Volume 138, Issue 1

January 2023



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2023: The Year of Transformation

Happy New Year from the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the PNU. We hope that this year will be full of health, happiness and prosperity for all!

The Board of Directors are excited to announce that 2023 will be the year of transformation of the PNU. As many members heard during the Holy Synod of the Polish National Catholic Church, the Board has been working very hard on how the PNU will look for the next 115 years. 2023 marks the 115th Anniversary of the PNU and the 50th Anniversary of the Spojnia Credit Union. With these wonderful milestones occurring this year, the PNU will position itself to keep providing financial and fraternal benefits strategically for the next 115 years.

As members of the PNU, you will notice that the Straz will be sent monthly in 2023. In the odd numbered months the Straz will be focused on Fraternal Activities, Education and Youth, and Board of Directors updates. In the even months the Straz will focus on District, Branch and PNCC activities as normal.

In 2023, the Board is also encouraging all Districts and Branches to partner with the PNCC to promote and execute fraternal activities. Starting in Great Lent, the Districts of the Union will work with their parishes of the PNCC to do a food drive for those who are in need. This year as well the Board and Management Team would like for all Districts and Branches to perform one service project of their choice. This service project could be volunteering at a local food pantry, homeless shelter, or community event that will promote the fraternal aspect of the PNU.

As we begin 2023, this is the time to take stock of your needs as you budget for the year. The PNU offers affordable niche life insurance and annuities that the large insurance companies do not offer. Now is the time to make certain that your loved ones are provided for in the event of your passing.

As the year progresses there will be exciting announcements made by the Board of Directors to the members as to how the transformation of the Union is moving forward and what is happening to make certain that the legacy of Prime Bishop Francis Hodur lives on in the life of the Polish National Union.

Martin H. Wachna, Jr., CEO

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1002 Pittston Ave., Scranton PA 18505 570-344-1513/800-724-6352 www.pnu.org info@pnu.org

Organizational Contact Information





PNU Home Office:		800-724-6352/570-344-1513 www.pnu.org Find us on Facebook @ Polish N	info@pnu	.org	cranton, PA 18505
Martin Wachna, CEO x310John Andrzejewski, CFO x310Joan Scheuneman, Executive Assistant x310Ashley Oset, Insurance Claims & Customer Service x303Christine Wachna, Straż Editorstraz@pnu.orgwww.thestraz.com					
PNU Executive Management: Martin Wachna, Jr., Chief Executive Officer executive01@pnu.org John C. Andrzejewski III, Chief Financial Officer-Secretary executive02@pnu.org					
Board of Directors	:	Most Rev. Anthony A. M Kathryn Nemkovich, Ma Gregory Senkevitch			kovich, Jr., wski, Michael Mietlicki &
Spojnia Inc. Directors: Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky, Chairman; Martin Wachna, Jr., Vice Chair; Mari Jane Stankowski, Secretary; Paul Gorgol, David Petrosky, Stacey Shrive & Michael Mietlicki					
Education & Youth Commission: Mary Stankowski, Chair; Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky; Martin Wachna, Jr., Very Rev. Robert Nemkovich, Jr. & Carol Mikovsky					
Fraternal Activities Committee: Michael Mietlicki, Chairman; Very Rev. Lucian Urbaniak, Debbie Bilinski, Henrietta Kleckner, George Urciuoli & Martin Wachna, Jr., Ex-officio					
Internal Audit Committee: Very Rev. John Kowalczyk, Jr., Chairman; Henrietta Kleckner, Vice Chair & Marian Sleczkowski, Secretary					
Medical Director:		Dr. Samuel Alfano			
District Directors:	1	Northeast PA	Julie Andrzejewski	570-842-1603	district1director@pnu.org
	2	NY, NJ, Philadelphia	Leslie Pietrowitz	201-393-0696	district2director@pnu.org
	3	New England	Mary Ann Zarek	774-254-5844	district3director@pnu.org
	4	Buffalo, NY	Beverly Basinski	716-759-1130	district4director@pnu.org
	5	PA & OH	Melissa Snee	724-263-7272	district5director@pnu.org
	6	IL, IN, FL MN, WI	Christine Wachna	847-927-9534	district6director@pnu.org
	7	MI	Suzanne Sniezek	313-720-4339	district7director@pnu.org
	10) Latham, NY	George Urciuoli	914-475-3219	district10director@pnu.org
Spojnia Credit Uni	on	(SCU): 800-724-6352/570-344-1 www.spojniacreditunion.org Sandy Reed, SCU Manager x308	info@spo	jnia.org	eranton, PA 18505 Assist. Manager x 302
SCU Management:			Jacek Grotnik, Vie John C. Andrzejev		

PNU District & Branch Meeting Schedules

- District 1 Quarterly Meeting & Delegate Elections to the 32nd General Convention: Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish in Dupont, PA Contact District Director, Julie Andrzejewski for details.
- District 4 (and Br. 79 & 311) Annual Election of Officers and Election of Convention Delegates: Sunday, January 29, 2023 at 10:30 a.m. at Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral, Lancaster, NY. Alternate date in case of inclement weather, to be determined. Contact District Director, Beverly Basinski for details.
- District 6: Thursday, February 9, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m. central via Zoom Contact District Director, Christine Wachna for details.
- District 7: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Alternate date, March 13, 2023. Contact District Director, Suzanne Sniezek for details.

2023 Straż Article Submission Deadlines

You are invited to submit articles and pictures regarding PNU events in a timely manner and relevant to the time period in which the Straz will be published. You are requested to send articles in Microsoft Word format and pictures in either jpeg or png format.

All submissions are to be sent via email to executive02@pnu.org by the deadline dates listed below. Thank you for your cooperation.

<u>Issue Month</u> February April June	<u>Submission Deadline</u> January 15 March 15 May 15	<u>Issue Month</u> August October December	<u>Submission Deadline</u> July 15 September 15 November 15	
Straz Mail Subscription		published on a bi-monthly basis issues are published and distribu	olish National Union, The Straz, is throughout the year. At least six uted via the website www.pnu.org. ed copy of The Straz are available for t the Home Office via:	
		Phone: 1-800-724-6352/570-34 Email: info@pnu.org	4-1513	
	nation	Mail: PNU – 1002 Pittston Avenue – Scranton, PA 18505		
		Required info for subscription n Recipient Name, Address, City, S	A CONTRACTOR OF	

Polish National Union of American Spojnia, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky, called to order the December 13th, 2022 videoconference of the Spojnia, Inc. Board of Directors at 7:05 pm. Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky offered invocation. Present on the call were: Michael Mietlicki, Mari Jane Stankowski, Paul Gorgol, Martin Wachna. Absent: Stacey Shrive, Andrew Humphries.

FINANCIALS:

Prime Bishop Mikovsky informed the board the profit and loss report is not yet available. All bank statements have not been received for November. Our advisors from Medallion Financial met with the Prime Bishop this past month to review our portfolio.

RENTAL PROPERTIES:

The rental house remains vacant. All utilities are in Spojnia Inc name and are paid to date. After a discussion, it was determined to turn off the utilities and have maintenance drain the pipes as we continue to discuss future use of the property. We received \$2,000 from Mr. Bagnick for the hay.

PROJECT UPDATE:

Contractors met with Prime Bishop Anthony and Paul Kaspriskie to review the project. Bids are due back by Friday at 4pm. Bids will be email to Paul Gorgol with Paul Kaspriskie copied as well.

Final approval was given on the design of our new signage. A deposit will need to be sent. Installation will be scheduled for the spring. We are looking at March or April.

The water drainage onto the road continues to be a problem. Danny Arena will retrench the ditches to have the water drain better.

We continue to work on a long-range plan for our property. Michael Mietlicki developed a long-range questionnaire. After some discussion, it was decided to send the questionnaire out to the following groups: Polish Nation Union of America board, Supreme Council, Reading parish, Dupont parish, YMS of R board of directors, Survey group, rental people, and Rosie Kazinetz. A specific cover letter will be developed for each type of group.

NEW BUSINESS:

Prime Bishop informed the board of a concern our identity and that of The Church of Waymart. To protect our interest, Fred Aebli was able to capture Spojnia Farm domain names, ie .org, .com etc.

Our next meeting in scheduled for January 17th at 7pm.

A motion was made by Martin Wachna, seconded by Paul Gorgol.

Respectfully submitted, Mari Jane Stankowski Secretary, Spojnia, Inc.



PNU Establishes National Youth Convocation Scholarships Program Suggested at Convo 2022

by Michael R. Mietlicki Chair of the Fraternal Activities Committee

Fraternalism is a word that has many meanings or synonyms. Here are just a few: sisterhood, brotherhood, community, unity, closeness, togetherness, solidarity, partnership, kindliness, support, familyhood, belonging, team spirit, mutuality, banding together. There are many more. The Polish National Union's, PNU, mission has always been to put these synonyms of fraternalism in action.

During last year's Convo 2022, Christine Wachna, PNU Director of District 6, presented the history and benefits of the Polish National Union and its mission of fraternalism to those in attendance. During the discussion that followed, it was suggested the PNU investigate the possibility of implementing a program to provide financial assistance to those youth who wished to attend national youth convocations.

Martin Wachna, PNU CEO, brought that suggestion to the board of directors and asked the Fraternal Activities Committee, the FAC, to define such a scholarship program putting fraternalism in action.

The FAC discussed the possible opportunities and agreed on a program that would offer one scholarship to one national convocation participant from each of the United States dioceses of the Polish National Catholic Church. The PNU Board of Directors unanimously approved the FAC proposal at its Third Quarterly Meeting in 2022 and designated the Fraternal Activities Committee as the program administrator.

The scholarship will cover the entire registration fee for convo and up to \$500 in travel expenses. The scholarship will be awarded based on a desire to attend a national youth convocation and is available to any youth below the age of twenty-one at the time of the convocation. Currently, either the applicant, her / his parents or her / his grandparents must hold either a life or annuity product with the PNU. To qualify, a participant must apply, and submit an essay and two letters of recommendation from her / his parish. Recommendations will be accepted from Parish Clergy, School of Christian Living Teachers, Parish Youth Group Leaders, or a Parish Committee Member. Prior scholarship winners can submit applications for subsequent convocations.

Information regarding how one can apply for this scholarship will be announced later this year. Members of the FAC are the Very Rev. Lucian Urbaniak, Deborah Bilinski, Henrietta Kleckner, George Urciuoli, and Michael R. Mietlicki. The FAC has developed an extensive list of fraternal activities PNU branches and districts can host to put fraternalism in action. Most of these come with some funding from the FAC.



National Youth Convocation of the Polish National Catholic Church Hosted by the Western Diocese Convo 2022 – "Live, Laugh, Love with God" Submitted by Christine Wachna, Convo Registration Coordinator

"Celebrate Youth!" was a perfect song to be lifted in prayer during Mass during Convo.

The National Youth Convocation, Convo 2022 of the Polish National Catholic Church was held July 18-22 at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana. This was the first time, since 2018 that this event was able to be held "in-person".

Members of the Western Diocesan Youth Association (WDUYA) included Brianna Davis, Paige Gradowski, Zach Grzesik, Mackenzie Petrella and Aiden Tufano and the Western Diocesan Youth Commission (WDYC) included Cathy Bilinski, Rev. David Rowinski and Christine Wachna made up the Convo 2022 Committee. Led by our National Youth Chaplain and Chaplain of the Western Diocese, the Very Reverend John Kowalczyk, "Live, Laugh, Love with God" was our theme and driving force for this five-day event and we indeed did all three!

While our numbers were lower than normal, remember that we are still coming off the pandemic and the university required that everyone be vaccinated and provide the proper documentation. Our group was small, but mighty and included 24 youth ages 12-21, 15 adults 25 and older and 11 clergy including our newest seminarian. We were blessed to have some of the PNCC's highest ranking leaders including the Most Reverend Anthony Mikovsky, the Right Reverend Jerry Rafalko (Bishop of the Western Diocese) and the Right Reverend Paul Sobiechowski (Bishop of the Eastern Diocese) in attendance.

How do you explain what is the purpose of a National Youth Convocation? Well, put simply, the objective of Convo is to bring the youth and the young at heart closer to God through daily Mass and prayer, a variety of sessions pertaining to the theme of the convo and then have a mix of fellowship throughout our time together. You come together and meet new people and renew old friendships from throughout the entire Polish National Catholic Church and expand your horizons.

Our group was given the opportunity to celebrate Mass in the Chapel of the Resurrection and Holy Masses were celebrated by Prime Bishop Mikovsky, Bishop Rafalko and Father Senior Kowalczyk. Homilists included Prime Bishop Mikovsky, Father Senior Kowalczyk and Father Jim Konicki. Thanks to all the clergy who participated. Our Convo Music Ministry was led by Mrs. Cathy Bilinski-piano & vocals, Alexis Mellado-bass guitar and percussion, MaryJane Scott-vocals and cantor, Marzena Krulik-vocals, Khloe Medrano-vocals, Brianna Davis-vocals and violin, Leah Wisbiski-vocals, Cindy Pecynskivocals and percussion, Dave Pecynski-vocals and percussion and Chris Wachna-vocals, cantor & flute.

Appreciation is extended to all our speakers that gave of their time, talent and treasury to share their love of God and the Church to everyone in attendance. Speakers

Fraternalism in Action



included the Very Reverend Jaroslaw Nowak who spoke on how to Live with God, Reverend Jason Soltysiak discussed how we Love with God through Agape (God's love for humankind), Eros (romantic love), Philia (brotherly love) and Storge (Family Love). Cleric Douglas Scott presented how we laugh with God in our daily lives. Ms. Katherine O'Connor was our Mental Health Professional and presented on the different stressor's life has thrown at us, especially during the pandemic. Mrs. Christine Wachna-PNU Director of District 6 developed a presentation on how we love with God through service and Mr. Jim Szalony presented on how we Live with God through the Psalms. Prime Bishop Mikovsky gave the final session and wrapped up how we Live, Laugh and Love with God each and every day of our lives.

Prior to the Convo, it was announced that we would organize a service project for the attendees and show our love to those in need locally. 100 backpacks were packed with personal toiletries that included soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, a hand towel, wash cloth and socks. The bags were donated to the Hammond City Rescue Mission. Thanks to all who donated to make this happen.

Part of our fellowship time included icebreakers, game night, two dances, on Monday and on Thursday evenings, Deep River Waterpark on Wednesday and the PNU provided the waterproof phone cases for everyone. We were amazed by Magician, Doc Dixon who actually "fooled" Penn & Teller. Snacks were provided each night in the dorm following evening prayer.

Through all our fellowship, new friendships were made and the elections for the National United Youth Association (NUYA) were held. Congratulations to all those elected: President Jorge Hernandez, Vice President Paige Gradowski, Recording Secretary Angelo Curay and Corresponding Secretary Alfonso Castillo. Representatives elected from the Central Diocese are Cecilia Wassman and Perla Alcaraz-Sierra and Alternate Bernard Cardoz. Representatives elected from the Western Diocese are Kameron Westberry, Marzena Krulik and alternate Aiden Tufano. Representatives from the Buffalo-Pittsburgh and Eastern Diocese will be elected later since there were no youth participants from either diocese present. Prime Bishop Mikovsky administered the oath of office on Thursday during Mass. The newly elected board and representatives elected President Jorge Hernandez as their delegate to the General Synod. We pray this new group of leaders will move mountains in spreading the Good News of our Lord and Savior throughout the PNCC and beyond.

Convo 2022 could not have happened without your support! Thanks to the Supreme Council of the Polish National Catholic Church who not only gave us the budgeted amount of \$6,000 but also an additional \$6,000 to reduce the cost of the registration fee for individuals. To run an event such as this, it does take a larger budget and we are also grateful for the left-over monies from the 2018 Convo as well as all the individuals, organizations and parishes that donated towards this endeavor. Here is a list of those who donated towards the service project as well as the hospitality portion of the Convo.

Fraternalism in Action



Service Project Donations	Hospitality Donations
Sandra Dobrovolskis	Cathy & Chuck Bilinski
Robert & Dian Maycan	Kathy & Larry Chockley
Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd	Stephanie Marsh
Cindy & David Pecynski Bernie & Richard Wisniewski	United Young Men's Societies of Resurrection – Pizza Thursday night following the Dance.
All Saints Cathedral Youth Association – Chgo, IL Holy Cross Parish – Hamtramck, MI Resurrection Parish – Temperance, MI St. Mary's Parish – South Bend, IN	PNU District 5 – Ice Cream Bar @ Thursday Dance PNU District 6 – Pizza Lunch @ Deep River Waterpark PNU District 7 – Gazebo @ Deep River Waterpark
St. Michael the Archangel Parish – Cedar Lake, IN	St. Michael the Archangel Parish – Cedar Lake, IN

On behalf of Convo 2022, thanks to everyone who helped "behind the scenes". Without your assistance, we could not do what we did in a seamless matter. We look forward to the next National Youth Convocation in 2024, wherever it may be. May everyone be blessed and spread the good news through their lives, love and laughter with God every day.





The John & Dorothy Markiewicz Scholarship

The Board of Directors of the Polish National Union in conjunction with the Education & Youth Commission are excited to announce a new member benefit that will begin for the 2022-2023 academic year. The family of John & Dorothy Markiewicz have decided to provide a living legacy of their parents. This legacy will come in the form of a \$1,000.00 annual scholarship to members of the Polish National Union Youth which are attending higher education.

This scholarship will be open to all undergraduate and graduate students along with those attending vocational or specialty schools. The preferred area of study is that of healthcare, nursing or other healthcare related fields.

Qualifications:

- 1. A member of the PNU, who has a life insurance policy (current paying, singlepremium or paid up) that is in force and in good standing for at least 5 years. Social Membership does not qualify.
- 2. Currently enrolled and taking classes at a college, university or vocational school full time focusing in the healthcare area.
- 3. Proof of enrollment either from the Registrar, Tuition Bill, Class Schedule all stating the institution's name and the student name and must accompany the application.
- 4. This scholarship is offered for undergrad and graduate students.
- 5. Questions or concerns can be directed to Mary Ann Stankowski, eyc@pnu.org

When all necessary information is obtained please forward all documents to:

Polish National Union of America c/o Education & Youth Commission Attn: Mary Ann Stankowski 1006 Pittston Ave Scranton, PA 18505

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Polisl Frater 100 Scr Web	orothy Markiew h National Union of A rnal and Benefit Socie of Pittston Avenue ranton, PA 18505 site: www.pnu.org address: EYC@pnu.org	ety
Education Compassion		
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For members who are in the Polish Nat Grants are made in accord	tional Union at least five (5 ance with the rules and reg	;) years and are currently in good standing. gulations of the Commission.
Stipend for the academic year 20_	- 20	Date
Name		Date of Birth
Address		
		Zip
		Home#
Email address:		
Member of PNU Branch No	District No	Certificate No.
Name of College / University:		
Name of College / University: Course/Study Pursued:		
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Course/Study Pursued:	nt:1 st year 2 nd year	
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Course/Study Pursued: Indicate current year of Enrollme Anticipated/Expected year of Grad Indicate status attending: * PART Please attach verification of creat determines part time or full	nt:1 st year 2 nd year luation: I TIME (7-11 credits) lits taken for each seme time status differently	
Course/Study Pursued: Indicate current year of Enrollme Anticipated/Expected year of Grad Indicate status attending: * PART Please attach verification of creat determines part time or full	nt:1 st year 2 nd year luation: f TIME (7-11 credits) lits taken for each seme time status differently j showing the number of cre	3 rd year 4 th Year Grad: * FULL TIME (12 credits and more) ster stated below. If the college/universi please provide this paperwork. edits for each class taken) eted/earned

Markiewicz Scholarship Application - Page 2



Langelinet and Comparison
Stipend Application - continued
In order to process this application in its entirety, please choose from at least one of the following criteria listed below, to show the proper enrollment verification from the College or University.
THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ALL APPLICATIONS IS APRIL 15 TH , FOR THAT ACADEMIC YEAR. All applications must be either received or postmarked by this date and returned to the address listed on the front of this application.
Please note the name of the institution, applicant's name, as well as the academic year must be stated on these documents in order for them to be considered as proof of enrollment.
SCHEDULE (and/or) GRADES AND A TUITION STATEMENT FROM EACH SEMESTER, FOR THAT ACADEMIC YEAR. Please make sure the number of credits are clearly stated on the schedule for that enrollment year.
ACADEMIC STATUS (UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT) FROM THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY VERIFYING THE ENROLLMENT YEAR, SEMESTER STATUS, AND NUMBER OF CREDITS TAKEN (OR IN PROGRESS). A TUITION STATEMENT FROM EACH SEMESTER SHOULD ALSO BE ATTACHED.
ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATION OF REGISTRAR FOR ACADEMIC YEAR. A tuition statement from each semester should be attached. Please fill out the following information below.
This is to certify
Enrolled at
Address
Enrolled in 1st year 2nd year 3rd year 4th year
Grad:
Signature of Registrar
(Seal)
Page 2 of 2

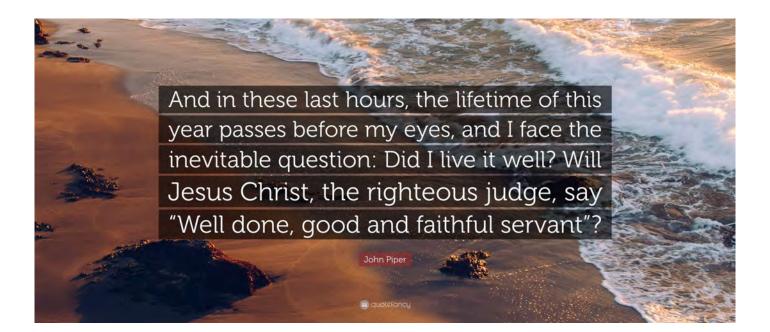
Welcome to Our New Members! (December 2022)

<u>District</u>	<u>Branch</u>	<u>Name</u>
1	72	Michael McDonald
1	72	Violet Ann Locks
5	116	Kristy Cryblski
5	116	Robert Patnesky
5	116	Robert Patnesky

Membership: Death Report November 2022

Anthony Zippitelli Michael Kristula Florence Kefor Mary Szczucki Regina Wolfe Karen Strycharz Christine Johnson John O'Malley

Autumn Beatty Ann Myers Edwin Brzezinski Carol Anton





Please note the academic year follows the school year, i.e.. 2022/2023

DECEMBER

START PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION PAPERWORK Download the application from the PNU website, https://www.pnu.org/index_27.htm

JANUARY – EARLY FEBRUARY GATHER ALL NECESSARY MATERIALS Class schedules/grades if available

Include information for both fall and spring semesters,

NUMBER OF CREDITS TAKEN FOR EACH SEMESTER MUST BE NOTED ON APPLICATION

Tuition statement for fall and spring semesters

Complete the entire application and sign

Deadline to submit is April 15th

MAIL THE APPLICATION ALONG WILL ALL THE DOCUMENTATION MENTIONED TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS **POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN APRIL 15TH**.**

EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMISSION OF THE PNU ATTN: MARY ANN STANKOWSKI 1006 PITTSTON AVENUE SCRANTON, PA 18505

MAY

EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMISSION COMMITTEE MEETS TO REVIEW APPLICATIONS

END OF MAY/EARLY JUNE

CHECKS WILL BE DISBURSED TO APPLICANTS

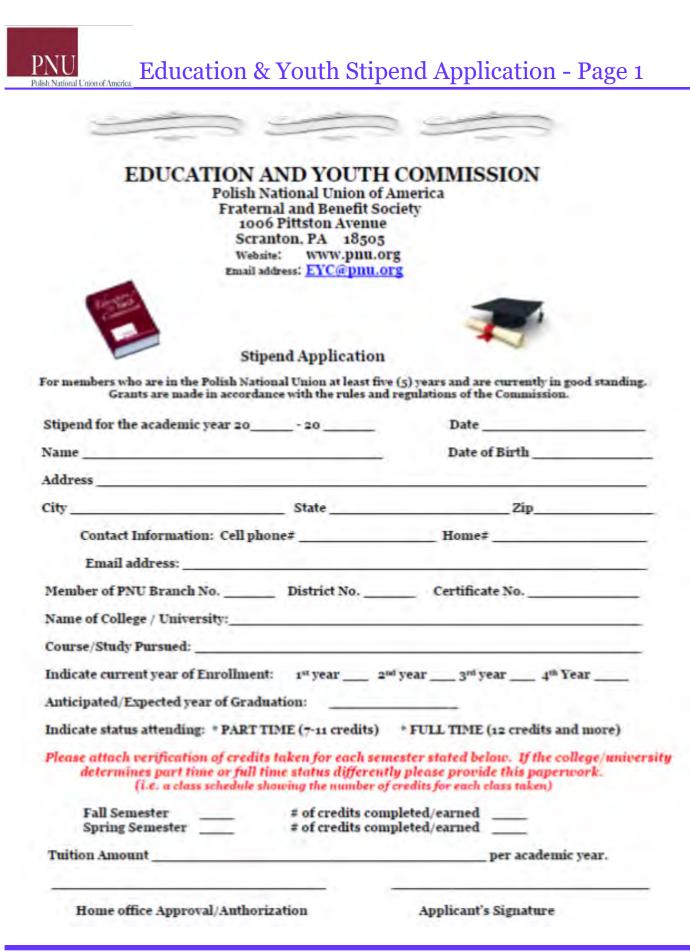
**PLEASE NOTE

NO APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED

IF POSTMARKED AFTER

APRIL 15TH OF THAT ACADEMIC CALENDAR YEAR.

Polish National Union of America



Education & Youth Stipend Application - Page 2

Education & Youth Stipend Application - Page 2
Constants
Stipend Application - continued
In order to process this application in its entirety, please choose from at least one of the following criteria listed below, to show the proper enrollment verification from the College or University.
THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ALL APPLICATIONS IS APRIL 15 ⁷⁰ , FOR THAT ACADEMIC YEAR. All applications must be either received or postmarked by this date and returned to the address listed on the front of this application.
Please note the name of the institution, applicant's name, as well as the academic year must be stated on these documents in order for them to be considered as proof of enrollment.
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ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATION OF REGISTRAR FOR ACADEMIC YEAR. A tuition statement from each semester should be attached. Please fill out the following information below.
This is to certify
Enrolled at
Address
Enrolled in 1st year 2nd year 3rd year 4th year
Signature of Registrar
(Seal)





The Polish American Congress Charitable Foundation is proud to announce that the 2023/2024 period to apply for scholarships begins on January 15, 2023.

We are again offering the Richard C. Gorecki Scholarships and the Majer & Lakowski Families Memorial Scholarships.

Please go to our website at www.paccf.org under the "scholarship" tab for the requirements, application and deadlines. If you have any questions, please email us at paccf@paccf.org. The Officers & Directors of PACCF

> Polish American Congress Charitable Foundation Website: <u>www.paccf.org</u> | Email: <u>paccf@paccf.org</u> | 773.763.9942 6645 North Oliphant Avenue, Suite A | Chicago, IL 60631 The PACCF is a 501(C) 3 Tax Exempt Organization.