

Skalny Scholarships awarded

Two Louis & Nellie Skalny Scholarships for Polish Studies were awarded for 2010 by the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC). Committee Chairperson Ursula Brodowicz reported that the Skalny Scholarship Committee, including Debra Majka, Ange Iwanczyk, Dr. Ed Pawlowski and Marion Winters, awarded \$3,000 scholarships to two outstanding applicants: Matthew Przybylek and Pawel Styrna.



Matthew Przybylek of Wilmington, Delaware is a 2009 graduate of the University of Delaware where he was awarded a BA in European Studies. As part of his studies at the University, Matthew completed a year long program in Polish language & culture at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. This fulfilled the requirements of the University of Delaware Discovery Learning Experience in the Arts & Science program. As part of his political science and international relations studies, Matthew submitted a highly evaluated paper analyzing the behavior logics of Jan Sobieski and his counterparts during events surrounding 1683 central Europe and the Battle of Vienna. He is the 2009 Recipient of the Foreign Languages and Literatures Study, and the 2009 Recipient of the Global Scholars Award, among others. Matthew has been accepted to graduate school at Columbia University where he plans to continue with Polish studies. His activities in the PolAm community have been extensive and include involvement in local politics and in the history of the sizeable Polish community in Wilmington. Matthew states that he takes deep pride in his Polish roots and in the language and culture of Poland. He identifies himself as a Polish American who preserves and promotes the culture and history of Poland, that this is a defining characteristic of who he is and that it permeates his professional and social life.

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Pawel Styrna of Chicago, Illinois was awarded an MA degree in history at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Pawel's master's thesis was titled "Opinions on the Kiev Expedition in the American, British, Belgian, Polish and Soviet Press: A Sample from April-May, 1920". This thesis was described by the professor of history as a very detailed, rigorously argued, and extensively researched analysis and as greatly exceeding requirements. As a research paper it met the highest standards for rigor, seriousness and analytical acumen. His professor also states that in 17 years of instruction at the university, Pawel was by far the most diligent, enthusiastic and dedicated student. Pawel has completed several independent studies and seminars in Polish Studies. He is an intern with the Kosciuszko Chair in Polish Studies at the Institute of World Politics in Washington, D.C. He is enrolled as a Continuing Education student, and has applied to the Masters program in Statecraft & International Relations. Pawel is a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. He is also a board member of the Chicago based Roman Dmowski Institute of America. Pawel continues to be active in the Polish American community, including assisting and coordinating the observance of the Katyn Forest Massacre in May at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. He has been published in several publications and is working on two major essays for publication on Polish history. Pawel believes that the study of history is a fine way to promote Polish history and Polish culture. His long term goals include earning a PhD and becoming a professional historian of Polish history involved in American policy towards Poland. □

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Orange County News

By: **Lila Ciecek** (714) 544-2458
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Leslie A. Carter †

Carter, Leslie A., 79, passed away July 12, 2010. He was a resident of Corona. He is survived by his wife Eugenia of 55 years, 3 daughters, Pauline Carter; Joan Kitt, Barbara Martin; sons- in-law, John and Edward; 4 grandchildren, Kimberly, Jacqueline, Kelly, Kristopher and his brother, Edgar Carter.

Les was a machinist and retired at the age of 62. He was a Member of St. Callistus parish in Garden Grove for 35 years and for the past 34 years a member of Pope John Paul II Polish Center in Yorba Linda where he served as the Facilities Manager for seven years.

Les was a member of the Polish National Alliance Lodge #3193 and the Knights of Columbus, Blessed Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko Council #9599. He was awarded the highest degree of membership, St. Jude 4th degree Assembly.

Services will be held Saturday July 24th at the Pope John Paul II Polish Center in Yorba Linda – Burial will be at a later date at Riverside National Cemetery. †

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Eulogy – Michael

Mieczyslaw Ciecek †

By: **Lila Ciecek and children**

Michael, beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend was called to eternity on June 4th 2010, on the First Friday of the month, at 3:00 in the morning - the Hour of Divine Mercy. What a testament this was to his deep faith, and an acknowledgement of a life well lived. Michael was a noble man. He was wise and quietly inspiring, philosopher and thinker. Humble and simple. Deeply religious, he loved God and his church. He was devoted to his family, Lila's loving husband of 61 years, father of four children, grandfather and great-grandfather of 17.

Mieczyslaw Michael Ciecek was born in Warsaw, Poland on March 22, 1922. After graduating from High School he started his university studies, which were swiftly interrupted by the Warsaw Uprising in August of 1944. As a member of the Polish Home Army (AK) he valiantly took part in the Uprising and after its fall was taken as a prisoner to a camp in Germany. After the war he was decorated with a Silver Cross of Merit with Swords - one of the high Polish medals.

After the liberation and end of World War II, Michael moved to London, England where he resumed his university studies in Mechanical Engineering at the British Imperial College. He graduated in 1949 with a Master of Science degree in Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering. That same year, in London, he married Lila (Alicia Świerczynska), a fellow student, and in 1951, with their one-year-old daughter Bożena, they immigrated to the United States. Three younger children: Andrew, Elizabeth and Jola were born in New York and in California, where they moved in 1954, and have been residents of Tustin ever since.

During his 38 years of professional work Michael spent most of his time working for the Aerospace industry and participated in the US Space program. Special valves designed by him were used in the Apollo and Columbia Space Shuttle programs. He loved to talk about his work and involvement in the US Space Program.

Michael, very proud of his Polish heritage passed the pride of Polish history and traditions to his children and grandchildren, especially at different family celebrations and events and during family trips to Poland. He loved celebrations, and always with a big smile acknowledged God's blessing in his life. As a member of numerous Polish, American and Church organizations, Michael was involved in many activities and events. A founding member of St Cecilia Church in Tustin as well as of the Pope John Paul Polish Center in Yorba Linda, where, for over 20 years he was co-editor of the Church Bulletin. Love for books, travel and good food were his other passions.

Michael's family always admired his strength, courage and his unflinching trust in God throughout his long life, especially in the last few years, when he had to face many health crisis, serious illness and disability. However, like a brave fighter for Poland's freedom in the past, Mike was brave and courageous to the very end - until called to His Father's House in Eternity. Our hearts are full of sadness, but we know, that God took His loving, faithful follower and servant to give him eternal happiness. May he rest in peace! †