

## President Bush Meets with Prime Minister Tusk of Poland Oval Office – March 10, 2008



PRESIDENT BUSH: It's been my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of our very close ally and strategic partner, Poland. We'll both have opening statements, and then we'll take two questions a side.

I want to thank you for your candor, thank you for your friendship. The people of Poland stand as a great example of freedom and liberty. This is a nation with a proud history, a nation that has resisted tyranny and now lives as an example of a free society. And there are millions of Americans who are proud of their heritage, Mr. Prime Minister; they're proud to be called Polish Americans. And we welcome you.

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/03/images/20080310-1\\_p031008jb-0043-515h.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/03/images/20080310-1_p031008jb-0043-515h.html) I want to thank you for your nation's contributions to the liberation of people in Iraq and Afghanistan. Your troops have performed brilliantly and they'll be coming home based upon success. And I thank your government and I thank the people of Poland for the sacrifices. I also thank you to help the young democracy in Afghanistan survive and thrive and flourish. And some day, Mr. Prime Minister, people are going to say Afghanistan did exactly the same thing that happened in Poland -- people realized the blessings of liberty, and out of those blessings flow peace.

The Prime Minister and I had a long discussion about a lot of subjects. One in particular I want to talk about, and that is our mutual security. The United States recognizes the need for Polish -- the forces to be modernized. It's important for our allies to -- when they are worried about the modernization of their forces that friends respond, and we're responding. The first part of a response, of course, is to take inventory of needs. And Mr. Prime Minister, before my watch is over we will have assessed those needs and come up with a modernization plan that's concrete and tangible.

Along those lines we talked about the need for mutual security, and that the significant threat to the 21st century or perhaps the most significant is the launch of a missile with dangerous materials in its warhead. Technologies are developing that will enable the free world to be able to defend itself from blackmail and/or strife from these types of launches.

And we're in discussions with Poland about how we can help the mutual security of the region. I've assured the Prime Minister that any decisions made will reflect the sovereignty of Poland. I've assured the Prime Minister that this system is not aimed at Russia, and I will continue to work with President Putin to give him those assurances, as well. This system is designed for the threats of the 21st century.

And so I want to thank you very much for your candor and your friendship, and we're glad you're here.

PRIME MINISTER TUSK: (As translated.) I want to thank very much you, Mr. President, for your hospitality

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## Skalny Scholarships for 2008

By: *Jo Louise Winters*,  
PR Chair - ACPC  
mvwinters@charter.net

For the tenth consecutive year, the Louis Skalny Foundation is donating a grant for the Skalny Scholarships for Polish Studies in Memory of Louis and Nellie Skalny. For the year 2008, there will be two scholarships awarded, each in the amount of \$1,000. The American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) will be the administrator in awarding the scholarships.

These scholarships are intended for students pursuing some Polish studies (major may be in other fields) at universities in the United States who have completed at least two years of college or university work at an accredited institution. The scholarships will be awarded for the fall 2008 term.

The American Council for Polish Culture is a national non-profit Polish-American confederation of 34 affiliate and supporting organizations and individual members engaged in fostering interest in our rich Polish cultural heritage. ACPC recognizes the importance of encouraging individuals to assume leadership roles in the Polish American community. The Council believes that the Skalny Scholarship awards provide incentives in this direction.

REQUIREMENTS for the scholarships are as follows:

1. Applicant must be a citizen of the United States of America.
2. Evidence of completion of two years of college or university studies at an accredited institution - most recent official university transcript (original to chairwoman, copies to other three committee members).
3. Resume. Include a section on POLISH STUDIES, listing all courses completed for university credit or certification.
4. A letter of recommendation from a faculty member who teaches Polish subjects.
5. A copy of an academic project on a Polish topic in English that was submitted as part of a course requirement. Include the name, position and current address of the evaluator and his/her evaluation of the project.
6. A description of your personal involvement in the mainstream community intended to promote Polish history and/or culture or an appreciation thereof.
7. A letter of recommendation from an individual with direct knowledge of your community activities as described in 6 above.

NOTE: Prior winners are ineligible. All materials for the scholarships must be mailed and received on or before May 3, 2008 (faxes not accepted). Originals of all materials must be mailed to the Chairwoman and duplicate copies must be mailed to the other three ACPC Skalny Scholarships Committee Members:

Ms. Ursula Brodowicz, M.A. Chairwoman, Skalny Scholarships Committee  
11 Brinley Way  
Newington, CT 06111

Mrs. Deborah M. Majka, M.S.  
812 Lombard St. #12  
Philadelphia, PA 19147

Ms. Ange Iwanczyk, M.S.  
833 Fairdale Ave.  
Ambridge, PA 15003-1608

Mr. Marion V. Winters, M.S.  
51 Camille Rd.  
Webster, MA 01570-3148

If there are any questions regarding the above, contact Ms. Ursula Brodowicz at the above address or by phone/e-mail: tel. (860) 521-0201; [ursula.b@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ursula.b@sbcglobal.net)

All materials submitted by applicants will become part of the records of the American Council for Polish Culture and will not be returned. □

## Tapping Poland's brightest



*Polish students at one of England's most famous schools are rising to the top of the class*

A March 10 article by Sian Griffiths on the *TIMESONLINE* Website tells about one of the most expensive private schools in Britain: send your daughter here to board for seven years and with extras such as uniform and games' kit, you won't see much change from £200,000.

For decades Cheltenham Ladies' college – the word “chav” for the working classes is supposedly derived from the college's slang for “Cheltenham average” – has turned out well-bred, well-educated young ladies. A roll call includes Kristin Scott Thomas, Mary Archer, Bridget Riley, Katharine Hamnett, Lisa Jardine, Gareth Peirce and Nicola Horlick.

But in recent years some of the school's starriest performers have been a handful of Polish teenagers who have joined the sixth form on free scholarships worth about £55,000 apiece, covering two years of sixth form boarding fees.

Selected in their home country some arrived with stumbling English, little money and only a Polish state education under their belts. But their talent and hard work has left them outstripping many pupils who have had the benefit of the college's pricey education since the age of 11. Studying for up to six A-levels, several have been snapped up by Oxbridge and Ivy League universities.

Education experts say that their achievements are a warning to British teenagers that the work ethic of clever Polish children, coupled with rigorous science and maths teaching at an early age, could see newcomers beating “complacent” British teenagers to the best university places and jobs.

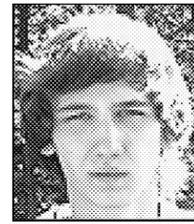
“They have a hunger for success, and know from their background just how important a good education is for fulfilling yourself and having the best opportunities,” says Alan Smithers, director of Buckingham University's Centre for Education Research.

“In this country we have become perhaps too complacent. We have enjoyed an established place in the world for a long time and do not feel as sharply as we should the need to achieve the best we can.”

Looking out over the college's gardens from her office Vicky Tuck, the principal of the college, describes the backgrounds of some of her Polish high-flyers. “They are usually from modest homes. Homes where learning is greatly valued . . . and they do work very, very hard,” she says. “We had one who needed money to buy socks – we do give them [£20 a week] pocket money,” says Tuck. But lack of ready cash didn't deter her from studying: “She would get up in the very early morning to download lectures online from Harvard and MIT [the Massachusetts Institute of Technology].”

Karolina Watras, the first Polish scholarship girl, won a place at Cambridge University to read history of art, where she got a first class degree.

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**Janek's  
Corner**  
*Janek Szczepański*  
Adam Mickiewicz U.  
Poznań, Poland

[janek.szczepanski@gmail.com](mailto:janek.szczepanski@gmail.com)

## Erasmus

Once a person becomes a university student, one immerses into university life and tries to get as much of it as possible. The university itself is a great venue for interpersonal relations, meeting new people, discovering the new with highly qualified and just ordinary people – the professors. Each of them seems to be a never-ending story that revolves when one wants to read it. But, this is not the only part of the university life which one can encounter at Polish universities. From year to year, due to social and cultural development of the country, more students want to come to Poland to study. The top majors that foreigners choose to study in Poland include medicine, dentistry, veterinary, and computing. They all bring the issue of intercultural exchange into life.

Thanks to Poland's membership in the European Union, Poland is a part of an Erasmus Students Network that enables thousands of students from Poland to study at top universities in the European Union and also opens up Polish universities to students from other European Union countries.

Erasmus, known also as *European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students*, is the name of the exchange program which is funded and monitored by the European Commission. It is directed at the higher education establishments that creates bilingual agreements for long cooperation schemes. Each year millions of students from universities and colleges around Europe participate in this ultimate experience to broaden their horizons and develop their love for the subjects of their choice.

The program works as a one-way exchange. It may be a half year or full year long. Students are delegated to a partner institution to study their subjects and bring the understanding of so diverse yet so monolithic culture of Europe. Thanks to Erasmus, central European students are able to study at Western European universities and vice versa. As a result, both sides of the agreement draw great benefits from the program.

Adam Mickiewicz University has its ties with Western and Eastern European universities. It includes higher education establishments in top European capitals as well as smaller cities. These are universities located in the northernmost area of Finland and Sweden and southernmost places of Greece, Italy and Spain. Other Poznań universities have signed agreements with Turkey (although it's still not a part of the European Union, Turkey agreed to allow Turkish universities to take part in the program; the same applies to Norway and Switzerland which also have partner-universities.)

The procedure of becoming an “Erasmus student” is a simple but well-monitored one. The recruitment process for available places starts early in January each year (that means that if a person wants to go to France for the academic year 2008/2009, one needs to apply in January 2008.) It is the local university that recruits eager students. The partner-school is only notified about the students chosen. It is a process based on the mutual understanding and interests to exchange the most valuable students who are interested in the program. Of course, academic standings and language fluency are the most important factors during the recruitment process, but it does not mean

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