



## POLISH-AMERICAN SOCIETY

[www.pasofmemphis.com](http://www.pasofmemphis.com)

P.O. Box 770927  
Memphis, TN 38177-0927



September 15, 2013

Mr. James L. Holt  
President and CEO of Memphis in May International Festival, Inc.  
56 S. Front Street, Memphis, TN 38103

Dear Mr. Holt,

On behalf of the Polish-American community in Memphis Metropolitan Area I am asking you to kindly consider Poland as a theme country for the 2015 edition of the Memphis in May International Festival.

About 200 families of Polish origin live currently in the Memphis area. Many of them are immigrants who came to the U.S. during the 1980's, the times when martial law was introduced by the Polish communist regime in order to put an end to the Solidarity opposition. However, the movement was not suppressed and in 1989 the communist government ceased to exist. This unprecedented historical event set an example for other countries creating a domino effect and finally led to the fall of communism in the Soviet Union.

Poland is now an important member of the European Union and NATO and one of only a few in Europe who evaded the recent economic recession.

Poland played a significant role many a time in the history. On September 11, 1683 near Vienna Polish King Jan Sobieski led Europe's forces of 80,000 against the Ottoman Empire army of 300,000 and stopped their invasion of the European continent. The September 11 date became a symbol and in 2001 was chosen by Al-Qaeda to avenge the 1683 Ottoman defeat. In 1920 Polish Army stopped the Red Army in their attempt to spread communism in West Europe. Polish generals, Casimir Pulaski and Tadeus Kosciuszko, became heroes in the American Revolutionary War. In the recent years Polish and American troops fought side by side in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Polish-American community of Memphis is very active in promoting solidarity values, cultural heritage and international friendship. We are proud of our Nicolas Copernicus School of Polish Culture and Language, we take part in multinational events such as Germantown International Festival and sponsor Polish-American artists. We have strong ties with the Embassy of Poland in Washington D.C. who is willing to endorse our request to consider Poland in the 2015 MIM Festival and support our future participation if such an opportunity occurs.

Again, we kindly ask you to consider our proposal.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jacek Konrad Dutkiewicz,  
President of the Polish-American Society of Memphis