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## ***“Poland for Chicago!”***

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago is pleased to announce that the President of the Republic of Poland, the Honorable Lech Kaczynski, will be visiting Chicago on Tuesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>.

During his stay, President Kaczynski will meet with various State and City Officials. He will also address Chicago’s Polish American community at a historic event beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park, (201 E. Randolph Street). The Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland has selected numerous renowned artists from Poland to perform after the President’s public address. This event is open to the public and admission is free.

The Poland for Chicago event also launches Polish Heritage Month and is the first of a series of events in October commemorating the Poles’ role in Chicago’s history and Poland’s rich culture and heritage.

Chicago’s Polish Community, or “Polonia” has played a crucial role in the political, religious, educational, institutional, and cultural life of Chicago. Streets named Pulaski and Solidarity Drive are symbolic manifestations of the impact of Polish Americans. Polonia remains a vital ethnic community because of the more than 150-year tradition of Polish immigration to Chicago.

Artists performing on September 25<sup>th</sup> include Justyna Steczkowska (award-winning actress, songwriter and vocalist), Andrzej “Piasek” Piaseczny (popular vocalist and actor of the hit television series ‘*Zlotopolscy*’), Piotr Szczepanik (legendary vocalist and actor; also serving as Minister of Cultural Affairs during Lech Walesa’s presidency), Katarzyna Jamroz (popular actress and award-winning vocalist), and Jan Pietrzak (renowned singer/songwriter, also known as ‘the voice of the anti-communist movement in Poland’).

As Chicago has the largest Polish population outside of the capitol of Poland; and one out of every 10 Chicagoans claim Polish ancestry, President Kaczynski's visit to Chicago is very much anticipated by the entire community.

The Polish President's visit also acts as a reminder that over the last 200 years, Poland and America have been linked in their struggle for freedom. Since the Revolutionary War, Polish patriots like Casimir Pulaski and Tadeusz Kosciuszko fought alongside American patriots to help win our country's independence.

**Lech Kaczynski** was elected President of the Republic of Poland and assumed the office on December 23, 2005. He and his identical twin, Jaroslaw, first gained public attention as child movie actors. Both were active in the prodemocracy movement of the 1970s and were members of [Solidarity](#). Lech Kaczynski served in the Polish Senate (1989-1991) and Parliament (1991-1993). Subsequently, he was head of the Supreme Auditing Board (1992-1995), Minister of Justice (2000-2001), and Mayor of Warsaw (2002-2005). A Founder (2002), with his brother, of the Conservative Law and Justice party, he was elected President of Poland three years later, campaigning on a socially conservative platform. He studied law at Warsaw University and University of Gdansk and has a Ph.D. in Labor Law.

**Poland for Chicago** is organized by the Polish American Cultural and Educational Institute (PACEI). Artist performances sponsored by: KGHM Polska Miedz. The Event is also made possible through the generous support of corporate sponsors including: Jewel-Osco, A National City Bank, MidAmerica Bank, Okocim and T-mobile.