

ANTONIO
REYNOSO
BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT



POLISH HERITAGE CELEBRATION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022

5:30 PM – 8:00 PM

RSVP @ BROOKLYN-USA.ORG/POLISH-HERITAGE-CELEBRATION-2022

Brooklyn Borough Hall
209 Joralemon Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Brooklyn Borough Hall is ADA-accessible and breastfeeding-friendly

BROOKLYN-USA.ORG



Program:

5:30 p.m.

Arrival and distribution of Polish Heritage Month pins

5:45 p.m.

***Opening Remarks by Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso
Vice Consul General of the Republic of Poland in New York Wawrzyn Warkocki***

6:00 p.m.

National Anthems of U.S. and Poland (Patricia Posluszna)

6:10 p.m.

Invocation

6:20 p.m.

Remarks (Aleksandra Slabisz)

6:25 p.m.

Presentation of citations to honorees

Iwona Korga – President and Executive Director of the Józef Piłsudski Institute of America

Rev. Joseph Szpilski, CM – Member of the Board of Directors of the Polish and Slavic Center

Zbigniew Solarz – Treasurer in the Board of Directors of the Polish and Slavic Center

Marian Żak – President of the Board of Directors of the Polish and Slavic Center and President
and Founder of New York Arts and Dance Innovations

6:45 p.m.

Closing remarks (Aleksandra Slabisz)

6:50 p.m.

Cultural entertainment

Krakowianki and Gorale

Greenpoint Children's Choir

Halina Kalitka

Jutrzenka Choir

Polish American Folk Dance Company

7:30 p.m.

Polish cuisine served

8:00 p.m.

Event ends

wona Drag Korga. Born in Poland, spent childhood and received education in Kraków and came to New York after graduating MA in History from Pedagogical University of Krakow. From 1994 associated with the Pilsudski Institute of America, since 2005 Executive Director in charge of the administration, office and archives and library. In 2016 becomes president. In 2004 received Ph.D from Pedagogical University of Krakow in the field of humanities. In 2008 graduated from Queens College (CUNY) with a Master of Library Science and received a professional librarian license.



Teacher in Polish Supplementary schools from 1996, currently at the Polish Saturday School by Cyril and Methodius R C Church in Greenpoint, NY, teaching high school students.

Specializes in Polish American relations during World War II, especially in information policies and history of Polonia. Takes part in international conferences, lectures on Polish History for children, high school students and college students. Author of articles in Polish American newspapers, periodicals in Poland and USA.

Author of the book (In Polish): Poland fights! Propaganda activities of the Polish Government in Exile towards American society 1939-1945 (2011).

Recipient of the scholarship from the Kosciuszko Foundation in NY and Polonia Aid Foundation Trust in London. Active in professional organization: Polish American Historical Association and since 2018 a board member at the Polish and Slavic Federal Credit Union.

Reverend Joseph Szpilski, C.M. Vincentian Father Joseph Szpilski, C.M., born in Radom, Poland, attended major seminary of Vincentian Fathers in Krakow, and completed his theological studies in their Theological Institute.



He was ordained June 24, 1956 by Bishop Stanislaus Rospond. After ordination he continued studies in theology and art history at the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw, while working as an assistant at Holy Cross parish, Warsaw 1956-1962.

From 1962 to 1964, he worked in Zagan, as an instructor of youth. He came to the United States in 1964 and studied English in Washington, D.C. He was assigned to St. John Kanty Prep School, Erie, Pennsylvania. In 1965, he became a member of the mission preaching band, conducting novenas, devotions, and retreats in Buffalo, Detroit, Pittsburg, and Chicago.

He was transferred to the St. Vincent Mission House in Whitestone, N.Y. in 1969. In 1973, he became a pastor at St. Stanislaus Kostka, Greenpoint. He was honored in 1978 as a Citizen of the Year by the Polish American World in appreciation of friendship and spiritual guidance he has offered Polonia from the altar and from working among us.

From 1982 to 1994 he continued in the mission band in Brooklyn and Whitestone. He was in parish ministry in St. Josephs Church, Ansonia, Connecticut, 1994-2003, and St. Michael's, Derby, Connecticut, where he was chaplain of the Saturday Polish School.

Since 2009, he has been ministering at St. Stanislaus Kostka, Greenpoint, and since 2013 has also served as chaplain of the New York Society of John Paul II Foundation.

Zbigniew Solarz is a skilled engineer and small business owner, who is deeply devoted to his Polish-American community.

Born in Poland, he graduated from the University of Science and Technology (AGH) in Cracow in 1984 as an electrical engineer. Then, in 1985, he graduated from the Print and Design School in Warsaw with title of Technical Editor of Publishing. He came to the United States in 1989 and founded Solarz Brothers Printing Corp. Over 33 years in the New York Area, the printing shop was visited by customers, as well as ordinary Poles seeking advice and assistance in matters like looking for a job, legalizing their stay, and even getting bailed out of immigration arrest. A story close to his heart regards helping families in their difficult first days who had come to the States with their children who needed medical operations. Relationships from those years have been maintained to this day.



Currently, Mr. Solarz devotes his free time to working at the Polish and Slavic Center (PSC), at which he has been a member since 1989, the Audit Committee since 2014, and after the 2016 PSC elections, a treasurer in the Board of Directors. Mr. Solarz participates in making key decisions in financial matters, currently mainly related to infrastructure, including renovation of PSC's buildings. Notedly, his efforts to reduce electricity costs led to the replacement of lighting systems across the Center with energy efficient ones. He is also working on implementing a solar panel project on the roof of the Center building on Java Street. He also assists in obtaining financial grants to make these projects possible. PSC recognized his involvement in the community with an appointment of the Marshall of the Polish and Slavic Center in the Pulaski Parade in 2017. Zbigniew also represented PSC at the "Congress of the World Polonia" in Warsaw in 2018. In the same year, together with the other members of the Center's Board of Directors, he received thanks for his community service from New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. In 2020, he was present in Miami, Florida as the PSC representative at the "60 Million Poles" Convention.

This year, the Polish and Slavic Center is celebrating its 50th anniversary. His time spent in service of his community has increased to daily discussions with executive members of the Board of Directors.

Mr. Solarz is also passionate about education and has been supporting the activities of the Polish Supplementary School at the parish of Our Lady of Czestochowa and St. Casimir, from which his daughter graduated, in Brooklyn.

The knowledge of running his own business and the ability to bookkeeping were also helpful in the place where he lives. For 7 years Mr. Solarz was a voluntary Treasurer in a 70 family housing community, which included many Polish families. In 2012, he was one of the initiators of installing a 50 KW solar panel system on the roof of the buildings. His involvement in this project ensured free solar energy for the benefit of all members.

Mr. Solarz is happily married and has a daughter. He and his wife are proud that they managed to raise their child in Polish culture and tradition, so that while living in the great country that is the USA, she can also be an ambassador of Polish heritage.

Marian Zak, choreographer, teacher, cultural organizer. He is a graduate of the State Ballet School in Warsaw, Poland. He received M.S. from Polytechnic Institute in Krakow, Poland and M.A. from New York University, NY, USA. He was the principal dancer with the Krakow Opera, and the Silesian State Opera, where he directed and choreographed. He was also a founder of Dance Theater Silva Rerum in Krakow which under his artistic direction became very successful throughout Poland. Many of his dance choreographies, including those to the music by Wojciech Kilar and Krzysztof Penderecki have been recorded by the Polish National TV.



In 1988, he immigrated to America where he worked as choreographer and dance teacher. He taught dance at the New Dance Group Arts studio and then became the studio's director. After graduating from the New York University in 1998 was hired by the New York City Board of Education and has worked as a High School teacher ever since.

In 1998 Mr. Zak founded the New York Dance & Arts Innovations (NYDAI), a non-profit that concentrates on the promotion of international art, with the focus on Polish art, and on organizing cultural events. Currently, Marian Zak leads the organization as its President. With the cooperation of prof. Suzanne Walther, Przemyslaw Moskal, Eric Walther and many others the NYDAI has organized over 500 artistic events and 23 International Chopin and Friends Festivals. The festival is a celebration of art. Its mission is to promote Polish culture among the American audience, as well as American culture among the Polish Americans living in New York. The events have been held in such prestigious venues as the Polish Consulate of the Republic of Poland, the Kosciuszko Foundation, the Polish and Slavic Center and Sali Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. For his artistic activity Mr. Zak has received several awards and recognitions from New York elected officials and Poland's government. His highest-ranking recognition, the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit, Mr. Zak received from President Lech Kaczynski in June 2009.

Since 1989, Marian Zak has been a member of the Polish and Slavic Center (PSC). He holds dual Polish-American citizenship. Since 2010 he has been a member of the board of directors of the PSC and in 2010 was chosen its Vice-President. In that period, Mr. Zak oversaw many initiatives at the PSC, particularly the organization of artistic events aimed at promoting Polish culture such as concerts and exhibitions. He also initiated cooperation with a TV station that operated in the PSC to record interviews with Polish and other artists to promote culture.

In 2019, Mr. Zak was elected President of the Board of Directors. From the very first meeting of the Board in January 2021 he has undertaken a mission to reform the PSC and transform it to a modern organization. In collaboration with other members of the Board of Directors, Mr. Zak replaces the organization's administration with younger, educated, and ambitious members, and undertakes to conduct necessary capital renovations that will give the Center a long-needed upgrade for years to come. The renovations kickstarted in September 2021 along with preparations for the 50th anniversary of the Polish and Slavic Center which serves some 42,000 members.

"The responsibility is huge, however with my skills and experience obtained from working in other non-profits, and with the support of the Board of Directors, I am confident we can achieve a lot. Throughout the entire 2022, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Polish and Slavic Center. The voluntary work for the PSC is an exciting challenge for me that I have cultivated since my youngest years".

EDUCATION

- New York University, New York, NY - Master of Art, Dance Education Department, 1995
- The Technical University of Kraków, Poland – M.S. Engineering, 1976

VOLUNTARY WORK

- Polish and Slavic Center, President of the Board of Directors, 2020 – Present
- Polish and Slavic Center, Vice President, 2010-2019
- New York Dance & Arts Innovations – Founder & President, 1998 – Present
- Member of the Polish American Council at the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in New York
- UFT, Member since 1999
- Kosciuszko Foundation, Member

RECOGNITIONS

- 2018 – New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio recognizes Marian Zak/Polish Slavic Center for his voluntary work for the Polish and American community aimed at improving the quality of life of New Yorkers and ensuring that they can participate in the prosperity our city is famous for.
- 2011 – recipient of the 60th anniversary Medal from the Association of Polish American Engineers in the USA (Polonia Technica)
- 2009 – the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit from Poland's President Lech Kaczynski
- 2005 – Proclamation from the Brooklyn Borough President
- Recipient of the Golden Book of the Tadeusz Kosciuszko Krakow University of Technology
- 2004 – Proclamation by David Yassky, New York City Councilman
- 2000 – Proclamation by Kenneth K. Fisher, New York City Councilman
- 1987 – The British Council Grantee, London, UK
- Recipient of the Commemorative Medal honoring the 200 years of the Polish Ballet, 8th International Ballet Summit, Lodz, Poland

Sponsors:



POLISH ARMY VETERANS
ASSOCIATION of AMERICA, DISTRICT 2
STOWARZYSZENIE WETERANÓW
ARMII POLSKIEJ w AMERYCE, OKRĘG 2



PIASA



**POLISH CULTURAL
FOUNDATION**

177 BROADWAY • CLARK • NEW JERSEY 07066 • USA
WWW.PCFNJ.ORG • PCF@PCFNJ.ORG • T: 212-382-7197



solarz
BROTHERS
PRINTING CORP.

231 Norman Avenue, Unit 105 • Brooklyn, NY 11222
Tel. 718-383-1330 • e-mail: print@solarz.com
www.solarz.com

