

*Annual Awards Banquet  
& Celebration of  
Polish Constitution Day*



*Friday, May 1, 2026*

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# *President's Letter*

Honored guests, families, friends, and colleagues in law enforcement, it is my pleasure to welcome you this evening to the Annual Polish-American Police Association Awards Banquet and Celebration of Polish Constitution Day.

Tonight, we gather to recognize and celebrate truly remarkable individuals and organizations whose dedication, professionalism, and commitment to service exemplify the proud tradition of Polish-Americans in public service.

Their stories, which will be shared this evening, reflect courage, integrity, sacrifice, and an unwavering commitment to protecting and serving our communities.

To our Law Enforcement Persons and Units of the Year, on behalf of the Polish-American Police Association, I extend our sincere gratitude and congratulations. Each of you has distinguished yourself within your respective agencies and has demonstrated the highest standards of professionalism, leadership, and service. Your work represents the very best of our profession and our shared mission to safeguard our communities and uphold the law.

To our Civilian Persons of the Year, your recognition this evening is a reflection of your dedication, hard work, and commitment to excellence. Your contributions to your professions, to the Polish community, and to the broader community are deeply appreciated. You are valued members of Polonia, and we commend you for your accomplishments and encourage you to continue the outstanding work you do.

I would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to our Polish dignitaries, elected officials, members of the judiciary, community leaders, and those who have traveled great distances to join us this evening. Your presence here tonight is a testament to the strength of our community and the importance of the mission we share.

On behalf of the Executive Officers and Board of Directors, thank you for your continued support of the Polish-American Police Association. We are honored to have you all with us this evening, and we hope you enjoy this celebration of service, heritage, and community.

*Thomas A. Sieja*

President



# **Chicago Police Department - Detectives Karol Obartuch & Quinton Starzyk**

Detective Karol Obartuch is a Chicago native and Lane Tech graduate. He attended Holy Trinity Polish School in Chicago and passed his matura in 2010. In 2015, he obtained a Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering from Loyola University. In 2017, Det. Obartuch earned the Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP) certification through a joint partnership between the City of Chicago and the U.S. Department of Defense. Det. Obartuch joined the Police Department in May 2018, working in 7<sup>th</sup> District for five (5) years before being promoted to detective and assigned to Area One. Det. Obartuch is a member of the Area One Vehicular Hijacking Task Force and the Major Crimes Division Auto Crimes Team.

Detective Quinton Starzyk is an Alsip native. After graduating *summa cumme laude* from Moraine Valley with an Associate Degree of Science, Det. Starzyk went on to obtain a Bachelor's of Arts from Governor's State. Det. Starzyk joined the Police Department in April 2018, working in the 4<sup>th</sup> District for five (5) years and serving in other specialized assignments related to violent crimes, including carjackings. Det. Starzyk was promoted to detective in 2024 and assigned to the Area 1 Vehicular Hijacking Team and, later, the Citywide Auto Theft Task Force.

On October 31, 2025, a man was carjacked and seriously injured by three individuals, armed with a pistol, in front of his toddler. The armed offender bludgeoned the victim over the head with the pistol. The offenders then fled in the victim's stolen vehicle. Dets. Obartuch and Starzyk were assigned to investigate.

The Detectives were able to track the vehicle and found a connection to a homicide that occurred within a few hours of the hijacking. The Detectives collaborated with Area 3 Homicide Detectives assigned to investigate the homicide. After gathering crucial evidence in relation to both cases, the first suspect was developed, identified, and safely arrested on November 19, 2025.

The second offender then became the focus, and a suspect was developed and identified. That suspect was connected to another violent incident where he allegedly wielded a shotgun to commit an armed robbery and an aggravated criminal sexual assault against the same victim. Due to this second

suspect's extremely violent background, the Dets. worked with the Great Lake Regional Fugitive Task Force to locate and safely arrest that offender on November 20, 2025.

Finally, the Dets. collaborated with the Auto Crimes Task Force to develop, identify, and safely arrest the third offender on January 20, 2026.

Due to Dets. Obartuch and Starzyk's attention to detail, ability to lead a complicated investigation while collaborating with different law enforcement partners, and persistence, three extremely violent offenders were arrested and charged with various crimes in connection to their brutal armed vehicular hijacking of a victim in front of his young daughter.

Dets. Obartuch and Starzyk's decisive action and attention to detail has taken these violent offenders off the street and helped reduce of the possibility of them harming other innocent civilians.

## **Des Plaines Police Department - Police Officer Allison Milkowski**

Officer Allison Milkowski graduated from York Community High School in Elmhurst in 2019. In 2023, Ofc. Milkowski obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Criminology with a minor in Forensic & Investigative Science and Communications from West Virginia University. Ofc. Milkowski then went on to intern for the Naperville Police Department before beginning her career as a full-time officer in Des Plaines in August 2023. Ofc. Milkowski has attended highly specialized training in her time with the Department and holds numerous advanced certificates and roles, including but not limited to Field Training Officer, ARIDE, and serving as a negotiator for the Tactical Response Team.

On July 24, 2025, Ofc. Milkowski and other Des Plaines Police Officers responded to the call of a male subject struggling to stay above the water in Lake Opeka. Upon arriving on scene, officers observed the man struggling to swim far offshore. Officers removed two personal floatation devices from the squad cars but were unable to throw them to the drowning man due to his distance from the shore. Working together, the officers entered the water and used the floatation devices and the attached throw ropes to reach the victim. Ofc. Milkowski pulled the rope tied to one of her fellow officers who was retrieving the victim and even swam with the rope back to shore. Once the victim was secured on shore, he was attended to by personnel from the Des Plaines Fire Department and was uninjured.

Ofc. Milkowski's role in an extremely dangerous situation was indispensable and resulted in saving the victim's life. Ofc. Milkowski also received a Life Saving Award from the Des Plaines Police Department for this incident.

# **Des Plaines Police Department**

## **Police Officer Darek Synowiec**

Officer Darek Synowiec graduated from Maine High School in 2007. Ofc. Synowiec went on to obtain a Law Enforcement Certificate and Associate's Degree in Applied Science Law Enforcement from Oakton Community College. While in college, Ofc. Synowiec started his career as a Public Safety Officer at Lutheran General Hospital. In 2021, Ofc. Synowiec was hired by the Des Plaines Police Department as a full-time officer. Ofc. Synowiec is assigned to the Patrol Division and serves as Juvenile Officer on shift.

On June 21, 2025, Ofc. Synowiec and other officers responded to a fight in-progress in Des Plaines. The first officer and sergeant on scene determined that one of the victims, a sixteen-year-old juvenile, had been stabbed multiple times with wounds on the left side of his torso and his left arm. Ofc. Synowiec assisted in triaging the victim and locating additional serious, life-threatening injuries on his person. Ofc. Synowiec and other officers applied tourniquets to the victim's left arm and leg, as well as applied two (2) chest seals on stab wounds located on the victim's torso. The Des Plaines Fire Department eventually arrived on scene and transported the victim to the hospital, where the victim received additional care after being diagnosed with one fully collapsed lung and one partially collapsed lung. The medical staff treating the juvenile victim advised responding officers that if the chest seals had not been applied correctly and timely, the wounds would have most likely been fatal.

Ofc. Synowiec's role in a chaotic and dangerous situation was indispensable and resulted in saving a young person's life. Ofc. Synowiec also received a Life Saving Award from the Des Plaines Police Department for this incident.

# **Joliet Police Department**

## **Police Officer Katie Kucharski**

Officer Katie Kucharski graduated from Wilmington High School in 2020, while also studying criminal justice at the Grundy Area Vocational Center. Ofc. Kucharski then went on to obtain her Associate's Degree from Saginaw Valley State University. Ofc. Kucharski has also served our nation in the 110<sup>th</sup> Battle Creek Michigan Air Force National Guard since 2021.

Ofc. Kucharski began her career in law enforcement while in the military, as she was assigned to the Air Force National Guard Security Force. In 2023, she was hired by the Joliet Police Department as a full-time officer.

Ofc. Kucharski has distinguished herself as a student, an Airman, and police officer. This includes being named the 2020 Grundy Area Vocational Student of the Year in Criminal Justice, earning the USAF 110<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Airman of the Quarter in 2023, serving as a juvenile officer with the Joliet Police Department, and earning a Joint Counter Radio-Controlled Improvised Explosive Device Electronic Warfare (JCREW) Certificate from the USAF. Notably, while deployed to Kuwait in 2025, Ofc. Kucharski provided base defense, armed response, and protected personal & critical assets. Due to her actions, Ofc. Kucharski and her unit received the Gallant Unit Award for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy of the United States during an armed conflict in the Middle East.

Ofc. Kucharski's courageous service and unwavering devotion to both our nation and the City of Joliet are worthy of recognition.

# **Mount Prospect Police Department**

## **Police Officer Bartek Giera**

Officer Bartek Giera obtained an Associate's Degree for Law Enforcement from Harper College in 2011 and obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Roosevelt University in 2014. Ofc. Giera has over fourteen years of total law enforcement experience, including serving as Mount Prospect Police Officer since 2014.

In his career at the Village of Mount Prospect, Ofc. Giera has earned 23 Commendations, 5 Honorable Mentions, and 28 Letters of Appreciation. He was named Mount Prospect Police Department Officer of the Year in 2016 and again in 2024. Some of the most recent commendations include recovering a stolen vehicle; locating and arresting two gang members who had allegedly brandished a firearm at a third-party victim; locating a vehicle used in the commission of multiple retail thefts, arresting the offenders, and helping to seize the vehicle as an asset forfeiture; and arresting two offenders on a traffic stop for drug and weapons offenses, including Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon for possessing a loaded firearm.

Additionally, about 15.1% of Mount Prospect's population reports Polish ancestry. As one of only four Polish-speakers at the agency, Ofc. Giera provides translation assistance to his peers during 911 calls, Detectives for high-level interrogations, and surrounding municipalities who need similar assistance.

Mount Prospect Commander Allison Teevan described Officer Giera "... as an exceptional leader within our Patrol Division, consistently setting the standard for professionalism, initiative, and dedication. He is highly respected by his peers for his steady leadership and commitment to serving our community." Ofc. Giera's dedicated, exemplary, and long-standing contributions are worthy of recognition.

# **Norridge Police Department**

## **Police Officer Nicole Brzezinska**

Officer Nicole Brzezinska studied Criminal Law and Justice at the University of Illinois at Chicago and graduated with her Bachelor's Degree in 2019.

Ofc. Brzezinska began her law enforcement career as an Auxiliary Police Officer with the Norridge Police Department in 2021, before advancing to Community Service Officer, and then advancing as a full-time sworn police officer in 2022.

In her time as a full-time sworn officer, Ofc. Brzezinska has been recognized by Mothers Against Drunk Driving for her impaired driving enforcement; the Department has had numerous citizens report Ofc. Brzezinska's professionalism and skill in the performance of her duties; and Ofc. Brzezinska has worked as an integral part of a high-performing afternoon shift team that recently responded to 151 calls for service in a single week. In February 2025, Ofc. Brzezinska responded to a fatal motor vehicle crash under treacherous icy conditions, securing the scene, rendering aid, and making proper notifications.

Chief Brian Goss describes Ofc. Brzezinska's career arc, beginning as an auxiliary officer while working hard to distinguish herself and eventually earn her position as a full-time officer, as "... a true testament to perseverance, professionalism, and dedication to service... Ofc. Brzezinska's journey reflects resilience, initiative, and an unwavering commitment to serving the Village of Norridge."

Ofc. Brzezinska's consistent, exemplary, and professional performance of her duties are worthy of recognition.

# **Oak Brook Police Department**

## **Police Officer Viktor Gadjanski**

Officer Viktor Gadjanski attended Niles West High School and Mission Hills High School in San Marcos (CA) and graduated in 2013. In 2019, Ofc. Gadjanski went on to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from Northeastern Illinois University. Viktor began his career in law enforcement in 2014 with the Skokie Police Department, serving as a Community Service Officer. Ofc. Gadjanski started serving Oak Brook as a full-time officer in 2023.

On December 21, 2025, around 0340 hours, Oak Brook police officers observed a vehicle driving recklessly at an extremely high rate of speed enter the expressway. Another officer entered the expressway and observed that the vehicle had crashed, overturned, and was on fire. The driver was unresponsive and trapped inside the vehicle. Ofc. Gadjanski arrived on scene very shortly thereafter. While the other two officers on scene worked to remove the unconscious victim from the inside of the vehicle, Ofc. Gadjanski armed himself with a fire extinguisher and began to extinguish the spreading flames. Ofc. Gadjanski's quick thinking and decisive action prevented the fire from totally engulfing the vehicle, prevented further injury to the driver, and kept his colleagues safe and allowed them to continue to work to extract the victim. As the fire intensified and Ofc. Gadjanski's fire extinguisher was exhausted, his colleague carefully moved the victim farther from the now fully engulfed vehicle to ensure his safety while minimizing the risk of further injury.

Per Chief Brian Strockis, “[t]he prompt, courageous, and decisive actions of [Ofc. Gadjanski and his colleagues] performed under extreme and life-threatening conditions, directly resulted in the saving of a human life. Their actions reflect exceptional bravery, sound judgment, and an unwavering commitment to the preservation of life.”

Ofc. Gadjanski's heroic efforts in saving another individual's life is worthy of recognition

# **Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago - Regina Jurkowska**

Consul Regina Jurkowska is a graduate of Hungarian studies at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest and postgraduate studies at the Strategic and Defense Department of the National Defense University in Warsaw. She worked at the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences and at the Hungarian Institute of Culture in Warsaw. Since 1998, she has served the Republic of Poland in numerous capacities.

In 1998-1999, she was an expert on Central Europe in the Department of Europe. Between 1999 and 2018, Consul Jurkowska served in a variety of diplomatic postings in Poland and spanning across multiple continents, including South America, North America, Southern Europe, Australia and Oceania. This includes Consul Jurkowska having served as a high-ranking official at the Montevideo, Uruguay Consulate, as Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney, and later overseeing the political and economic section at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bogota. She began her mission as Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago on December 23, 2024.

For her merits in foreign service and diplomatic activity, she has been awarded: the Silver Cross of Merit of the Republic of Poland (2012), the Golden Cross of Merit of the Republic of Hungary (2018), the Golden Cross of Merit of the Republic of Poland (2022), the Medal of the General Superior of the Society of Christ in Poznań (2017) and honorary citizenship of the Blacktown district in Sydney.

Since assuming her current position, Consul Jurkowska has become a staple of the Polish American diaspora in Chicagoland. She has helped preserve and promote Polish culture and traditions.

Consul Jurkowska's long and distinguished service to the Republic of Poland and Poles around the globe is most deserving of this recognition.

## **Polish Highlander Riders – President Peter “Lucek” Gorz**

The Highlander Riders Riding Club is a non-profit fraternal organization originally established in 2009 by nine motorcycle enthusiasts of Polish descent living in Greater Chicago Area. The award will be accepted by President Peter “Lucek” Gorz.

The majority of the club’s members come from the southernmost region of Poland – Podhale, thus the intent of the club is not only to promote the enjoyment of riding motorcycles, but also to promote the traditions of Polish Highlanders. Members of the club are united by special friendships and their shared passion for Tatra mountains.

The club is family-oriented and aspires to ride the roads in peace and to bring communities together through social events and motorcycle riding. Among the club’s mission statement, members of the club commit to respect all law enforcement officers, law enforcement agencies, and abide by all local, state and federal laws. The club promotes the region of Podhale, including its music, costumes, and highlanders’ traditions. Additionally, the club supports children’s charities and actively promotes events to raise funds for those in need. Finally, the club cooperates with Polish organizations to advance Polish culture.

The members of PAPA can attest to the fact that the Highlander Riders Riding Club lives up to its mission. The club has been a fixture at PAPA events over the course of the last year – supporting PAPA at its banquet, summer picnic, and Christmas party. The club’s members have been extremely gracious to PAPA’s members, and helped PAPA advance its dual missions of supporting law enforcement and Polish culture.

## **Alderman Peter Chico, 10<sup>th</sup> Ward**

Alderman Peter Chico serves the 10<sup>th</sup> Ward, located on Chicago's southeast border with Indiana along Lake Michigan. Alderman Chico was sworn in in May 2023. The 10<sup>th</sup> Ward is a sprawling and diverse Ward filled with neighborhoods with rich histories.

Alderman Chico is part Polish, a proud PAPA member, and a former law enforcement officer. In 2001, he graduated from De La Salle High School and went on to attend Benedictine University in Lisle, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science in 2005.

Alderman Chico began his law enforcement career with the Cook County Sheriff's Department. He later became a Chicago Police Officer and was assigned to the 004th District as a District Intelligence Officer. Alderman Chico currently serves on numerous committees, but a few have an outsized impact on law enforcement in Chicago, namely the Committees on: Pedestrian and Traffic Safety and Public Safety.

Alderman Chico's background in law enforcement has made him an out-sized ally of law enforcement officers throughout Chicago as he has tirelessly advocated for common sense solutions to increasing violent crime in the city. When Mayor Johnson eliminated ShotSpotter, depriving Chicago police officers of a critical, life-saving tool, Alderman Chico vigorously appeared in media and council to advocate for the tool's value and the value of any life saved by it. Alderman Chico has also stood up for law enforcement when a senior mayoral advisor referred to Chicago Police Officers as "slave catchers, not workers."

Alderman Chico is a true advocate for police officers in Chicago and all over the state of Illinois. The Polish American Police Association is proud to recognize him as a Friend of Law Enforcement and present him with this award.

## **Alderman Raymond A. Lopez, 15<sup>th</sup> Ward**

Alderman Raymond A. Lopez serves the 15<sup>th</sup> Ward, on the City's southwest side. Alderman Lopez has represented the 15<sup>th</sup> Ward as Alderman since 2015. The ward includes the Canaryville, Back of the Yards, West Englewood, Gage Park, and Brighton Park.

Alderman Lopez is part Polish and a proud PAPA member. Alderman Lopez is also a proud graduate of St. Laurence Catholic High School before going on to study political science and English literature at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Alderman Lopez serves on numerous committees, but a few have an outsized impact on law enforcement in Chicago, namely the Committees on: Finance, Public Safety, and Budget and Government Operations.

Since arriving on City Council, Alderman Lopez has been a steadfast voice for common sense public safety solutions and fair treatment for law enforcement officers in the city and beyond. This includes but is not limited to the Alderman's advocacy for empowering law enforcement with the tools necessary to save lives, advocating for ordinances that create accountability and consequences for the parents of out-of-control juveniles, and working to improve the City's ability to collaborate with and tap into the federal government's vast resources to fight crime and protect Chicago residents.

Additionally, Alderman Lopez has become a fixture at PAPA events throughout the years. Notably, this includes Alderman Lopez joining PAPA at the Running for Blue Lives suicide prevention each year and walking miles to visit Chicago Police districts to distribute symbolic pennies and a positive, mental health message to officer.

Alderman Lopez is a true advocate for police officers in Chicago and all over the state of Illinois. The Polish American Police Association is proud to recognize him as a Friend of Law Enforcement and present him with this award.

## **Kim and Larry Gumienny, Board Member and Volunteer**

Kim and Larry Gumienny have each been PAPA members for over ten years. Larry was the first to join because of his Polish heritage and twenty-year friendship with now-President Sieja. Kim served as a police officer with the Cook County Forest Preserve Police for twenty-eight years and quickly joined as well.

Kim grew up in Chicago Ridge and attended Richards High School in Oak Lawn. Larry grew up in Crestwood and joined the Air Force after high school. Larry served our nation with honor and distinction for ten years before beginning a career as an aerospace engineer in the private sector.

Kim and Larry's favorite part of being involved in PAPA is meeting new, like-minded members and friends through the organization and the wonderful Polish food served at PAPA's events.

Kim has volunteered with the organization for over five years, helping to prepare and set out food at our Southside Chapter meetings and assisting with raffles held at various events throughout the year. In 2025, Kim committed to PAPA even further by officially joining the PAPA Board of Directors.

Larry, like Kim, has volunteered with the organization for over five years. And while Larry does not hold an official title, he has selflessly offered his time and talents wherever needed. If our Sergeant-At-Arms is unavailable, you'll find Larry manning the check-in table at the Southside meeting.

Larry and Kim constantly make themselves available to staff PAPA events and helps the organization maintain a robust presence at events all over the Chicagoland area. Their intelligence and diligence are assets to the organization and make PAPA better, day in and day out.

Congratulations to Larry and Kim for their years of excellent service and dedication to PAPA. They have undoubtedly earned this award and our gratitude.



*Annual Polish American Police Association Awards Banquet  
&  
Celebration of Polish Constitution Day*

*Posting of Colors: Chicago Police Honor Guard*

*Bagpipes and Drums of the Emerald Society, Chicago Police Department*

*National Anthem: Kenyatta Gaines, Chicago Police Department*

*Polish Anthem: Ewa Kowcz-Fair*

*Introduction of the PAPA Board*

*Dinner: Blessing / Served*

*PAPA President's Opening Remarks*

*Dinner Continues / Acknowledgement of VIP's*

*Award Presentations / Dessert Served*

*Dancing & Raffle Prize Drawings*



*Welcome to our Annual Awards Banquet &  
Celebration of Polish Constitution Day*

*Congratulations to all award recipients!*

*Sto Lat!*

***Board of Directors***

*Robert 'Rocky' Nowaczyk; Chairman of the Board*

*Martin Obrecki; Immediate Past President*

*Thomas Sieja; President*

*Daniel Szczesny; Director*

*Katherine Wagner; Director*

*Jerry Svejda; Director*

*Anna Labno; Director*

*Mary Ember; Director*

*Ewelina Gondek; Director*

*Debbie Rucci; Director*

*Kim Gumienny; Director*

***Executive Officers***

*Thomas Sieja; President*

*Mark Pawelic; Vice President*

*Grace Moczarna; Vice President*

*William Siems; Recording Secretary*

*James Jakstavich; Financial Secretary*

*Gregory Kulasa; Sgt-At-Arms*

*James Ciukaj; Sgt-At-Arms*

*James Sadowski  
President Emeritus*

***POLISH AMERICAN POLICE ASSOCIATION  
MERCHANDISE PRICE LISTING***



<b>LED PAPA STAR</b>	<b>\$45</b>
<b>STAR TUMBLER</b>	<b>\$35</b>
<b>FLAG TUMBLER / FLAG WATER BOTTLE</b>	<b>\$30</b>
<b>PAPA STAR / COFFEE CUP</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>VEHICLE FLAG / GOLF TOWEL</b>	<b>\$15</b>
<b>CHALLENGE COIN / CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT</b>	<b>\$15</b>
<b>PINT GLASS</b>	<b>\$6 OR (2) FOR \$10</b>
<b>LICENSE PLATE FRAME</b>	<b>\$6 OR (2) FOR \$10</b>
<b>STYLUS PEN / SHOT GLASS / KOOZIE</b>	<b>(3) FOR \$10</b>
<b>(2) SUPPORTER BRACELET / MINI POLISH FLAG</b>	<b>\$5</b>
<b>SUNGLASSES / LAPEL PIN / PATCH / COASTER</b>	<b>\$5</b>

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# *POLISH AMERICAN POLICE ASSOCIATION*

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HOODIE / FLEECE	\$45
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SHORT SLEEVE T-SHIRT	\$25
BASEBALL HAT	\$25
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PAPA CREW SOCKS	\$15

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# Are you a member yet?

The Polish American Police Association of Chicago and Illinois (P.A.P.A.) was founded in 1964, for Chicagoland police officers and their families who are of Polish and Slavic descent. Civilians from all communities and professions with strong ties to their heritage and/or law enforcement are welcomed as Associate Members. P.A.P.A. currently has over 400 active and associate members.

## **SPECIAL OFFER FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY:**

In honor of Polish Constitution Day, any **NEW** member that joins by May 31st, will receive a free membership for the remainder of 2026!

SCAN THE QR CODE,  
COMPLETE THE  
APPLICATION, & INCLUDE  
“BANQUET2026” IN THE  
RETIREMENT FIELD TO JOIN





Illinois State Treasurer

**MICHAEL FRERICHS**

May 1, 2026

Polish American Police Association  
P.O. Box 31095  
Chicago, IL 60631

Dear Members of the Polish American Police Association and the Polonia Community,

At this special celebration, we come together to honor the anniversary of the Polish Constitution, a monumental achievement that stands as a symbol of freedom, democracy, and the enduring spirit of the Polish people. The principles enshrined in this historic document -- respect, dignity, equality, and solidarity -- continue to inspire The Polish American Police Association (PAPA) in its mission of service and community engagement.

PAPA remains steadfast in its mission to foster solidarity between civilians and law enforcement. The Association is dedicated to expanding opportunities for educational, charitable, and social services that support the dignity and well-being of Polish and Slavic immigrants. Through these efforts, Polonia flourish both here in Chicago communities as well as abroad.

Tonight, as we honor the outstanding individuals and organizations who have demonstrated exceptional dedication to public and community service, let us reaffirm our commitment to the Polish American Police Association in its support of justice, unity and solidarity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Frerichs".

Michael Frerichs  
Illinois State Treasurer

**State Capitol**  
Room 219  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Phone: (866) 458-7327  
Fax: (217) 785-2777  
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**SUSANA A. MENDOZA**  
ILLINOIS STATE COMPTROLLER

May 1, 2026

**Greetings**

As Illinois State Comptroller, I extend my sincere greetings and congratulations to everyone gathered for the Polish-American Police Association's (PAPA) Annual Awards Banquet and Celebration of Polish Constitution Day.

Since 1964, PAPA has exemplified a steadfast commitment to public service, professional excellence, and the preservation of Polish and Slavic heritage within the law enforcement community. Your organization continues to serve as a vital bridge between law enforcement professionals and the communities they serve, fostering unity, trust, and mutual respect. This evening's celebration provides a meaningful opportunity to recognize the outstanding individuals whose dedication and integrity reflect the highest ideals of your mission.

Please accept my best wishes for continued success now and in the years to come. And to all our law enforcement in attendance, I thank you for your service and sacrifice. Stay safe out there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susana A. Mendoza".

Susana A. Mendoza  
Illinois State Comptroller

555 West Monroe Street, 1400S-A  
Chicago, Illinois 60661-3713  
(312) 814-2451

325 West Adams Street  
Springfield, Illinois 62704-1871  
(800) 877-8078



## CPMCL VETS 1<sup>st</sup> 20K MARCH FRIDAY 15 MAY 2026 20K FOR 20 LIVES PER DAY

### HUMPERS WANTED!!!

- Team meets 0600 hrs at Tattler American Legion, 4355 N. Western; bus departs 0630 hrs to 31<sup>st</sup>/Lake Shore Drive; the March route ends back at the Tattler American Legion
- Route is 20K (~13 miles) with a good portion along the lakefront
- For those who want to skip the 0600 meet at Tattler, meet us at 31<sup>st</sup>/Lake Shore Drive beach parking lot at 0745 hrs.
- Food will be supplied at the finish.
- **Cost is \$80/marcher.**
- To sign up, go to: <https://chicagopolicemarines.org> and click on the **Vets 1<sup>st</sup> 20k Entry** button
- 100% of the proceeds from this event directly support Rags of Honor, Road Home, and Vet Service Dogs.




### JOIN US!

Chicago Police Marine Corps League, Det. 553

Visit us on the Web:

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\* Veterans Helping Veterans \*

\*\* Dedicated Twice By Choice \*\*

### SAME TEAM



### NEW MISSION

202504-GA-PAPA



**Congratulations & Best Wishes**  
 to the  
**Polish American Police Association**  
**of Chicago and Illinois**  
 on the occasion of its  
**Annual Awards Banquet and**  
**Celebration of Polish Constitution Day**

**POLISH ROMAN CATHOLIC UNION OF AMERICA**  
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# Congratulations to the 2026 PAPA Law Enforcement and Civilian Persons of the Year



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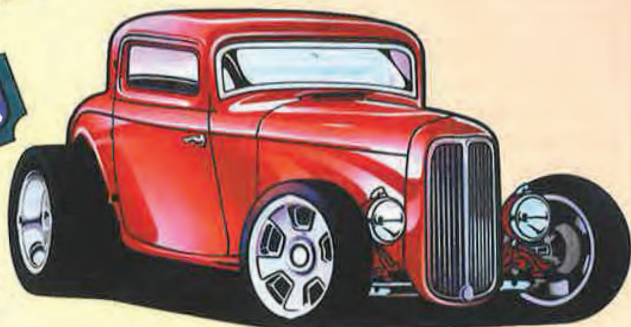
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on your  
Polish Constitution Day***



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Bogdan Gromek - president

Congratulations and Best Wishes To  
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On Their Annual Awards Banquet

Honoring  
Polish American Police Association  
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Ralph Modjeski, world renown builder of great American bridges, son of circus Helena Modjeska, was also a virtuoso pianist. He performed with Ignacy Jan Paderewski in Chicago, had a great love for Chopin, played from memory his Nocturnes, Polonaises, Etudes and Mazurkas. He was a member of the Philosophical and Art Societies. He had a reputation as a designer of very safe, economical and esthetically pleasing structures. Modjeski received many of the greatest engineering awards. He was an outstanding businessman and an exceptional organizer of construction sites.

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**Jan S. Plachta** studied Civil Engineering in Cracow, Poland, Vienna, Austria and in Chicago. He has a PhD degree in Soil Mechanics from the Technical University of Cracow in Poland. He has published extensively in numerous technical publications in the United States and in Europe, documenting the accomplishments of engineers of Polish heritage. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the American Society of Military Engineers (ASME).



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BRIDGES OF RALPH MODJESKI

# ARTIST IN BRIDGES OF CONCRETE RALPH MODJESKI AND STEEL

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*Congratulations to P.A.P.A. and to all the award winners.*



*Unveiling of the Modjeski plaque and a miniature model of his bridge in Nenana, Alaska, on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Alaska Railroad*

Congratulations to  
PAPA  
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on the occasion of its  
Annual Awards Banquet  
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**Congratulate  
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**On the occasion of the Polish American  
Police Association Awards Banquet  
and the celebration of Polish Constitution Day**

**I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all honorees and sincere appreciation to the organizers for preserving Polish heritage and values within the Polish-American community.**

**May this special occasion be a symbol of unity, pride, and the enduring strength of our shared identity.**

**Wishing you continued success, fulfillment in your service, and ongoing inspiration in all your efforts for the community.**

**President Dr. Lucja Mirowska Kopec**

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**Our headquarters is located at**

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*Mazel tov to all the honorees of the Polish American Police Association in 2026. We recognize all your accomplishments and wish you good health and continued success!*

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Special Agent Edward Fay E.O.W. November 22, 1921 Belt Railway Police Dept.  
Special Agent Alexander Lang E.O.W. September 17, 1922 Belt Railway Police Dept.  
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*Congratulations to the  
Polish American  
Police Association  
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Polish Constitution Day  
Celebration!*



---

**Congratulations to the  
PAPA and this  
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Congratulations to my colleagues,  
**Alderman Peter Chico and Alderman Ray Lopez,**  
on being named Public Officials of the Year by the  
**Polish American Police Association.**

As we recognize Polish Constitution Day—**celebrating freedom, honoring heritage, and recognizing the enduring importance of democratic values**—this honor reflects your shared commitment to public safety and the communities you serve. Well deserved.

---

We proudly support the  
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Congratulations  
PAPA  
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In celebration of Polish Constitution Day, we recognize PAPA's service and dedication to our community.



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*Best Wishes  
To The Association Members  
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