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Winners of the 2016 Awards of the Polish American Historical Association Named at PAHA's 73rd Annual Meeting in Atlanta, GA

Los Angeles, January 18, 2016 – At the 73rd Annual Meeting held in Atlanta, GA, January 7-9, 2016, the Polish American Historical Association announced the winners of its Annual Awards. The PAHA Meeting included also many scholarly presentations as a part of the conference of the American Historical Association.

The Mieczyslaw Haiman Award, offered annually to a scholar for sustained contribution to the study of Polish Americans, was bestowed on **Prof. Dorota Praszałowicz** of Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland. Her contributions to the field of Polonia studies have had considerable influence not only in the U.S. but also in Europe. An independent researcher at the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora of the Jagiellonian University, she is the editor of the scholarly journal *Studia Migracyjne,* and author of many articles, conference presentations and two monographs published in Polish. The biannual migration conferences she organizes gather eminent scholars from the United States and Europe.

The Oskar Halecki Prize recognizes an important book or monograph on the Polish experience in the United States. Eligibility is limited to works of historical and/or cultural interest, including those in the social sciences or humanities, published in the two years prior to the year of the award. The 2016 Halecki Prize was presented to **Prof. Anna Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann** and **Theodore Zawistowski**, for ***Letters from Readers in the Polish American Press, 1902-1969: A Corner for Everybody*** (Lexington Books, 2014). This unique collection features nearly five hundred letters from Polish American readers, published in the Polish-language weekly *Ameryka-Echo* (1902-1969). The translated and annotated letters are a rich source of information on the history of Polish Americans and provide a new, fascinating, and lively look into the passions and experiences of individuals who created the larger American historical experience.

The Amicus Poloniae Award that recognizes significant contributions enhancing knowledge of Polish and Polish-American heritage by individuals not belonging to the Polish-American community was presented to **Dr. Silvia Dapia** of John Jay College and The Graduate Center, City University of New York. She has provided significant service to Polonia and PAHA through her work on the Polish experience in Latin America, guest-editing a special edition of *Polish American Studies* on this topic and a special issue of the *Polish Review* on the work of Witold Gombrowicz. She has also presented papers on Polish-related topics at PAHA and PIASA conferences and international conferences on Polish-American subjects. Further, she organized several Gombrowicz sessions and conferences in Poland and Argentina.

Dr. Pien Versteegh, Dean of Avans School of International Studies at the Avans University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands received the **Distinguished Service Award**, given occasionally to a member of PAHA who has rendered valuable and sustained service to the organization. Dr. Versteegh's role as executive director of PAHA since 2007 has been vital to the smooth and successful operation of the organization and its annual meetings. Her own scholarly interests focus on migration and ethnicity and her contributions as a scholar and as a PAHA officer are a model of service and scholarship to the academic community.

The Swastek Prize is awarded annually for the best article published in a given volume of *Polish American Studies,* the journal of the Polish American Historical Association. This award, established in 1981, is named in honor of Rev. Joseph V. Swastek (1913-1977), the editor of *Polish American Studies* for many years, and a past president of PAHA. The Editorial Board of *Polish American Studies* recommends that the Swastek Prize for the best article in *Polish American Studies* for the year 2014 is awarded to **Lori A. Matten** for "Scouting for Identity: Recruiting Daughters to Save the Traditional Polish Family During the Interwar Years" (PAS 71/1,

Spring 2014). The author presents sound exploration of the history and formation of Polish American organizations conceptualized by questions of gender and ethnicity. She skillfully examines processes of identity transformations and assimilation of the second generation in the interwar period.

After distributing the awards, PAHA President Grażyna Kozaczka commented: "It was an honor for to be able to congratulate this year's distinguished award winners. PAHA awards are an important vehicle for our organization to recognize and honor achievement as well as to encourage research in the field of Polish American history and culture."

The program of PAHA's 73rd Annual Meeting included six sessions on diverse aspects of Polonia's culture, presented from historical, sociological, anthropological, gender-studies, feminist and literary perspectives: Polish immigrant adaptation and cultural transitions; Polish immigrant and Polish American ethnic women; foreigners' view on the American Civil War; Émigré political activism during the Cold War; and the reception of Polish culture in the United States. Scholars discussed traditions of ethnic and immigrant communities such as the Kashube, Ukrainians, miners in Germany, Polish Americans in Toledo, Ohio and in Georgia, or former female prisoners of Nazi camp at Ravensbrück dispersed around the world. Dr. Maja Trochimczyk presented her recent book of verse, *Slicing the Bread* (Finishing Line Press, 2014), filled with bitter family memories from World War II and its aftermath, the takeover of the country by the Stalinist regime.

A special session, co-sponsored by the Immigration and Ethnic History Society and entitled "Honoring Victor Greene: Immigration and Ethnic History since the 1960s," was held on January 9, 2016, with the participation of Profs. James R. Barrett, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Ronald H. Bayor, Georgia Institute of Technology; Dominic A. Pacyga, Columbia College Chicago; James Pula, Purdue University North Central; and Dorothee Schneider, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The session's organizer, Prof. Anna D. Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann, Eastern Connecticut State University, stated: "Victor R. Greene (1931-2014) was a prolific scholar who made a fundamental impact on many fields of research, from labor history, to immigration, cultural studies and musicology. He left an indelible mark on PAHA and American culture."

New Board members, appointments and policies were presented at the Board Meeting, facilitated by PAHA President, Grażyna Kozaczka, with Mary Erdmans, Anna Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann (Editor of *Polish American Studies*), Anna Mazurkiewicz (First Vice President), Anna Miller, James Pula (Treasurer), Robert Synakowski, Maja Trochimczyk (Secretary), and Pien Versteegh (Executive Director). Dr. Anna Miller, of the University of Michigan at Dearborn joined the Board as its newest member and Dr. Iwona Drag Korga, Executive Director of the Pilsudski Institute in New York City, became the Chair of the Awards Committee for 2017. The Committee will accept nominations to PAHA Awards at email: i.korga@pilsudski.org.

About PAHA: The Polish American Historical Association is a non-profit, tax-exempt, interdisciplinary organization devoted to the study of Polish American history and culture as part of the larger Polish diaspora. Founded in 1942 as part of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, PAHA became an autonomous scholarly society in 1948 and is an affiliate of the American Historical Association. PAHA publishes a newsletter and a biannual scholarly peer-reviewed journal, *Polish American Studies* (University of Illinois Press, http://www.press.uillinois.edu/journals/pas/isubscribe.php; ISSN 0032-2806; eISSN 2330-0833; with past issues on JSTOR). The organization sponsors an annual conference, in conjunction with the American Historical Association, which serves as a forum for research in the field of ethnic studies. PAHA has over 600 international members, including both individuals and institutions. Membership is open to all individuals interested in the fields of Polish American history and culture, and immigration studies.

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