

Piast Institute

National Institute for Polish and Polish-American Affairs

The Piast Institute is a national institute for Polish and Polish-American affairs based in Hamtramck, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. The Institute was founded in 2003 by Dr. Thaddeus Radzilowski and Mrs. Virginia Skrzyaniarz. With a Board of Directors comprised of prominent Polish-American leaders, an international network of Institute Fellows, and a staff led by Dr. Radzilowski as president and Mrs. Skrzyaniarz as an executive director, Piast Institute has evolved into the largest think tank in North America devoted to Polish and Polish-American affairs.

The Piast Institute seeks to "Build a New Polonia for the 21st Century." With its staff, boards and international network of fellows, Piast develops conferences, seminars, publications, public programs, lectures, and exhibits that provide unbiased, timely and current information about Poland, Poles, and Polish Americans. With its resources and its position as a Census Information Center, Piast Institute also acts as a data resource center helping Polish, Polish American and other community groups develop policy papers and historical, cultural, political, economic, social, and demographic studies on a wide variety of topics.

The Institute's mission and programming also aim to celebrate Polish contributions to American as well as general world culture, and to address and counter any inaccurate or defamatory information released about Poland, Poles or Polish Americans.

In 2006, the Piast Institute was designated as a United States Census Information Center (CIC) by the United States Census Bureau. Piast Institute is one of only 59 CIC's, the only Center in the Michigan region, and the only CIC whose primary purpose is to represent a European ethnic group.

As a CIC, the Piast Institute is integral part of the U.S. Census Bureau's data dissemination network. The program's primary focus is making census information and data available to underserved communities that may not have access to census data through other means of the data dissemination network. In addition to utilizing the Census data for its own studies and research, the Institute serves the Polish and Polish-American communities well as organizations seeking to forward the goals of other ethnic and minority communities. The Institute also provides census data and reports to businesses for a fee. The most recent publication of the Piast CIC, *Polonia in*

Numbers: Report on the Polish Population in the United States by Dominik Stecula, Piast's Census Information Specialist, is a 51-page publication on the Poles in America and their socio-economic characteristics. It received national attention from the Polish community, and was quoted widely in all parts of the United States. The report will be available on the upcoming Piast Institute website.

The Piast Institute assists the family of Dr. Anatole Dekaban and his wife Mrs. Pamela Liddle-Dekaban in the oversight and management of the work of the Dekaban-Liddle Foundations. The Foundations, established by Dr. and Mrs. Dekaban in 1982, facilitate agricultural, economic, and engineering exchanges between Polish universities and universities located in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The foundations seek to benefit Poland and its citizens by enhancing the quality of Polish science and education.

In addition, the Piast Institute sponsors the annual Dekaban Lecture to commemorate and honor the work and spirit of Dr. and Mrs. Dekaban. Recent keynote speakers participating in the Dekaban lectures have included figures such as Dr. Zbigniew



U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow of Michigan announces the selection of Piast Institute as a CIC

Brzezinski, one of the most influential figures in the history of U.S. foreign policy, and Alex Storozynski, a Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist.

Dr. Thaddeus Radzilowski serves as Piast Institute president. He is an award-winning historian focusing on Poland and other Central and Eastern European nations, including Russia. He has written extensively on the histories of these regions as well as the migration of peoples from Central and Eastern Europe, with special emphasis on social history and historiography. He has lectured widely in Europe and North America and has published more than 100 monographs, edited collections, journal articles, book chapters and scholarly papers. In 1999, the President of Poland presented Dr.

Radzilowski with the Cavaliers Cross of the Polish Order of Merit for distinguished contributions to the dissemination of Polish culture in the world.

Mrs. Virginia Skrzyaniarz serves as Piast Institute executive director. Mrs. Skrzyaniarz has more than seventeen years of experience in managing non-profit organizations. She has served as an executive level administrator with duties in personnel, risk management and supervision of employees and facilities, and she has also directed of development and events planning. Prior to co-founding the Piast Institute, Ms. Skrzyaniarz was Vice President for Administrative Affairs at St. Mary's College with responsibility for development, fund raising,

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Happy Easter Wesołego Alleluja!



A National Institute for Polish and Polish American Affairs

The Piast Institute is a unique organization. In the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski it is "well conceived and much needed" in today's world. Piast seeks to help Polonia to address the issues vital to its existence in a modern and sophisticated way and to elevate its reputation and standing in American society through its research, publications and programs and its assistance to other Polish American Organizations.

The unique functions of the Piast Institute include: Official U.S. Census Information Center, research center and think tank, dealing with anti-defamation issues as well as dealing with relations with other ethnic groups. Piast Institute also organizes the Dekaban Lecture Series and maintains the faculty exchange program between the U.S., Canadian, U.K., and Polish Universities.

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Happy Easter

from

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Founder and President

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