



2026 Estelle Wachtel-Torres, MD Adult Literary Competition

Contest Rules:

1. Open to all Michigan residents at least 18 years.
2. Entries must be short stories, poems, essays, or graphic novels. All entries must be original, never have been published or received an award in any other competition. All entries will be judged together regardless of form. Judged by panel on creativity, grammar, and following rules.
3. Submit only one original literary work. No Artificial Intelligence (AI) is permitted.
4. Entries must be in English, 1000 - 1500 words, typed, and double spaced.
5. **2026 Theme: Historical fiction based on the life of an influential Polish American:**
 - See page 2 for list of famous Polish American people
 - Submissions will be judged on creativity and basis in historical facts. For more info: <https://celadonbooks.com/what-is-historical-fiction/>
 - Examples of historical fiction titles: *"An account of living with Tamara de Lempicka."* *"Ignacy Jan Paderewski and how I inspired one of his works."* *"I was with Zbigniew Brzezinski when he helped broker the Camp David Accords."*
6. Place your name ONLY on the entry form—not on the literary submission.
7. Send entries via both email and traditional mail:
 - Mail one copy of your literary work and the entry form to Pamela Saunders 4230 N. Fulton Place, Royal Oak, Michigan, 48073.
 - Email to info@friendsofpolishart.org with subject line: Polish Literary Competition Submission
8. **Contest runs May 1- August 15, 2026. Deadline for entries is August 15, 2026.**
Winners will be notified by mail by September 15, 2026, and announced at the October FPA General Membership Meeting.
9. FPA Literary Committee has full discretion to award the following prizes in the Estelle Wachtel-Torres, MD Literary Competition.
 - Grand Winner – \$500
 - 2nd Place – \$300
 - 3rd Place – \$200
 - Honorable Mention
10. Submission of works constitutes a copyright license to the Friends of Polish Art (FPA) to publish and/or reprint the winning works should FPA choose to do so without royalties or other compensation. By submitting the work, the entrants represent that they have the right to grant this license.
11. Excerpts or the entire work of winning projects may be published in the Friends of Polish Art newsletter and/or on the [Friends of Polish Art website](#).

Questions: Contact Pamela Saunders via email at pk Saunders1@msn.com with subject line: Polish Literary Competition.

2026 is the U.S. semi quincentennial. To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the 1776 signing of the Declaration of Independence, our contest theme showcases influential Polish American people.

You may choose another person of Polish descent who has made a substantial impact on United States politics, arts, culture, business, etc.

- **Military** – Tadeusz Kosciuszko, Casimir Pulaski, Matt Urban (Most decorated WWII veteran)
- **Actors** - John Krasinski, Kristen Bell (Detroit), Loretta Swit, Helena Modjeska, Christine Baranski
- **Film** - Joseph Kosinski, Roman Polański, Andrzej Krakowski
- **Sports** - Mike Krzyzewski (Duke basketball "Coach K"), Tara Lipinski (Gold Medal Olympic Figure Skater), Jane "Peaches" Barkowicz (Tennis - Detroit), Tom Paciorek (Baseball - Detroit), other inductees to the Polish-American Sports Hall of Fame.
- **Politics** - Marcy Kaptor (US Congress), Zbigniew Brzezinski (National Security Advisor), Lisa Murkowski (US Senate), Barbara Mikulski, John Dingell (Longest serving US Congressman)
- **Music** - Jack White (White Stripes - Detroit), Ray Manzarek (Doors), Pat Benatar, Bobby Vinton, Marcella Sembrich (soprano), Ignacy Jan Paderewski (Pianist/Composer)
- **Inventors** - Steve Wozniak (Apple Computers), Stephanie Kwolek (invented Kevlar), Henryk Magnuski (walkie-talkie), Jan Czochralski (developed the Czochralski method for growing single crystals, which is essential for manufacturing semiconductor wafers in all modern electronics), Ralph Modjeski (Engineer -bridges)
- **Artist/Culture** - Tamara de Lempicka (Painter), Dennis Orlovski (Painter - Detroit), Marcia Lewandowski (Activist - Folk - Detroit), Stephen Paul Mizwa (Kosciuszko Foundation)
- **Activist** - Mary Zuk (in 1935 organized a massive strike against high meat prices during the Great Depression)

Wikipedia List:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Polish_Americans#:~:text=Peter%20Falk%20\(1927%E2%80%932011\),%2C%20actress;%20Polish%20maternal%20grandmother](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Polish_Americans#:~:text=Peter%20Falk%20(1927%E2%80%932011),%2C%20actress;%20Polish%20maternal%20grandmother)