest from the late Dr. Richard Godlewski. The Godlewski Evening of Polish Culture was inaugurated in 1994 with a presentation by author Suzanne Strempek Shea.

## **Koproski Family Lecture on Polish Business & Economy**

The lecture series was inaugurated on December 2, 1999, with a presentation by Dr. Susanne S. Lotarski, Director of the U.S. Commerce Department's Office of Eastern Europe, Russia, and Independent States. The Koproski Family also endowed a scholarship for students interested in business or the CCSU Polish Studies minor.

## **Stanislaw and Anita Milewski Lecture in Polish Studies**

In 1990, Dr. Milewski and his wife Anita endowed the Milewski Polish Studies Lecture in the Modern History of Poland. The first Milewski Lecture was delivered on September 30, 1990, by His Excellency Kazimierz Dziewanowski, then Ambassador of the Republic of Poland.

## **Michael A. Peszke Lecture in Polish Military History**

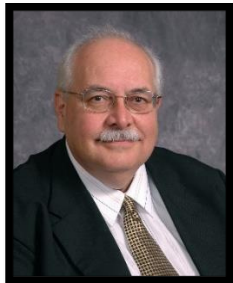
The Michael A. Peszke Memorial Lecture Fund was endowed in 2007 and supports an annual lecture related to the Polish Studies Program with concentration on the history of Polish military and aviation. Dr. Michael Peszke himself delivered one of the first lectures at an observance held at the New England Air Museum.

## Speaker Biographies



**ANNA JAROSZYŃSKA-KIRCHMANN**

Anna D. Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann is Distinguished Professor of History and CSU Professor in the Department of History Emerita at Eastern Connecticut State University. She received her MA in history from Marie Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poland and her Ph.D. in history from the University of Minnesota. She has published respected academic studies, including “Polish American Voices: A Documentary History, 1608-2020” (Routledge, 2023), co-edited with James S. Pula. Her numerous articles explore various aspects of the Polish American experience. In 2014, she received the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Merit from the Republic of Poland for her contributions to Polish culture abroad. She served as president of the Polish American Historical Association and is editor-in-chief of the Journal Polish American Studies. Her current research focuses on the history of Polish American food culture.



**JAMES S. PULA**

James S. Pula is Professor of History Emeritus at Purdue University. He has authored and edited more than 20 books about the Polish diaspora and the American Civil War, as well as dozens of articles. He served as editor-in-chief of *The Polish American Encyclopedia* and edited the academic journal *Polish American Studies* for some 33 years. His work has been honored with the Mieczysław Haiman Award for sustained scholarly contributions to the study of the Poles in America, the Distinguished Service Award from the American Council for Polish Culture, four Oskar Halecki Prizes for various books, the Rudewicz Medal for contributions to the study of Poles in America, the Tadeusz Kościuszko Medal from Polonica Technica, the U. S. Army Historical Foundation Distinguished Writing Award, and the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland.

## Polish Studies Program Directors



**Stanislaus A. Blejwas (1974–2001)**

Born in New York City to Polish immigrants, Stanislaus Blejwas earned his Ph.D. in Modern East European and Polish History from Columbia University. He joined Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) in 1974, where he became a distinguished professor and the driving force behind the Polish Studies Program. His dedication led to the creation of the first Endowed Chair in Polish and Polish American Studies in the U.S., which was named in his honor after his untimely passing. An influential and respected scholar, he pursued a vigorous research agenda that significantly contributed to our understanding of both Polish and Polish American history.

Dr. Blejwas greatly shaped public programming at CCSU by inviting scholars, politicians, journalists, and artists to engage with the university and its community through lectures, discussions, and cultural events. He enriched the Polish Studies Program by helping to establish the Polish Heritage Collection and Archives, located in the Elihu Burritt Library. Dr. Blejwas was a tireless promoter and fundraiser for the program, and it was during his tenure that most endowed lectures and scholarships were established.

Dr. Blejwas played a key role in the Polish American Congress at both national and state levels, during efforts to lobby for Solidarity support and Poland’s NATO accession. He was a member of the board of directors of numerous Polish American organizations, including the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, the Polish American Historical Association, the Józef Piłsudski Institute, the National Polish American-Jewish American Council, and the Kosciuszko Foundation. He played a key role in advancing Polish-Jewish relations, serving on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

For his work in Polish American history, he was awarded the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland, along with numerous other honors. Known for his kindness, leadership, and tireless efforts, he left an enduring legacy in both academia and the community.



**Mieczysław B. Biskupski (2002–2024)**

Dr. Mieczysław B. Biskupski was appointed the Stanislaus A. Blejwas Endowed Chair in Polish and Polish American Studies at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) in 2002, following a national search. He received his Ph.D. in Polish History from Yale University. The distinguished scholar of modern Central Europe and Poland previously held positions at St. John Fisher College and the University of Rochester, served as a Fulbright Research Professor at the University of Warsaw, and was a Fellow at the Central European University in Budapest.

During his tenure at CCSU, Dr. Biskupski contributed significantly to Polish studies through his teaching, research, and public programming. He authored 24 books and 131 scholarly articles on Polish history and was frequently invited to deliver keynote addresses at national and international conferences.

Dr. Biskupski was decorated three times by the government of Poland, receiving the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Merit, the Presidential Plaque, and the Commander’s Cross of the Order of Merit. Dr. Biskupski served as President of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America (2011–2018) and was involved with other scholarly organizations, including the Polish American Historical Association and the Piłsudski Institute. His recent publications include *Invented or Restored? Dmowski, Piłsudski, and the Idea of Poland* (2024) and *Prezydent Woodrow Wilson a odrodzenie państwa polskiego, 1914-1918* (2024). Dr. Biskupski retired in July 2024. A Festschrift in his honor, titled *Poland: Liberty and Independence*, is forthcoming.

# Symposium Program

Wednesday, October 9, 2024, 5:30 – 9:00 pm  
Founders Hall in the Davidson Building

## 5:30 - 5:45 pm

- **Opening remarks:** CCSU Polish Studies Program
- **Welcome:** Dr. Zulma Toro, CCSU President
- **Remarks:** The Honorable Mateusz Sakowicz,  
*Consul General of the Republic of Poland  
in New York City*

## 5:45 - 7:15 pm

### PROGRAM SPEAKERS

- **Polish American History Before 1939**  
Dr. Adam Walaszek, Jagiellonian University
- **Polish American History After 1939**  
Prof. Joanna Wojdon, Wroclaw University
- **Why Do We Need to Listen to Polish American Voices?**  
Dr. Anna D. Jaroszynska-Kirchmann, Emerita,  
Eastern Connecticut State University  
Dr. James S. Pula, Emeritus, Purdue University

## 7:15 - 7:30 pm

- **Recognition of Polish Studies Program directors:**  
Dr. Stanislaus A. Blejwas and Dr. Mieczyslaw B. Biskupski
- **Announcement:**  
Available scholarships and a fellowship
- **Recognition of major donors to lecture and scholarship funds**

## 7:30 - 9:00 pm

- **Reception**

# Speaker Biographies



**ADAM WALASZEK**

Adam Walaszek is professor of history (Emeritus) who worked in the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora of the Jagiellonian University. He is a specialist in the history of migrations, especially transatlantic migrations, and Polish presence in the United States. Professor Walaszek published six monographs about various aspects of Polish American history and the history of international migrations. He has edited and co-edited 10 volumes of essays.



**JOANNA WOJDON**

Joanna Wojdon is professor of history at the Institute of History, University of Wrocław and heads the Department of Teaching History and Civic Education. She is president of the International Society for History Didactics, a member of the Steering Committee of the International Federation for Public History, and a member of the editorial board of Polish American Studies. Her first publications dealt with the political propaganda in education under communist rule. Her *White and Red Umbrella – History of the Polish American Congress in the Cold War Era*, published in 2015 - was awarded the Oskar Halecki Prize from the Polish American Historical Association. Between 2019 and 2024, she coordinated a National Center for Science (Kraków) grant, Polish American History (1854-2004), and authored *Polish American History After 1939* (Routledge, 2024).