



Journeys of Discovery

Pathways for Changing Lives

Polish American
Association

2002 Annual Report

The background of the page is a topographic map with brown contour lines and a grid. The map shows various elevation points and geographical features, though they are not clearly identifiable. The text is overlaid on this map.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Polish American Association, a human service agency, is to serve the diverse needs of the Polish community in the Chicago metro area by providing resources for changing lives, with emphasis on assisting immigrants.

Core Values

We believe that:

- ★ Each client of PAA is a unique individual with different concerns and abilities and shall be treated with dignity, respect, and trust
- ★ PAA programs and services shall assist in the empowerment of people as individuals so that they may reach their full potential in all aspects of their lives
- ★ PAA programs and services shall be most effective when a holistic approach is taken to individual needs
- ★ PAA shall make every effort to respond to the unmet and well researched needs within the Polish community by providing programs and services not available elsewhere
- ★ PAA shall advocate on behalf of those within the Polish community who may not be able to speak for themselves
- ★ PAA shall foster linkages and collaborative efforts with other human service agencies and also within the extended Polish community, including persons most comfortable speaking either the English or Polish language

*A journey of a thousand miles
must begin with a single step.*

— Lao-tzu

Dear Friends,

Shortly after the beginning of this fiscal year on July 1, 2001, the world as we knew it changed abruptly. The once unthinkable events of September 11 challenged our country and its people. Our seemingly normal journey through the everyday tasks, joys and challenges of living was interrupted. That day had an irreversible impact on all of us.

From the midst of tragedy, we were also able to learn and be inspired. The outpouring of compassion and generosity shown to strangers demonstrated the enormous capacity of people to reach out to one another in times of crisis. Our sense of hope was reawakened, and our journey through life continued.

The number of people seeking help from most charities is on the rise as economic uncertainty continues to grapple our country. At the same time, corporate and foundation giving is down, and government budgets continue to be trimmed.

We at the Polish American Association are grateful that, with the help of our donors, board members, volunteers, and staff, we were able to meet the increased demand on our services, and end the year without cutting programs or staff like many charities. Thanks to the incredible efforts of our board and staff to raise additional funds and reduce spending, PAA ended the fiscal year with only a slight deficit.

Although Polish American Association was not able to move forward with some of the things we planned when times were better, we proudly helped 14,749 clients set out on journeys of discovery and find paths to help them improve their lives. As you read on, you will learn about the achievements and challenges that defined this fiscal year.

★ The first half of our fiscal year was marked by a dramatic increase in the demand for PAA's counseling, employment and emergency services, due in part to the events of September 11. PAA's staff worked fervently to meet the increased demand on our services as people in our community, like many others in the nation, faced uncertain futures for themselves and their families.

★ The many INS policy changes and the anti-immigrant environment resulting from September 11 placed PAA in an even more critical role. For many confused and frightened immigrants, PAA was a safe place to turn for reliable information on immigrant rights and responsibilities.

★ PAA piloted a new centralized, computerized client service database. The database system allows us to efficiently track the 3,500 clients we serve monthly at all four locations. As a result, we are better positioned to identify client needs and tailor our services.

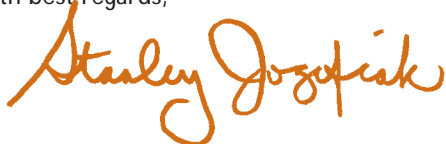
★ PAA launched its new Polish-language newsletter, *Ogniwo*, in an effort to inform more people about our services. Additionally, the newsletter aims to educate people, who in Poland were not familiar with non-profit organizations, about their responsibility to support and help sustain organizations like PAA for those less fortunate.

★ To achieve a better balance of funding, PAA continued its efforts to build the Miracle Fund as a source of sustainable, private support for many important and underfunded programs.

As we close the fiscal year, we count our blessings but also anticipate even greater challenges in fiscal year 2003. Much of our funding is influenced by the general state of the economy, as it impacts government and foundation giving as well as personal donations.

We'd like to thank all of our supporters, board members, staff, and volunteers for the critical part they play in helping our clients set out on journeys to discover hope, strength, and the joys and pride of making this country their new homeland.

With best regards,



Stanley W. Jozefiak
Chairman of the Board



Karen J. Popowski
Executive Director



Education & Employment

The desire of immigrants to succeed in creating new and better lives for themselves is often the catalyst for setting out on one of life's greatest journeys — education.

PAA's Learning Center has helped thousands of Chicago's Polish immigrants and others in need learn English, prepare for U.S. citizenship exams, and gain new skills to enable them to enter careers in healthcare and other professional settings and become involved and contributing members of Chicago's communities. PAA has been successfully providing employment services since 1981, adult education since 1989, and vocational training since 1992. PAA is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education as a Private Business and Vocational School.

During FY 2002, PAA's Learning Center served 2,012 adults through its adult education and vocational training programs, and PAA's employment program received 417 job orders from employers and successfully placed more than 160 clients in jobs earning an average of \$9.33 per hour.



Thank you for all the wonderful Patient Care Technicians that you (PAA) have sent to Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare...Their training, compassion and expertise have proven to be a blessing for the patients of our hospital.

Pat Blackwell, Human Resources,
Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare

Highlights

- ★ In recognition of Polish American Association's superior performance in adult education, the Illinois Community College Board presented PAA with **the highest performance award given to any community-based organization in the state.**
- ★ Thanks to the additional funding, PAA nearly **doubled the number of English-As-a-Second Language (ESL) classes** it offered to 47 during the 2002 fiscal year. PAA also increased the number of class locations; ESL classes are offered at the Copernicus Foundation and Foreman High School in addition to our own facilities.
- ★ For the first time, PAA **offered citizenship classes at off-site locations:** the Polish Women's Alliance in Park Ridge and Foreman High School.
- ★ PAA **established a Career Center** as part of its employment program to provide educational and vocational guidance and assessment services to assist clients in planning career paths. The program consists of individual counseling, resume writing and job readiness workshops.
- ★ Despite the weakened economy and high unemployment, PAA's **employment programs have exceeded funder-mandated training and placement rates.**
- ★ The high demand for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) and PAA's highly-respected **CNA vocational training program resulted in a 100 percent placement rate for our graduates.**
- ★ Through funds for supportive services from the City of Chicago Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, PAA **offered economically disadvantaged job seekers gift certificates** to purchase interview clothing and CTA bus passes to help them offset initial transportation costs.
- ★ The additional adult education funding also created a need for additional staff and office space to handle the significant increase in students and classes. PAA **remodeled its Learning Center** to accommodate these needs.

We started this class with the simple hope of learning the basics of the English language to improve our ability to function in American society, get better jobs, gain U.S. citizenship and even personal satisfaction. We got so much more than we expected.

Translated excerpt of a letter written by students of a PAA English-as-a-Second-Language class which concluded in May 2002

CLIENTS SERVED IN FY 2002

Employment Services	866
Education Services	2,012
Citizenship Classes	414
English Classes	1,309
Vocational Classes	161
Literacy	128





Social Services



When someone is frightened, feeling hopeless, alone or fearful about their future, and they discover an inner strength or a glimmer of hope they did not think they could muster, they begin the journey of rebuilding their life.

PAA's social services programs offer families, seniors, youth, domestic violence victims, the homeless and those seeking help to free themselves of substance abuse problems an opportunity for hope and personal growth. PAA staff provides professional support, advice and hands-on assistance in our clients' first and most comfortable language to transform lives and create happier and more stable home environments. Through its many social service programs, PAA enabled 5,098 clients in FY 2002 to hope for a brighter tomorrow for themselves and their families.

Some of Polish American Association's core social services include: individual and family counseling, crisis intervention, programs for victims of domestic violence and offenders, youth development and drug abuse prevention, senior case management, day center for homeless men and emergency homeless outreach services, intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment, early intervention services for adolescents using alcohol/drugs, homemaker program, food pantry, clothing closet, energy assistance, and outreach and interpretation services.

CLIENTS SERVED IN FY 2002

Social Services	3,280
Counseling/ Case Management	1,554
Victims of Domestic Violence	164
Homeless	304
Substance Abuse Treatment	57
Seniors	520
Youth	410
Homemaker	271
Support Services	1,818
Food Pantry	1,045
Energy Assistance	773

Highlights

- ✦ Polish American Association is **collaborating with the Coalition for Limited English Speaking Elderly and seven other ethnic agencies in the Chicago area on the Limited English Proficiency Alzheimer's Disease Demonstration Project.** The project's objectives are to increase appropriate assessment, diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease among limited-English speaking elderly; provide necessary home and community-based services; and support caregivers.
- ✦ PAA's Youth Program **began a Polish-language support group for youth with addicted parents or relatives.**
- ✦ Polish American Association's **food pantry is serving 20% more clients than in the previous fiscal year.** The spike in individuals seeking help can be attributed to the country's economic situation and outreach efforts of PAA staff.
- ✦ PAA's Homemaker Program **provided 86,343 hours of care to 271 elderly and disabled clients during FY 2002,** enabling them to remain in their homes. **PAA Homemaker Barbara Kasza was awarded the prestigious 2002 Mary I. Hill Homecare Assistant Award** by the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers. She was selected from 21 nominations to receive this award.
- ✦ Polish American Association **received a certificate of appreciation** from the Regional Polish-American Council of the Social Security Administration **for its efforts to increase the number of bilingual workers at SSA.** There are currently 34 Polish speakers working at the Social Security Administration.
- ✦ PAA's **homeless clients now have weekly access to preventative healthcare,** thanks to Dr. Mark Sobor who is volunteering his services for our day shelter residents.
- ✦ At the invitation of The Batory Foundation, Marek Prejzner, **a co-facilitator for groups of PAA's partner abuse program, was a presenter for a four-city workshop series in Poland on domestic violence.** He met with court judges, correctional staff, mental health professionals and others interested in learning about PAA's education and counseling programs for men who are domestic violence perpetrators.

The best way to show the importance and effectiveness of this program [Youth Starting Point] is our clean and drug-free children...Calmness and joy replace the previous fear and helplessness that we once felt...We thank you for our clean children, for the happiness and hope this program brings to our families.

Excerpts from a letter written by participants in a support group for parents of addicted youth

I had lost my job and didn't know what to do... I thank those wonderful people who prepare our [food] packages with love... At this pantry I don't feel I'm poor. Everyone is good and respectful. Juanita

Excerpt from a thank you letter to PAA's food pantry





Immigrant Services

The search for a better life, with economic and educational opportunities, safety, freedom and a chance for something better for their family and children takes many immigrants on the most difficult and courageous journey of a lifetime. Making a new country feel like home takes years and is filled with challenges and obstacles.

Polish American Association's Immigrant Services programs aim to make this transition a bit more smooth. The Immigration Services Program helps many fulfill the dream of calling the United States home. Accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals of the Immigration and Naturalization Services, PAA's counselors work with immigrants to complete citizenship applications, adjust immigration status, translate documents, and make it a priority to keep the Polish community informed about current INS policies and procedures.

PAA's Health Outreach Program provides health information, screenings and access to affordable healthcare for our low-income, limited-English speaking clients. PAA's Housing Resource Center helps our clients reach the ultimate American dream — owning their own home. Our staff provides unbiased, bilingual information, counseling and seminars to facilitate knowledgeable and thoughtful home-purchasing decisions.

During FY 2002, PAA's Immigrant Services programs helped 6,773 clients become U.S. citizens, adjust their immigration status, gain access to necessary medical services and screenings and learn about the joy and responsibility of home ownership.



CLIENTS SERVED IN FY 2002

Immigrant Services	6,773
Immigration Services	3,685
Health Outreach	2,447
Housing	641

Highlights

- ★ The events of September 11, 2001 created a difficult and confusing environment for the immigrant population in the United States. In addition to routine immigration services and counseling, PAA's Immigration Services staff spent much of this last year **providing accurate and updated information to Polish-speaking immigrants about the rapid immigration policy changes** taking place throughout our country, in addition to dispelling rumors and calming their fears.
- ★ PAA staff has been busy **working with state and federal legislators and local groups and coalitions advocating for immigrant rights**. Some of the issues that topped the agenda this year have included supporting legalization initiatives for eligible undocumented immigrants, the Student Adjustment Act, restoration of supportive and safety net benefits for all low-income families, including immigrants.
- ★ Polish American Association's Health Outreach staff **organized 25 health screenings**, which provided preventative healthcare, immunizations and school physicals **for nearly 1,300 low-income, Polish-speaking clients**. The Health Outreach staff also translated from English to Polish healthcare information on several important health issues.
- ★ **PAA earned a KidCare Achievement Award from the Illinois Department of Public Aid**. Polish American Association was one of ten Illinois groups, and only one of two non-healthcare groups, recognized for their outstanding work in enrolling Illinois kids and pregnant women into the state's healthcare coverage program for children of working families.
- ★ During its second year of operation, **PAA's Housing Resource Center nearly doubled the number of clients it served to 641** through its home-buying courses, seminars and counseling services.
- ★ **PAA's Housing Resource Center hosted a housing fair, "Dom 2002," for the Polish community** in June. More than 250 people attended the event, which was aimed at linking potential homebuyers and current homeowners with resources to facilitate home purchasing and remodeling. Additionally, 349 people attended home-buying and financial literacy workshops and seminars.
- ★ PAA staff **provided extensive Polish translations for a variety of housing-related materials** including: The City of Chicago's Bungalow Project, The Drug and Gang House Ordinance Prosecution Initiative, materials for Access Living regarding advocacy for people with disabilities. Housing Resource Center staff also thoroughly reviewed Fannie Mae's Polish-language materials.

If I did not have the opportunity to take advantage of your free citizenship classes and experience, which I'm certain resulted from years of work performed with complete dedication and understanding, the naturalization process for me, an elderly person, would have been an immensely stressful experience. Sincerely, Helen

Translated excerpt from a thank you letter sent to PAA's Immigration Services staff

I came to Chicago with my wife and children in late July, thanks to your staff I was employed in August. ... I work at this company today to my satisfaction and that of my employer. In addition, you informed us about free immunizations and health screenings for our sons. Polish American Association eased our beginning in a new homeland. Thank you. Joseph

Translated excerpts from a thank you card sent to our staff

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Lifetime Giving of \$50,000+

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Catholic Charities of Chicago
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Youth Outreach Services, Inc.

Polish American Association is grateful to all whose contributions have helped us offer resources for changing lives. We rely on private donations to enable us to provide vital services to our clients. Thank you to all who have given to PAA in time, money or prayers.

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Community Affairs
Illinois Department of Human
Services, Bureau of Refugee
& Immigrant Services
Illinois Department of Human
Services, Community Health
& Prevention
Illinois Department of Human
Services, Office of Alcoholism
& Substance Abuse
Illinois Department of Human
Services, Member Initiative
Illinois Department of Human
Services, Refugee & Immigrant
Citizenship Initiative
Illinois Secretary of State
Karol Uryga – Nawarowski
Foundation
Kraft Foods North America,
part of the Philip Morris Family
of Companies
Kraft Employee Fund
Marshall Field's
Mayor's Office of Workforce
Development
Michael Reese Health Trust
Polk Bros. Foundation
Retirement Research Foundation
Sara Lee Foundation
Dr. Scholl Foundation
Sovereign Military Order of Malta
Federal Association, USA
United Way of Chicago
Youth Outreach Services

Polish American Association Memberships

American Library Association
American Association for Adult
& Continuing Education
Area Planning Council for
Adult Education
Association of Fundraising
Professionals
CAN-TV
Chicago Anti-Hunger Federation
Chicago Council on Planned Giving
Chicago Jobs Council
Chicago Metropolitan Battered
Women's Network
Coalition of Limited English Speaking
Elderly
Community Media Workshop
Donors Forum of Chicago
Greater Chicago Food Depository
Harris InfoSource
IACEA
Illinois Addiction Counselors
Association
Illinois Alliance for Aging
Illinois Association for Career and
Technical Education
Illinois Association of Community
Care Program Homecare
Providers
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant &
Refugee Rights
Illinois Health Occupations
Association
Immigrant & Refugee Health Task
Force
Independent Monitoring Board
INS Community Discussion
Committee
ITBE
IT Resource Center
National Association of
Social Workers
Northwest Coalition of Youth Serving
Agencies
Operation ABLE
Partnership to End Homelessness
PRAG/CTE
TESOL

Licenses and Accredited Programs

Board of Immigration Appeals
Accreditation
City of Chicago, Limited Business
(Immigration Service)
Greater Chicago Homeowner
Education Counseling
Collaborative
Illinois Department of Human
Services, Office of Alcoholism
& Substance Abuse, Outpatient
Substance Abuse Treatment
Illinois Department of Human
Services, Office of Alcoholism
& Substance Abuse, Remedial
Education
Illinois Department of Human
Services, Partner Abuse
Intervention Program
Illinois Department of Public Aid,
Physical Rehabilitation Aide Training
Illinois Department of Public Health,
Certified Nursing Assistant Training
Illinois State Board of Education,
Private Business & Vocational
School

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Target Research Associates

Jerry Smulik
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Bogna Iwanowska-Solak
Oak Mill Bakery

Jeanne M. Sowa
Easter Seals

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(ret)

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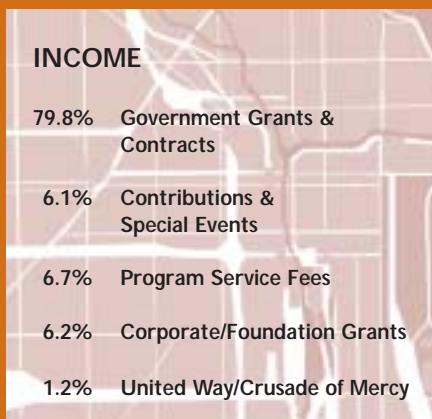
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Lukasz Grzesik
Monika Grzesik

Treasurer's Report

Polish American Association is an Illinois not-profit corporation qualifying for tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Revenues are received in the form of contributions from individuals, businesses, and organizations; grants from foundations and corporations; contracts and grants from federal, state, and local government; and fees for certain program services. Revenues are used to fulfill the organization's chartered purpose. The 19 member voluntary board of directors is responsible for overseeing and charting the organization's operations, including its financial activities. Financial statements are presented for review and approval on a monthly basis. The condensed financial statements of the current unrestricted fund for the year ended June 30, 2002, appearing in this report were derived from audited financial statements. The full audited financial statement will be available upon request.

Roger F. Kovack, Treasurer
Polish American Association



Polish American Association

Condensed Statement of Financial Position for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2002

Assets	
Current Assets	\$658,992
Property and Equipment	929,747
Total Assets	\$1,588,739
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Liabilities	\$711,872
Unrestricted Net Assets	803,367
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	73,500
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,588,739

Condensed Statement of Activities for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2002

Revenues	
Contributions and Special Events	\$242,114
United Way	46,144
Government Agencies	3,131,450
Corporate and Foundation Grants	241,500
Program Service Fees	262,590
Other Revenue	(36)
Total Revenues	\$3,923,762
Expenses	
Program Services	
Social Services	\$1,087,507
Employment and Training Services	480,166
Immigration Services	329,825
Education	898,018
Homemaker Services	937,077
Support Services	
Management/Fundraising	204,069
Total Expenses	\$3,936,662
Net Revenue for the Year	(\$12,900)



Polish American Association
Resources for changing lives

Main Office

3834 North Cicero Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60641
(773) 282-8206

Learning Center

3815-19 North Cicero Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60641
(773) 282-1122

paa@polish.org
www.polish.org

South Side Office

6276 West Archer
Chicago, Illinois 60638
(773) 767-7773

Homeless Outreach Center

3425 North Milwaukee Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60641
(773) 777-6662