



NCSS 104th Annual Conference
Boston | Nov 22–24, 2024

A Report from Polish Perspectives ACPC Booth 209 on International Alley of the National Conference for the Social Studies

Every year the National Conference for the Social Studies (NCSS), a convention for teachers of geography, history, government/civics, and economics is held in a different American city. This year the 104th Conference took place at the John B. Hynes Hall in the Prudential Convention Center in Boston, Massachusetts. This gathering is an opportunity for many educational institutions, publishers, countries and museums to reach out to the shapers of the minds of a new generation of Americans. There were representatives and displays from a multitude of organizations, teaching societies and schools. For many years now, the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) has been setting up a booth at this gathering to promote and share Polish history, culture and customs using the theme Polish Perspectives.

This year the individuals at the booth were: Tom Payne (Washington, DC), Honorary RP Consul Debbie Majka (Philadelphia, PA), and Lilia Kieltyka (Hartford, CT). The local host in Boston was Mark Szpak, president of the Polish Cultural Foundation. They were also joined by a re-enactor portraying General Casimir Pulaski. The Polish Perspectives booth was one of many that presented the constantly moving stream of several thousand teachers with published information, educational items, books and posters. In addition to answering questions there were printed materials given out in several categories.

1. the Colonial period - Polish settlers at Jamestown; Tadeusz Kosciuszko and Casimir Pulaski playing important roles in the American Revolution as generals in Washington's army
2. Polish scientists and engineers in the world - bridge builder Ralph Modjeski, Marie Sklodowska-Curie and others who advanced science and technology
3. Poland in World War II - books and brochures presenting the true story of the suffering and bravery of the Polish people and at home and the activities of their soldiers abroad during that turbulent period. This also included persons who fought against the Holocaust such as: Irena Sendler, Jan Karski and Witold Pilecki

4. The role of Pope John Paul II as a peacemaker in the world and his contribution to the defeat of totalitarian Soviet Communism

5. Polish history, customs and general cultural information about Poland - its people, cities and economy

Some of the visitors to the booth took the opportunity to taste Polish cookies and candy. Many had questions and carried away printed information to share with their students. "I didn't know that!" was a comment often heard. Others shared positive stories of their visits to Poland. There was hardly a dull moment as many stopped to have their photo taken with the uniformed Casimir Pulaski who never tired of telling about his involvement in the American Revolution. More than 300 colorful booklets with his biography were distributed.

The ACPC is most grateful to Cecilia and Ray Glembocki for preparing many of the posters and printed materials. Also, very helpful were books and items donated by Hippocrene Books and Aquila Polonica publishers. After this event we hope many of the teachers will access the ACPC's new website: www.polishcultureacpc.org to search for even more information.

Now that this year's NCSS conference is over, the ACPC is already making plans for attending the 2025 edition of the event and has already reserved a prominent place in International Alley at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, which will be held in Washington DC over December 5-7, 2025.

Photographs



(l. to r.) Mark Szpak, Debbie Majka and Tom Payne



(l. to r.) Tom Payne, Lilia Kieltyka and Casimir Pulaski



(l. to r.) Mark Szpak with a visitor



The Polish Perspectives Booth 209 – created by the ACPC



Polish Perspectives Booth on International Alley



(l. to r.) Mark Szpak and Debbie Majka with a visitor



Tom Payne at the Polish Perspectives Booth



(l. to r.) Rosie the Riveter meets Casimir Pulaski at the NCSS 2024

Cup with the logo of the "Poznan" Squadron 302 in the Battle of Britain



(l. to r.) Mark Szpak, Debbie Majka, Lilia Kieltyka, Casimir Pulaski and Tom Payne at the NCSS 2024



Casimir Pulaski in the Polish Perspectives Booth 209 at the NCSS 2024