



THE ADVOCATE

Newsletter of the Advocates Society,
an Association of Polish-American Attorneys



OFFICERS FOR 2021-22

Hon. Jonathan Clark Green
President

Audrey Cosgrove
1st Vice President

Allison R. Pawlicki
2nd Vice President

Christina N. Malecki
3rd Vice President

Ann L. Melichar
Treasurer

Joanna Pawlowska
Secretary

Eryk Wachnik
Historian

Board of Governors

The Management of this Society is vested in the Board of Governors, consisting of the Officers, Chairs of Standing Committees and Past Presidents. The Board shall advise, guide, direct and determine the overall policy of the Society.

New Officer Nominations!

In November, the Nomination Committee presented a report with officer nominees to the Board, and the Board accepted the nominees. Now the officer nominees will be presented at the General Meeting in December for vote and approval. Any competing nominations must be submitted in writing by 10 members in good standing at the December Board Meeting. New officers will be sworn in at the the Installation Dinner in in February 2022. Fingers crossed, an in-person installation dinner will be arranged. More details to follow.

Below are the names of the current nominees!

President: Audrey Cosgrove
First Vice President: Ann L. Melichar
Second Vice President: Christina N. Malecki
Third Vice President: Eryk Wachnik
Secretary: Kathy E. Bojczuk
Treasurer: Tom Nowinski
Historian: Julia Jensen Smolka



Calendar of Events

*December**

7th - Board Meeting; 6:30pm reception; 7pm meeting (zoom)

10th - CLE Program, "Rooting Out Racial Bias," the Advocates are co-sponsoring and the CLE is in conjunction with the ISBA/IJA Joint Midyear Meeting. (zoom)

17th - General Meeting, Holiday Party; 6:30pm Reception; 7pm Meeting (zoom)

18th - Maryville Crisis Nursery Wishlist Drive; 10am-12pm; Copernicus Center Parking Lot, 5216 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago (in person)

*January**

4th - Board Meeting
6:30pm reception
7pm meeting (zoom)

20th - General Meeting and CLE, 6:30pm reception; 7pm Meeting (zoom)

*February**

1st - Board Meeting
6:30pm reception
7pm meeting (zoom)

**Due to the Illinois mandates and Covid-19 precautions, all events will be held virtually, unless otherwise noted.*

Public Relations Committee:

Kathy E. Bojczuk, chair
Audrey Cosgrove
Pam Menaker
Julia Jensen Smolka
Joan Smuda

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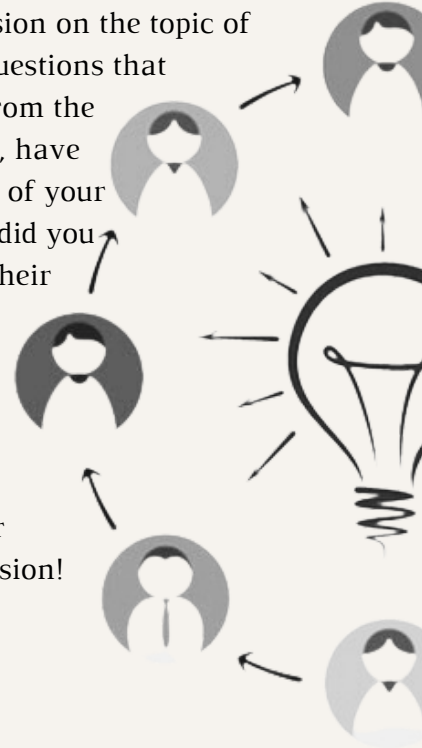
The Advocate is now scheduled to be published quarterly. Content, including news about members, can be emailed to Advocatessociety@gmail.com for publication consideration. The Public Relations Committee manages, edits, and coordinates the production of the newsletter.

Highlighted Event: Our 2021 Virtual Judge's Night



Our annual Judge's Night was presented virtually on October 26, 2021. **The Honorable Richard Ginkowski**, who is the host of ABA podcast "Gavel Talks" led a discussion on the topic of respect for lawyers and judges. He raised questions that provoked thoughtful and open responses from the attendees. For example, he asked the group, have you ever felt discriminated against because of your ancestry? How did it make you feel? What did you do about it? Many of the attendees shared their personal stories and some commented that they had no idea that other races and ethnicities had experiences similar to their own.

We are so thankful to Judge Ginkowski for creating such a lively and insightful discussion!



The Advocates Membership Committee Needs YOU!

We need members for this important committee to help recruit, assist and maintain contact information for members. Please consider volunteering by sending an email to **Joan Smuda** at jsmuda@yahoo.com.

Specifically, we would like members to volunteer to be a New Member Buddy. We will assign a recently admitted member to you. You will reach out and introduce yourself, make sure that the newer member knows how to access Zoom meetings, meet them in person at the first opportunity and do anything else that you feel appropriate to make them welcome.

Thank you for your consideration!



Advocate SPOTLIGHT: Katherine Levine

To get readers better acquainted with the Members of the Advocate Society, we spotlight a Member in each issues. This winter's issue, we feature a Question and Answer with Katherine Levine, who is in private practice and Chair of the Advocates Society Amicus Poloniae Clinic Support Committee.

Why are you a member of the Advocates Society?

The Advocates Society gives me the opportunity to volunteer at the Amicus Poloniae Clinic, access to professional and personal networking and mentor young lawyers and law students.

The Amicus Poloniae Clinic is a way for me to connect with and help the local Polish community. Oftentimes people who come to the legal clinic, do not speak English, and do not know the legal system and do not have the resources to hire an attorney. Volunteering makes me "feel good" and provides a sense of satisfaction. As lawyers, we tend to overthink and stress out over our cases. Volunteering takes me away from work and provides some "personal" time.

Having the opportunity to meet fellow attorneys (i.e., like-minded colleagues who understand our daily challenges we face as lawyers) it is comforting, uplifting and often leads to friendships. Moreover, membership at the Advocates Society provides me with a platform for mutual source of exchanging ideas and resources. I enjoy attending the Advocate Society's Special Events (Judges' Nights, Installation Dinners, Polish Constitution Day parade, etc.) Again, for me this is an opportunity to socialize, get out and meet fellow attorneys and "me time" away from work. Lastly, the Advocates Society enables me to help, mentor or be a resource for young lawyers and law students.



Give us an example of how being a member of the Advocates Society empowered you as an attorney.

The organization helped me grow professionally through the exchange of ideas and experiences with fellow attorneys. Whether discussing current cases, interactions with clients or managing our law practices, all the attorneys of the Advocates Society share similar experiences. These shared experiences create a sense of comradery and belonging. I also enjoy the CLE programs, which are great tools to stay sharp and current with legal education.

What are you most looking forward to most in the coming year, personally and professionally?

I am looking forward to the end of this COVID-19 way of life and getting back to "normal." I am looking resuming Advocates Society's in-person events, being able to see my friends and colleagues in person more often, whether in court or otherwise, and doing more in-person trials.

Personally, in the upcoming year, I am looking forward to spending more time with my 3-year old daughter and improving my work-life balance. Finding ways to be more efficient at work AND spending more time with my family is my goal.

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

I was a Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps. I served on active duty for 4 years in the U.S. and abroad. I was a Cook County Assistant State's attorney from 2008 to 2015 (plus 2 years of 711 during law school). I am bilingual, fluent in English and Polish. Last but not least, I love what I do; I love being an attorney and being a mom!

Attorney Katherine Levine can be reached by email kl@fisherlevinelaw.com or by telephone (312) 372-8888.

Judge's Corner: The Honorable Diane Pezanoski

To get readers better acquainted with the judges who support the Advocates Society, we have launched a special section in the newsletter to honor those amazing judges. Here is what Judge Pezanoski shared with us.

Judge Pezanoski, for those who are not known to you, please introduce yourself.

I was sworn in as an Associate Judge on January 6, 2020. I spent the first 22 months as a judge in the Traffic Division, working under the excellent leadership of our esteemed Advocates' member, Acting Presiding Judge Diann Marsalek. As of November 1, 2021, I have been assigned to the Child Protection Division, where I am excited to continue my judicial career.

Prior to becoming a judge, I spent 31 years in various positions with the City of Chicago Law Department. For the last nineteen years at the City, I was the Deputy Corporation Counsel of the Aviation, Environmental, Regulatory and Contracts Division. I started my legal career at Freeborn & Peters, where I worked for three years as a litigation associate. I graduated from Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law in 1985.

What do you love about your job?

What I enjoy most about being a judge is the public service aspect. Judges must place ego aside and be the face of justice to those who appear before them. It is especially rewarding to handle cases involving self-represented litigants (SRLs). I work hard to try to be competent at explaining the law and legal procedures to SRLs, and putting people at ease in the courtroom.

I also love the law, especially researching and learning new areas and new issues. Being a judge, no matter where one is assigned, provides endless learning opportunities.

What do you miss about being a lawyer?

I miss working with my former colleagues at the City of Chicago Law Department, who are outstanding lawyers and wonderful people. Otherwise, as a judge, I continue to do what I loved doing best as a lawyer – researching the law, analyzing the issues, and engaging in legal writing. It has been a seamless transition for me.

Did you have mentors as an attorney or a judge? What is the most valuable lesson(s) you learned from your mentor(s)?

Yes, I had so many role models and mentors as an attorney, starting with my early years in private practice, and especially in my decades at the City of Chicago Law Department. Some of my best mentors at the City left there to join the bench, so they gave me great advice on how to achieve that goal. They also underscored the importance of hard work and preparation. The best attorneys leave no stones unturned, knowing the facts and the law of their cases in depth.



Judge's Corner: The Honorable Diane Pezanoski (continued)

Do you have any advice for attorneys trying to become a judge?

First and foremost, work hard at being the best lawyer you can be, and always conduct yourself with civility in your dealings with judges, colleagues, and adversaries. You will develop a reputation for competence and integrity that will form a solid base from which you can then pursue a judicial career.

Second, join bar associations and become actively involved in at least one of them, including participation on a Judicial Evaluation Committee, which will give you an inside view of the process. Third, make sure to get at least some trial experience, which can be in State and/or Federal courts, and/or administrative tribunals, and keep records of your legal experience (trials, appeals, significant motions, etc.) and adversaries.

Start early and, above all else, be persistent. The road to the bench can be long and winding, so work on eliminating any weaknesses, and enhancing your strengths, and keep at it.


Do you have any advice for lawyers to improve in court?

Do your homework – know the law, read the relevant statutes and cases, and make the best arguments on your client's behalf, clearly and concisely, and well-supported by the law. That is your job. Always remember to address the judge, not your adversaries, when appearing in court. And posture – standing tall, with your shoulders back and head held high – goes a long way to conveying a sense of confidence in your arguments.

I am very proud of my Polish heritage. I grew up as one of nine children, the oldest of eight girls, in a working-class Polish Catholic family in Racine, Wisconsin. I was the first in my family to go to college, and I am so appreciative of the Polish National Alliance Scholarship I received that helped me pay for tuition. I was very close to my Polish grandparents, on my Father's side, learning to make, among other things, pierogi and kielbasa with my Grandma. My favorite part of my Polish upbringing was dancing with a folklore dance group throughout high school, and with the Syrena Polish Dancers while in college at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. My grandparents and great-grandparents came to this country in the early 1900s, leaving everything behind, and starting life here working in the coal mines of Pennsylvania, and eventually working their way to the Midwest Polish communities in Milwaukee and Racine.

My involvement with the Advocates and Polonia has helped me keep a strong connection to my Polish heritage, and become acquainted with the Polish community in Chicago. Through the Advocates, I was able to volunteer at the Amicus Poloniae Legal Clinic, a longstanding and excellent clinic that provides free legal services to mostly Polish-speaking clientele. Volunteering there has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my entire legal career. I urge any lawyers to participate at the once-a-month clinic, along with any Polish speakers who can help translate.





Second Annual Maryville Crisis Nursery Wishlist Drive

We are having our second annual Maryville Crisis Nursery Wishlist Drive from December 13 to 18, 2021.

You are welcome to drop off gifts in person to Attorney Julie Smolka's attention at DiMonte & Lizak, 216 W. Higgins Ave., Park Ridge, Illinois, from Monday, December 13th to Friday, December 17th, during standard business hours. Alternatively, you may drop off gifts at the Copernicus Center parking lot, 5216 W Lawrence Ave, Chicago, Illinois on Saturday, December 18th, from 11am to 12pm.

Please visit the Maryville website, <https://www.maryvilleacademy.org/crisis-nursery-wish-list/>, for more information and instructions on donating directly through Amazon.

Fun Polish Facts

If you ever visit the palace of Versailles in Paris, you will find a painting of Maria Leszczyńska (a.k.a. Marie Leczinska). She was a Polish princess and Queen consort of France from 1725 until 1768 by marriage to Louis XV. Queen Marie was daughter of King Stanislaus I of Poland and Catherine Opalińska, and her 42-year service was the longest of any queen in French history.

Although Queen Marie was not initially respected by the royal court, as she was not French-born, she won the country's heart and maintained the role and reputation of a simple, dignified Catholic queen. She functioned as an example of Catholic piety and was famed for her generosity to the poor and needy through her philanthropy, which made her very popular among the public her entire life as queen.

Cheers to brilliant Polish women in history!

Committee Selections

The Board will soon be making selections to the 2022-23 committees.

Much of the Advocates Society's work on behalf of its members is carried out by its substantive working committees. These committees provide information, continuing legal education, and a way to get involved with the organization and with other Advocates.

The 2022-23 year begins with the Installation Dinner in February 2022.

Please visit our website, www.advocatessociety.com, for a complete list of committees and their scope statements.





In Memoriam

In October, we announced with a heavy heart the passing of the wife of one of our great Advocacy Society leaders, Judge Michael Chmiel of McHenry County. Judge Chmiel's wife, Marie Chmiel, passed away after a brave battle with cancer. All our thoughts and prayers are with Judge Chmiel and his family during this difficult time. Marie was a great supporter of the Advocates, as well, and joined us over the years for a number of our functions with her family.

Amicus Poloniae Legal Clinic

Volunteers (attorneys and Polish translators) are needed for the next Amicus Poloniae Legal Clinic Session on **Saturday, December 18, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**, in-person at the Polish National Alliance (6100 N. Cicero Ave., Chicago), via Zoom, or even by being "on call" for that time period if someone from your specific legal field is needed. Those interested in volunteering should contact us at Advocatessociety@gmail.com, and we will make sure you receive a CVLS volunteer registration form to fill out prior to the next session so you are all set for this session and those for the rest of the year. CVLS provides legal liability coverage for registered volunteers.

Our New Website is here!

Please take a few minutes to visit our new website for more information, to make a donation or become a member.

www.advocatessociety.com



Merry Christmas!

FROM THE ADVOCATES SOCIETY

The next deadline for newsletter submissions is February 15, 2022. Please send email items to Advocatessociety@gmail.com. Articles should be in Word format and pictures in jpeg format. Permission to publish as received or edited is assumed when emailed. Any announcements such as job promotions, awards received or personal achievements, may also be submitted.