

# Summer English language and American culture immersion program

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In 2014 St. Mary Magdalene High School in Poznań held a very exceptional event – namely, a concert and auction organized with a view to raising funds for a student suffering from cancer. During the charity action one could bid for items created by teachers and students, such as paintings, books, icons and other valuable works of art. The action went off very successfully and resulted in raising an unexpectedly high amount, which was earmarked for the treatment, hospitalization and rehabilitation of a St. Mary Magdalene student. This charitable initiative equally fortunately translated into establishing cooperation with an American organization WIESCO (Wisconsin International Educational Scientific Cultural Organization), whose representative – Robert Pine – visited our school. And thus a noble act of altruism bore fruit in the shape of the summer program aimed at learning the English language and studying American culture during lessons delivered by volunteers who arrived at our school from the USA.

WIESCO is a non-profit organization set up in 1994 with the view to promoting cooperation with the countries from outside North America and building a world community by teaching the English language and popularizing American culture. WIESCO volunteers act as ambassadors of American ideals, run summer camps and language programs as well as visit schools in various corners of the world (so far – until the end of the year 2019 – they have worked with over 25 thousand students in Armenia, Brazil, Lithuania, Latvia, Macedonia, Russia and Poland). Their primary goal is practical teaching of English by engaging program participants in interactive lessons, discussions as well as afternoon activities and sports competitions, during which students become acquainted with American culture, history and lifestyle. Essentially the instructors conducting classes

are representatives of various backgrounds and professions, who share both their work experience and knowledge stemming from their multiple passions and interests, and thereby may constitute an inspiration for young people and open up their prospects for diverse career paths.

Having entered into contact with WIESCO, we initiated talks about the form of our cooperation. We agreed that our priority would be enabling learners to develop and improve communication skills, acquire language competencies and abilities to speak fluently, as well as provide them with intensive contact with natural language.

### **About beginnings of cooperation**

The first program addressed to the students of St. Mary Magdalene High School in Poznań took place from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2015. It was like an experimental equation with many unknown variables. At our invitation, three volunteers came from the United States: an experienced teacher with long employment period Carol Wieneke, a student of health sciences and an enthusiast of archeology Marissa Barista, and an entrepreneur Robert Pine, acting as the program director. On our part the program was attended by 34 students divided into three homerooms. Classes were held for five days, from Monday to Friday, and they included, among others, such topics as: "American Football and Baseball and Their Impact on American English"; "Poles in Chicago"; "The Sounds of American English... From Hills to Valleys, from Borough to Bayou"; "Poe's *The Raven* for Accent, Stress and Discussion"; "History of Shoes"; "Cartooning - Finishing the Joke"; "Burma Shave Ads"; "Epitaphs & Obituaries... History, Humor and Creating Your Own"; "Sympathetic Mourners & Words in George Washington"; "Development and Preparation of Fairy Tale Script".

A lot of topics were illustrated by presentations featuring facts and tidbits of information concerning e.g. the most renowned American cities, favorite dishes of Americans, holidays celebrated in the USA. Having familiarized themselves with them, the students took quizzes. Marissa, being keen on theater, conducted lessons on drama which consisted in students performing theatre scenes and comic skits. The students genuinely valued these lessons due to a vibrant personality of the instructor, her innovative approach to teaching and charisma. Marissa - as an African American - was particularly concerned with the issues pertaining to equality and respect for civil rights, hence during classes she talked about her experience of living in a multicultural country, whose inherent class and national diversity can be both a blessing and curse. In order to stress the gravity of the problem, Marissa organized a debate on discrimination and racial tensions, during which students presented arguments, justified their views and responded with counterarguments to their opponents' standpoint. It was a great opportunity to master the art of skillful participation

in substantive discussion, whereby the benefits arising from the necessity to provide arguments in English and effectively answer the adversary's argumentation constituted the added value of this task.

One of the biggest challenges for the program participants was to deal with various dialects and accents. Each of the instructors conducting classes had a slightly different pronunciation and way of articulating sounds, which initially made it difficult to understand and decipher the message. However, everyday exposure to diverse varieties of enunciation enabled the students to gradually get accustomed to characteristic pronunciation of individual instructors and to become capable of effectively communicating with them, even when listening to the speech uttered at the natural pace and with American accent.

### **About expanding on subject area and range of classes**

Following the successful execution of the first program and the feedback from the participants and their parents, the next school year commenced with preparations for the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Drawing on the obtained experience, we decided to extend the program to 7 days, enrich the substantive scope with methodology workshops for English teachers, and also widen the target audience to incorporate the teachers of subjects other than English. Ultimately, the program was scheduled from 30<sup>th</sup> June to 8<sup>th</sup> July 2016. This time as many as eight instructors, representing various jobs and occupations, came from the USA: the above-mentioned program director – Robert Pine, an accountant Maggie Burmeister, a romanist living and working as a French teacher in Singapore – Christina Popowski, a teacher and community activist Patricia Schnack, a lawyer and internal audit director Anthony Minakowski, court administrator Peter Lally, and two students – Aspen Popowski and Rebecca Schnack, who played a role of teacher assistants and helped students do the English language exercises. The program was attended by 60 students divided into 4 homerooms, eight English teachers took part in methodology workshops and a group of five teachers of various subjects: mathematics, French, physical education participated in conversational English classes.

The four instructors conducted classes for students by rotation so that each participant could experience original topics and familiarize themselves with different dialects and accents. Hence, Maggie dealt with the following subject area: “U.S. Political System & Constitution”, “Visiting the U.S. – National Parks”, “U.S. Civil War – Causes and geography of 1860s”, “Baseball – How to play the game and its influence on American society”, “Chicago – *Little Poland*”; Christina presented such topics as: “U.S. Electoral Process and Presidential Debate”, “Dr. Martin Luther King and Discrimination”, “Thanksgiving and Other American Holidays”, “English Vocabulary and Pronunciation through Poetry”, “A Day in the Life of an American Teenager”;

then the matters raised by Peter included: "Jurisprudence: American and Polish Legal Systems", "History of Immigration", "Effective Communication in Today's World", "Famous American Cities and Their Local Cuisines", "Essentials of Men's and Women's Lacrosse"; Anthony touched upon such issues as: "Relationships between the American and Polish Economies", "Polish Heroes in the American Revolution", "History of the Chesapeake Bay Area and Seafood Gravlax", "The Life of a Junior and Senior at Loyola Blakefield High School".

### **About teaching methods applied by volunteers**

Thanks to a wide array of topics, students could get acquainted with facts and trivia relating to American history, politics, culture, geography, diet and sport, delivered in a familiar style, frequently tinged with humor, without mundane work with textbooks or mechanical performance of exercises. To illustrate the methods of working with students, it suffices to invoke the lessons conducted by Christina. When introducing the rules governing presidential elections in the USA and explaining the role of electors, she used a presentation which neatly and clearly featured complexities of the American political system. The use of visual aids made classes more attractive, and by appealing to the imagination of young people, the teacher made it easy for them to understand, acquire and commit this knowledge to memory. Once the students learned about the model of elections, they simulated voting for presidential candidates running for office in 2016, but the result was quite the opposite of the actual distribution of electoral votes. Had the elections been held in Poznań in July 2016, it would have been Hillary Clinton who would have won rather than Donald Trump, who – as everybody knows – gained greater support in real elections which took place in November 2016 in the USA. When discussing the everyday life and eating habits of American teenagers, Christina fetched to the class jam and peanut butter, which she had brought from the United States, for the students to make sandwiches and use their own judgement to find out whether such a combination, unusual for the Europeans, is tasty or if it diverges from our tastes.

Another exemplification of the teaching methods may be preparation of the dish called gravlax. While discussing the rich diversity of American cuisine and dishes originating from various countries, Anthony, who despite following a respectable profession of a lawyer and internal auditor was also a real gourmet and an excellent cook, made gravlax with students. This is a traditional Scandinavian dish, which has caught on in America and is especially popular in the Chesapeake Bay region of the USA. It is made from a raw salmon marinated in salt, seasoned with sugar and dill.

The classes devoted to cooking were preceded by a trip, together with the instructor, to a local shop to purchase necessary ingredients. At first

Anthony talked about history and origin of the dish, and then students, divided into smaller teams, prepared the marinade and spread salmon fillets with the mixture of herbs, covering everything with salt and leaving it in the fridge for two days. During the next classes, they all sliced the salmon into thin pieces and ate it with crackers or crispbread. Some students approached the tasting skeptically, mistrusting that the salmon was adequately cured, but seeing others relishing the self-prepared dish, they did not regret their decision and sampled this snack, which is so little known in Poland. While they were working cooperatively as well as eating together, the air was filled with laughter and conversations. Not only did the students have good fun but also learned the vocabulary connected with food, recipes and cooking, plus they had to communicate in English.

Anthony introduced yet another project, which was his brainchild initiated almost half a year in advance. Having graduated from a Catholic Loyola University, he suggested establishing cooperation between St. Mary Magdalene High School, which was historically run by the Jesuit order, and a Jesuit Loyola Blakefield High School in Maryland. He asked our students to record questions addressed to their American peers and to send him a film. In turn the Loyola Blakefield students supplemented the film with the answers regarding their interests, plans for the future, education system and everyday life in the United States. Once he arrived at our school, Anthony played the video footage and this time recorded our students answering the questions asked by the American teenagers. Seeing the effects of their work and feedback received from the American peers, the program participants felt a sense of satisfaction and discovered that their actions were purposeful. It turned out that, despite a long distance, cultural differences and language barriers dividing them, young people have very similar goals, plans and dreams, and the English language constitutes a universal medium facilitating communication, integration and cooperation between them.

### **About teaching the teachers**

The novelty in the 2016 program was a 3-day methodology workshop for teachers of English, organized by Robert Pine, which was attended by five English teachers from our school and three from St. John Cantius High School no. 3 in Poznań. The main idea of the classes was to present and subsequently practice students-activating methods, broken down into two main streams – improvisational techniques as well as competitive games and activities. Improvisation revolved around the three themes: first, as linear exercises – e.g. creating a collective story by students, who take turns to add one word/sentence at a time so as to develop a consistent plot-line (*One Word at a Time / Chain Story*); second, in the form of interactive exercises – e.g. drawing an object on the board while being blindfolded,

by listening to and following the instructions given by another person (*Drawing Blindly*), or holding a conversation exclusively by formulating questions referring to the issue mentioned by an interlocutor who also uses only interrogatives (*Questioning Conversation*); third, by means of situational exercises – e.g. applying for a participation in the NASA space mission by justifying the usefulness of your randomly selected occupation for the success of the enterprise (*NASA Interview*), or applying for a particular job and taking part in an employment interview (*Job Interview*), or providing the voice over to a silent scene performed by other students acting impromptu, without prior preparation (*Foreign Film Dubbing*), and finally, developing a TV infomercial in which a company promotes its product, using sales pitches, by providing both the information and advice on some crucial community issues (*TV Infomercial*). On the other hand, competitive game exercises included: a duel of words in which a person from one team calls out an adjective, as an example, and the other team, depending on the preliminary agreements, must respond with its synonym or antonym, or alternatively form a derivative noun, within a set time period (*Call and Echo Duel*), or writing the biggest possible number of words belonging to a specific thematic category, without exceeding the time limit (*Categories of Things Competition*), or earning points for your team every time you correctly define a phrasal verb (*Phrasal Verb Ordeal*). By putting themselves in students' shoes, the English teachers had a chance to see for themselves if a given exercise would produce a desired effect and work out in a lesson situation, and were consequently able to judge the applicability of the suggested methods with respect to language teaching and education.

Yet another novum was the introduction of English classes for teachers. They were conducted by Patricia Schnack, well versed in adult education. To begin with, she introduced herself, openly talking about the details concerning her grown-up children, life experience, day-to-day living in the States and problems that ordinary Americans have to tackle. Her sincerity and straightforwardness made a positive impression on the Polish teachers. Teaching adults is relatively difficult, as they need more time to become accustomed and break the ice hindering them from speaking a foreign language. Patricia could masterfully conduct lessons, striking up a conversation independently and subsequently incorporating individual interlocutors to the discourse. When they encountered problems with adequate choice of proper words, she prompted them to use accurate expressions, tactfully corrected occurring errors and precisely explained collocations and lexical phrases matching a particular context. Her classes were primarily oriented towards communication and their chief objective was indeed the developing and mastering of speaking skills. The selection of topics was determined by students' needs and ranged from the issues associated with the family, travel and work, to such down-to-earth aspects as shopping or ordering food in a restaurant. What matters is that theory was translated

into practice. At the end of the meetings, the teachers would get outdoors with their instructor to do “field practice” so that they could use newly learnt lexical-grammatical structures in a specific situational context, e.g. in the nearby marketplace at Bernardyński Square while purchasing fruit, in a restaurant when ordering food, in the street whilst asking for or giving directions to a predetermined destination.

In subsequent years, classes for teachers were taken over by Robert Pine, who in turn specialized in leading discussions and telling anecdotes, due to which teachers had an opportunity to practice listening comprehension and engage in conversations. Additionally, he involved them in various language games, real-life situations and role-playing, which made it possible for them to effectively review newly acquired language structures. It is noteworthy that the composition of the adult group evolved year by year and the last program was also joined by university teachers.

### **About subsequent programs**

Between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 our school hosted four Americans – Karen Schaefer and Christina Popowski conducted lessons for 34 students divided into two homerooms, Robert Pine worked with six teachers, while a student Aspen Popowski assisted the instructors and cooperated with the youth. Each of the instructors employed their own characteristic teaching styles and techniques and pursued original ideas. Karen brought from the United States some gadgets, which she used as teaching aids to illustrate the meaning of idioms or as symbolic prizes given to students for a well done assignment. One of her classes was held in the assembly hall, where she distributed stations with miscellaneous attractions, including: lottery, whoopla and darts, brief exercises requiring general and linguistic knowledge, as well as games of physical skill and agility. Christina, on the other hand, advocated the use of modern technology during lessons and thus her classes abounded in multimedia presentations or *Kahoot* quizzes performed with the aid of an interactive board, web applications and mobile phones as educational tools. She also promoted the idea of inquiry-based learning, i.e. a teaching method based on search. Contrary to the traditional teacher-centered narrative style of instruction, this approach engages the student in the process of independently discovering the answers to nagging questions by investigating, deducing and solving problems. In practice this would boil down to confronting the program participants with new vocabulary whose meaning they had to guess on their own from context, or challenging them with tasks and problems to solve in groups, which required teamwork, or arousing their interest in a particular issue and holding open discussions. Christina acted as a guide, moderator and native speaker, accompanying young people in their exploration of the English language.

The 4<sup>th</sup> edition progressed according to similar, already tested formula of a five-day program between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> July 2018. This time our school was visited by a married couple – Arlene and Richard Eckert, who worked with two homerooms numbering 14 and 16 students, and Robert Pine, who continued lessons for six teachers. Arlene – an American literary historian by education – focused her classes on the language. She put emphasis on enriching vocabulary and developing the skill of reading comprehension, precise elocution and clear writing. With this end in view she brought from the United States authentic materials – newspapers and magazines – and the students were tasked with, for example, finding an interesting article and summarizing it in front of the class. Richard – an IT specialist by profession – dedicated some lessons to his passion, namely genealogy. He was eager to explain, by means of a presentation, his family history and the origin of his ancestors. For our students this was an eye-opening lesson of multiculturalism, showing how important it is for the Americans, being a relatively young nation, to investigate their roots and attempt to reconstruct their own identity. In order to facilitate comprehension of the idea of exploring family bonds, Richard clarified the rules of constructing a genealogical tree and asked students to compile their one family tree.

### **About how we combined a rest from studying with studying and rest**

Unlike the lessons taking place until lunchtime in classrooms with the division into groups, after 1:30 p.m. all students participated in extracurricular thematic activities, dedicated predominantly to learning a foreign language through play. Many of them had an inherent element of competition, which only raised the level of attractiveness and students' involvement in them. A good example of this type of activity is the so-called "Scavenger Hunt", i.e. a game in which participants, divided into teams, must accomplish a variety of tasks from the list and collect the designated items – an American coin with the smallest denomination, a cap with an English writing on it, a U.S. postage stamp, etc. – note that in this part the participants were allowed to collaborate with the instructors and ask for the sought-after items, which provided yet another opportunity to use the English language in a particular context. Many of the challenges to address were connected with language tasks and required e.g. explaining the meaning of idioms, providing antonyms to specific words, completing a nursery rhyme, defining rare words. Some questions tested the knowledge of history, geography and socio-political realities of the United States, and required the students to, for instance: name the current U.S. President and Vice-President or the four U.S. Presidents memorialized on Mount Rushmore; name the river that borders Illinois and Iowa, the ocean that borders California, the only four states whose corners touch at one point, the five Great Lakes; name the denomination of American currency where one will find the faces of



particular presidents; specify the number of inches in a yard, the number of feet in a mile, the number of acres in a hectare; convert centimeters into inches, kilometers into miles or degrees centigrade into Fahrenheit. In order to obtain correct answers and complete the task, the participants could ask the American instructors for clues, and so while engaging in some enjoyable activities, they could gain the knowledge that would additionally help them score points in the game.

Another form of the afternoon activities was sport, the so-called *Olympic Games*, which triggered social integration and healthy rivalry, and at the same time, enabled familiarization with a specific sports jargon and required assimilation of typical commands issued by the instructors.

Learning to play baseball met with a surprisingly warm reception. A few months before the first program commenced in 2015, the school had been sent a parcel from the USA with professional sports equipment – wooden bats, leather gloves and baseballs – which aroused interest and was a promise of the summertime highlight. To start with, the students were taught quite complicated rules of the game, and next practiced an appropriate way of pitching, battering and catching a ball, so as to finally proceed to play a full game. During training sessions the youth learned terminology typical of this discipline relating to baseball gear and the game itself. The vocabulary introduced in this way was further reviewed during a lesson whose topic was the influence of baseball, as the national sport of the USA, on the English language. The instructor accurately explained the origin of the idioms deriving from this sport, indicating how both life and language intertwine, and at the same time making the young learners aware of the issues involving linguistics and sociology.

Afternoon activities are further exemplified by a mock trial. This practical exercise was preceded by a lesson delivered for respective groups of students by the instructor – a lawyer, who presented a detailed overview of the judiciary in the United States and then encouraged young people to engage in the discussion aimed at comparing the legal system applicable in America and in Poland. That way the audience could practice the acquired vocabulary in a direct conversation. The mock trial itself took place on the assembly hall stage, in the arranged courtroom, with the use of props prepared by the participants in advance. The students had volunteered for the particular roles beforehand and then impersonated the judge, district attorney, defense counsel, defendant, relatives of the defendant, witnesses, clerk and bailiff maintaining order in the court. The remaining students were supposed to put themselves in the position of jury members, that is analyze the course of the court case by listening attentively to the charges, line of defense and testimonies of the witnesses. This was followed by the debate over the verdict to ultimately declare the defendant innocent or guilty. This exercise was a great way to test listening comprehension skills as well as the ability to infer from logical data analysis, connect related

facts, present conclusions and justify the decision taken – of course using the English language as a tool of communication. Eagerness with which the youth approached the accomplishment of the task proves that the best method of learning a foreign language is to immerse oneself in the realities of a given country and solve concrete problems, in other words purposeful communication.

The students participated in a number of different activities – e.g. in a talent contest they could show their singing, dancing, acting or athletic abilities, and were subsequently judged by the American “jurors”. What made the time after classes more attractive for students were, inter alia, short workshops on creating collages conducted by Carol, singing and dancing with Karen, debates with Marissa, a game of Scrabble with Maggie, an exhibition of drawings by Aspen.

One of the most interesting challenges was showing the Americans around the city of Poznań. Students were asked to devise the route of a guided tour for a particular instructor and prepare the information and fun facts about respective monuments. During a group walk the students took turns to present individual landmarks and talked about them in English, which was no mean feat as they had to apply specific vocabulary associated with history, architecture and art.

The students got on especially well with the youngest volunteers Aspen and Rebecca, whom they often invited at the end of the day to a rope park near Poznań, to a swimming pool or a cafe. When the youth found out that during the program in July 2016 Becca turned 18, they prepared a birthday cake for her and sang *Happy Birthday* in unison. Many of the friendships formed back then have endured and some participants still keep in touch with the Americans via social media.

### **About closing the program and bidding farewell to the volunteers**

The climax ending each program was the closing ceremony. In order to accentuate the richness and beauty of Polish culture, the ceremony was initiated with a traditional polonaise danced by the students who, having presented the prearranged and more sophisticated figures, invited the instructors, incorporating them to a procession and leading them around the assembly hall dancing. The artistic part was two-pronged and comprised group theater scenes, and individual performances of students and volunteers. During the program, each homeroom, which had an instructor acting as its leader assigned, prepared a short staging of a fairy tale, legend or skit. The team leader was responsible for allocation of roles, assistance in the rehearsals and content-related support, to make sure that the skits performed in English were not only amusing but also correct in terms of lexis and grammar. This constituted great language training and, at the same time, contributed to building the sense of togetherness, community

and responsibility for the net effect presented on the stage. Following the stage appearance of their trainees, the trainers in turn, much to the joy of the audience gathered in the assembly hall, read poems by Jan Brzechwa or Julian Tuwim, struggling with the tongue-twisting pronunciation of the Polish sounds, and all the same striving to render the message and interpretation of a given poem faithfully. The objective of this extraordinary task was to make students realize how daunting a task learning a foreign language is for every human, regardless of their age or education. Polish teachers taking part in the program also left their footprint on the stage, supporting in the background the recitation delivered by their instructor. Dressed up as Maciek, an ox and a beetle, they were enacting the content of a poem beginning with the words "In Szczebrzeszyn, a beetle buzzes in the reed ...".

Presentations of particular groups and recitations delivered by the instructors were interspersed with the students' artistic performances, which served as a nice surprise for the volunteers and a thank-you for their work. In order to show their talents and express gratitude to the volunteers for their arrival at our school, the students, over the course of the four program editions, performed Chopin's piano compositions, played the violin, flute and saxophone from classical music through to jazz, danced ballet, sang solo and in a duo. We could also admire a performance by a court dance group dressed in Baroque style costumes and witnessed a game of chess in which our student played blindfolded but, nonetheless, she won! On numerous occasions the Americans stressed a positive impression that our youth made on them with their multiple talents, broad knowledge, as well as diligence, creativity and enthusiasm.

The culminating point of the participation in a program was the issuing of certificates to the students by their instructors. Ultimately the students handed flowers and gifts to the American guests: a book about history of St. Mary Magdalene High School, a gorgeous album with the music and songs recorded by the "Marynka" students, drawings of the Poznań town hall or linen tote bags with the hand painted facade of the school building. We hope that these small keepsakes will remind our friends of the time spent on our school premises.

### **About a lesson of Polish-American friendship and lessons learned from the program**

An inconspicuous and yet meaningful symbol that marked our joint collaboration with WIESCO, was a miniscule metal pin with Polish and American flags, which was given to every participant of the first program at the initiatory meeting in July 2015. This simple gesture of presenting us at the very outset with the national colors of Poland and the United States

entwined together was like a good omen presaging a friendly atmosphere, mutual respect and fruitful cooperation.

A key asset of the program was learning a foreign language, discovering American culture and developing listening, reading and speaking skills by associating with native speakers of the English language under conditions akin to natural language acquisition. The immersion in the language and culture enabled the learners to assimilate the knowledge in an easy and pleasant way, appropriate for the circumstances of the program taking place during the summer period. During the four editions of the program we were accompanied by the committed volunteers, who travelled a long way with a view to sharing their language competencies and professional experience. It is thanks to their passion, work, engagement and readiness to cross remote continental borders, communicational language barriers and mental cultural differences, that the program participants could perfect their command of the English language, shape openness to other cultures, broaden thought horizons. Interestingly enough, the Americans themselves often emphasized how much they appreciate an abundance of Polish culture, the beauty of our landscape and the taste of traditional regional cuisine. Their delight at the Poznań old town, the gothic Cathedral on the Ostrów Tumski island, the Museum of the First Piasts on the Ostrów Lednicki island, organ concerts in the Fara Church, collections of the National Museum, the Palace in Rogalin, the Arboretum in Kórnik, the Castle in Gołuchów was a really elevating experience for us, demonstrating the virtues of our country from a different perspective.

Let the words of one student, who quoted a scene from his family life, serve as a conclusion of this humble attempt to describe the idea of the summer program. One evening – during the program – when asked by his parents if he could perform a favor for them, he mechanically replied: “Yes, I can”. He used an English phrase, he would normally apply in a conversation with the American teachers, which only proves how effectively he immersed himself in the English language and automatically shifted to communication in this register. These words – *nota bene* being, as it were, a paraphrase of the ex-President Barack Obama’s electoral slogan “Yes, We Can” – constitute the best summary of the program objectives and testify to the positive impact of the work done by the American volunteers on the Polish youth. In line with the cited motto – which aptly captures an American mentality manifesting itself in optimism, self-confidence and a friendly attitude to people – with a bit of goodwill, willingness to cooperate and cognitive curiosity, anything is possible!