

**Polish American Association**  
*Resources for Changing Lives*

# celebrating 80 years

of active caring and concern 2003 ANNUAL REPORT



## 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.

## Vision Statement

Polish American Association will be the recognized, preeminent human service agency in the Chicago metro area identifying and serving the diverse needs of the Polish community. This will be achieved through Polish American Association's own programs and activities and in collaboration with others, utilizing an appropriate balance of private and public funding and human and physical resources.

## 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

# Dear Friends,

The Polish American Association marked its 80th anniversary this fiscal year, and the changes during eight decades of service to our community have been extraordinary. PAA has experienced tremendous growth and evolved over the decades into being not only a place of hope in times of crisis, but also a resource and place of empowerment for those wishing to smoothly adjust to life in the United States.

As we celebrate PAA's 80 years of service in providing resources for people to make positive changes in their lives, we also remember the spirit of generosity of those who came generations before, and their lasting gifts to the future.

Life for immigrants in the early 1920's was especially harsh. Work was strenuous, conditions at the workplace were often risky and reprehensible, and pay was meager. Many things could and did go wrong. People died. Spouses sought solace in alcohol. Youngsters quickly learned that a shop-lifted vegetable tasted better than no food at all. Authorities did not have the ability to cope with people who did not speak English.

Established Polish Americans living in Chicago saw all this and wanted to help. Realizing that ignoring the ills of society only intensifies problems, the Chicago Society of the P. N.A. helped incorporate the Polish Welfare Association, now the Polish American Association, as a nonprofit organization on August 16, 1922.

Although it seems that 80 years have changed a great deal, the reality is that immigrants still face the same struggles, obstacles and emotions in making a new life for themselves and their families. We at PAA are privileged to take our turn providing resources for changing lives. Thanks to the incredible efforts of our board and staff to raise additional funds and continue to reduce spending in an already lean budget, we ended the fiscal year in a much better place than hoped. Some of our successes that we'd like to share:

✦ In an effort to strengthen PAA's resources, broaden its linkages, and bring new approaches to help advance the organization, PAA has significantly increased the size of its board to 28 members.

✦ At a time when many other organizations cut programs and staff, PAA was very fortunate to maintain all its programs. Although, due to economic conditions, PAA was not able to expand current programs or develop new services, the organization proudly helped open the doors to a new life for more than 14,000 clients.

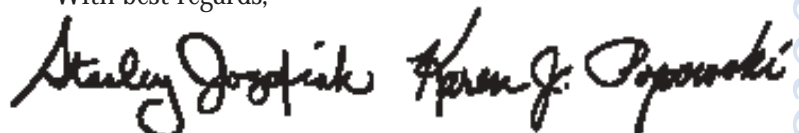
✦ PAA kicked off its 80th Anniversary celebration by hosting a Media Appreciation Day for members of Chicago's Polish-language media. Polish-language media have been instrumental in PAA's ability to reach out beyond the walls of our buildings to those who are overwhelmed with the challenges of life in a new country and often have no one to turn to for help. PAA also hosted a Roaring 20's Benefit to raise funds and commemorate its 80 years of service.

✦ PAA was awarded the Silver Statue Award from the Association of Journalists of the Republic of Poland for its outstanding success in serving Polonia.

✦ PAA continued its efforts to achieve a greater diversity in funding. The growth in individual support can be attributed to a combination of new development initiatives, such as PAA's Polish-language newsletter *Ogniwo*, privately-hosted benefit concerts, the 21 Pledge, and continued outreach to educate those in the Polish community not familiar with non-profit organizations about their responsibility to support and sustain organizations like PAA.

Your time, energy and financial support are what helped us achieve this incredible milestone of 80 successful years of service. We thank all our supporters, board members, staff and volunteers for playing such a crucial role in the life of this organization and the thousands of clients who turn to us each year.

With best regards,



Stanley W. Jozefiak  
Chairman of the Board

Karen J. Popowski  
Executive Director



## Education & Employment

*Immigrants coming to this country face many challenges, including language barriers and difficulty finding a job. Traditionally, immigrants have provided an inexpensive and hard-working labor pool for unfilled jobs, and this still holds true today. Through PAA's Education and Employment programs, our clients can make a smooth transition to a productive and hope-filled future for themselves and their families.*

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 that have enabled them to enter careers in healthcare and other professional settings, and allowed them to actively participate in the social, economic and political life 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 2003, PAA's Learning Center served 2,702 adults through its adult education and vocational training programs, and PAA's Employment program received 481 job orders from employers and successfully placed more than 243 income-eligible clients in jobs earning an average of \$8.90 per hour.

### Clients Served in FY 2003

|                            |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Employment Services</b> | <b>1,427</b> |
| <b>Education Services</b>  | <b>2,702</b> |
| Citizenship classes        | 536          |
| English classes            | 1,428        |
| Vocational classes         | 144          |
| Literacy                   | 136          |
| Computer resource room     | 458          |

|                           |    |     |
|---------------------------|----|-----|
| First Class Postage Stamp | 2¢ | 37¢ |
| PAA Employees             | 2  | 180 |



The newly incorporated Polish Welfare Association, now Polish American Association, employed two people primarily providing social services when its doors first opened. It would be 60 more years before PAA began providing employment services and 67 years until it began offering adult education.

Left: Charity Ball. Guests dance the night away while raising money for the Polish Welfare Association (PAA's former name) in the 1930's at the Stevens Hotel (now the Chicago Hilton & Towers). Fundraising events have remained a key way to raise private funds for PAA's programs and services.



⌘ PAA recently **established a community computer resource room at its Southside location.** It offers free computer and Internet access to those who are seeking employment or who need lab time to improve basic computer skills. It also gives immigrants an opportunity to stay connected with family and friends living far away.



⌘ PAA **offered 47 English-As-a-Second Language (ESL) classes,** helping more than 1,400 people learn English during the 2003 fiscal year. ESL class offerings were expanded on weekends to accommodate our clients' busy schedules.



⌘ PAA's Career Center **added a Job Readiness Specialist,** enabling PAA to help clients write complete, polished resumes, and to offer job readiness workshops on an increased basis, in addition to our other employment and career-building offerings.



⌘ Participants of two classes in PAA's highly-respected CNA **Vocational Training Program achieved a 100 percent pass rate on the state certification exam.**



## Social Services

*Although we are now in a new millennium, the emotions of people who are newly arrived in this country are the same as they were for those arriving 80 years ago. The hope and excitement of a new and better life quickly give way to isolation, insecurity and powerlessness. PAA aims to empower and restore the self-sufficiency and spirit of our clients as they embark on a quest for a successful future in their new homeland.*

PAA's Social Services programs offer families, seniors, youth, domestic violence victims, the homeless and those seeking help to free themselves of substance abuse

### Clients Served in FY 2003

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Social Services</b>       | <b>3,456</b> |
| Counseling/Case Management   | 1,688        |
| Victims of Domestic Violence | 150          |
| Homeless                     | 323          |
| Substance Abuse Treatment    | 71           |
| Seniors                      | 565          |
| Youth                        | 377          |
| Homemaker                    | 282          |
| <b>Support Services</b>      | <b>1,713</b> |
| Food Pantry                  | 860          |
| Energy Assistance            | 853          |

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 services programs, PAA enabled 5,169 clients in FY 03 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 substance abuse prevention, senior case management, day center for homeless men and emergency homeless outreach services, intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment, homemaker program, food pantry, clothing closet, energy assistance, and outreach and interpretation services.

|                              |         |         |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Gallon of Gas                | 25¢     | \$1.61  |
| Polish Immigrants in Chicago | 148,268 | 138,570 |

PAA's Social Services have grown dramatically in the last 80 years. What has not changed is our commitment to being a place of help and hope. PAA's official purpose for being formed in 1922 was "to promote the moral and physical welfare of our people; to cooperate with legal agencies and various welfare organizations in the handling of the juvenile and adult delinquents; and to carry on a campaign of education and information directly into the home to reduce delinquency." Today our social service programs continue to grow to meet the emerging and diverse needs of our community.

1955 Dedication A new building is dedicated in January 1955 at 1303 N. Ashland Avenue, at the time the center of Chicago's Polish community, to house the growing programs of the Polish American Association.



⌘ **PAA's Youth Program was redesigned to provide an expanded focus on after-school activities for elementary-school children.** The program provides art activities, tutoring and a newly organized theater workshop run by a volunteer professional actress.



⌘ **In collaboration with grade school children from PAA's after-school program, PAA's Benjamin B. Green-Field Youth Development Program for high school teens hosted their first ever Art Show.** The proceeds from the Art Show support PAA's youth services and scholarships to Snowball, our Polish-language youth retreat.



⌘ **PAA's Women's Counseling Program has seen a 50 percent increase in the number of women seeking help over the past two years.** Rather than troubling, this increase is positive in two ways. Through PAA's community outreach and education efforts, more women have become comfortable asking for help. They have also learned to recognize their problems sooner and seek help before the situation develops into a crisis.

⌘ **PAA's Homemaker Program provided 98,490 hours of care to 282 elderly and disabled clients during FY 03,** enabling them to remain in their homes.

⌘ **Polish American Association's Food Pantry is serving 40 percent more families than in the previous fiscal year.**

⌘ **PAA's Outreach and Interpretation Program assisted the National Center on Poverty Law in the Polish translation of materials to facilitate the application process for food stamps.** These materials are intended to greatly reduce delays by providing a clear understanding of the documentation needed to receive food stamps.



## Immigrant Services

*Immigrants are an integral part of the fabric of our nation. Today immigrants make up nearly one-fifth of our country's population. They come to the United States in search of opportunity and in pursuit of the American dream. After years of challenges, hard work and the difficult process of adaptation to a new life, these immigrants are ready to become Americans and make this country their home.*

Polish American Association's Immigrant Services programs aim to make this transition a bit smoother. The Immigration Services Program helps many fulfill the dream of calling the United States home. Accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals, 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 immigration policies and procedures.

PAA's Housing Resource Center helps our clients attain 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. PAA's Health Outreach Program provides health information and referrals to affordable healthcare for our low-income, limited-English speaking clients. Community physicians and nurses voluntarily provide free screenings arranged through PAA.

During FY 03, PAA's Immigrant Services programs helped 4,861 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 2003

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Immigrant Services</b> | <b>4,861</b> |
| Immigration Services      | 2,709        |
| Health Outreach           | 1,515        |
| Housing Resource Center   | 637          |



# then & now

1922                      2002

|                                      |                  |           |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-----------|
| Bus Fare                             | 5¢               | \$1.50    |
| People of Polish Ancestry in Chicago | Nearly 3,000,000 | 8,977,444 |



As early as 1948, the Archbishop's Veterans Committee for the Archdiocese of Chicago charged PAA with resettling displaced persons. As history moved into the 1970's and beyond, newcomers were more often political refugees. In 1986, immigration counselors were hired to assist the 5,300 persons who came to PAA as a result of the national amnesty program. In 1991, PAA's offices were jammed with people who won a visa in the lottery program. By the mid-1990's, more than 50,000 newcomers from Poland comprised Chicagoland's largest group of new legal immigrants.

Volunteers Sell Flowers at a Fundraiser PAA's dedicated volunteers, donors and board members continue to develop creative ways to raise vital funds for the most vulnerable in our community.



❖ PAA was **instrumental in helping the Polish-speaking community understand the newly organized Department of Homeland Security**, which now encompasses the functions of the former INS. In addition to routine immigration services and counseling, PAA's Immigration Services staff continued providing accurate information about ongoing immigration policy changes.



❖ PAA staff, in cooperation with the Polish American Leadership Initiative (PALI), **organized a seminar entitled "American Civics Orientation for Extern Priests from Poland" for the Archdiocese of Chicago**. The seminar provided priests, whom many immigrants turn to for help, with accurate immigration and citizenship information.



❖ PAA's Health Outreach Program, in cooperation with a resident at St. Elizabeth Hospital, **worked with several Polish-language preschools to present dental hygiene, nutrition and immunization information to children**.

❖ Our staff was **invited to present at the annual KidCare Illinois conference on model outreach and enrollment practices**. PAA was one of only seven Illinois community-based organizations to receive special funds due to its outstanding performance and outreach efforts.



❖ PAA's Housing Resource Center hosted a housing fair, **"Dom 2003."** More than 200 people attended the event, which **linked prospective and current homeowners with resources for home purchasing and remodeling**. More than 400 people attended home-buying and financial literacy workshops and seminars throughout the year.

# Highlights

# Our Contributors

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, goods or services.

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Lifetime Giving of \$50,000+

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Catholic Charities of Chicago  
The Chicago Community Trust  
Chicago Tribune Charities  
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*PAA has been the designated recipient of contributions from many hundreds of generous federal employees, represented in this listing by area.*

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Area Planning Council for Adult  
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Association for Career &  
Technical Education  
CAN-TV  
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Chicago Jobs Council  
Chicago Metropolitan Battered  
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Illinois Addiction Counselors  
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Illinois Alliance for Aging  
Illinois Association for Career &  
Technical Education  
Illinois Association of Community Care  
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Illinois Health Occupations Association  
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of Other Languages Bilingual  
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Office of Alcoholism & Substance  
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Illinois Department of Public Aid,  
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Roger F. Kovack, Treasurer, Polish American Association

## Polish American Association Condensed Statement of Financial Position for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2003

|                                   |           |             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Assets                            |           |             |
| Current Assets                    | \$823,230 |             |
| Property and Equipment            | 878,493   |             |
| Total Assets                      |           | \$1,701,723 |
| Liabilities and Net Assets        |           |             |
| Liabilities                       | \$830,177 |             |
| Unrestricted Net Assets           | 816,752   |             |
| Temporarily Restricted Net Assets | 54,794    |             |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets  |           | \$1,701,723 |

## Condensed Statement of Activities for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2003

|                                  |             |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Revenues                         |             |             |
| Contributions and Special Events | \$324,958   |             |
| United Way                       | 33,462      |             |
| Government Agencies              | 3,408,028   |             |
| Corporate and Foundation Grants  | 232,906     |             |
| Program Service Fees             | 280,952     |             |
| Other Revenue                    | 5,921       |             |
| Total Revenues                   |             | \$4,286,227 |
| Expenses                         |             |             |
| Program Services                 |             |             |
| Social Services                  | \$1,200,558 |             |
| Employment and Training Services | 665,090     |             |
| Immigration Services             | 313,404     |             |
| Education                        | 802,152     |             |
| Homemaker Services               | 1,079,793   |             |
| Support Services                 |             |             |
| Management/Fundraising           | 211,845     |             |
| Total Expenses                   |             | \$4,272,842 |
| Net Revenue for the Year         |             | \$13,385    |

### Expenses

|       |                  |
|-------|------------------|
| 95.1% | Programs         |
| 4.9%  | Support Services |

### Income

|       |                                |
|-------|--------------------------------|
| 79.5% | Government Grants & Contracts  |
| 7.6%  | Contributions & Special Events |
| 6.6%  | Program Service Fees           |
| 5.4%  | Corporate/ Foundation Grants   |
| .8%   | United Way                     |
| .1%   | Other                          |

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*Resources for Changing Lives*

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Chicago, Illinois 60641  
(773) 282-8206

**Learning Center**

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

**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

[paa@polish.org](mailto:paa@polish.org)  
[www.polish.org](http://www.polish.org)