Fronczak Room
"An Archive for Buffalo's Polonia"

The Fronczak Room was established through the efforts of Dr. Walter M. Drzewienieccki, Professor Emeritus and the then Director of the East European and Slavic Studies Program, and in cooperation with Dr. Lucien E. Palmieri, Director of the E. H. Butler Library. Dr. Stanislaw Dabrowski, professor of history, sorted the papers initially, and, commissioned in 1973 by the Polish Cultural Foundation of Buffalo, wrote a biography of Dr. Fronczak.* Sister Martin Joseph Jones, then Archivist of E. H. Butler Library, cataloged the collection according to archival standards. The Fronczak Room was officially dedicated on June 18, 1970 with the cutting of the white and red ribbons by Dr. Eugenia Fronczak-Bukowski and Dr. E. K. Fretwell, Jr., President of the College.

The Fronczak Family papers and memorabilia, donated by Dr. Fronczak’s daughter, Dr. Eugenia Fronczak-Bukowski, form the nucleus of the collection. Dr. Francis E. Fronczak, his daughter Eugenia, and her husband Edward, were all physicians. Dr. Fronczak’s singular life, his wholehearted dedication to his community and to humanity at large, make his collection, in particular, a unique resource for the study of local and Polish history.

The Fronczak Room Collections and Research Sources

- Dr. Francis E. Fronczak Collection
  - Documents - I. J. Paderewski Documents
  - Portraits - Relief Organizations
  - Correspondence - Polish National Committee, Paris
  - Orders and Decorations - Gen. Haller & Polish Blue Army
  - Uniform - Medical Brochures
  - Famous autographs - Polish Periodicals
- Dr. Walter Drzewienieccki Collection
  - E. European & Slavic Studies Program
  - Correspondence
  - Publications on Military History
  - Buffalo Clippings
  - Polish Cultural Foundation
  - Buffalo Scrapbooks
- Capt. Jacob F. Swist Collection
  - Documents on Polish repatriation from Germany
- Stanislaw Skrzypka Collection
  - Brochures from the war period
- Dr. Marek Zaleski Collection
  - Cassettes of Buffalo Solidarity radio program
- Col. Waldemar Czyz Collection
  - Polish Veterans' Periodicals
- Anniversary Books of Churches and Organizations

The biography is currently being edited for publication. A tax exempt donation for the publication of the biography and the preservation of the collection may be made to the "Friends of the Fronczak Room Fund" with the donor’s name inscribed on a plaque in the Fronczak Room. For information please call the Curator at 878-6208.

The Fronczak Room was established in honor of Dr. Francis E. Fronczak

- Physician
- Medical Researcher
- Reporter
- Legal Researcher
- Public Speaker
- Candidate for Political Office
- Health Commissioner
- Philanthropist
- Emissary to President Woodrow Wilson
- Leader of Buffalo and American Polonia
- Member of the National Committee in Paris
- Army Officer
- Freedom Fighter
- Humanitarian
- Delegate to International Medical Conferences
- Loyal Buffalonian
Dr. Francis E. Fronczak

Dr. Fronczak was born in Buffalo on September 20, 1874 of Polish immigrant parents and died on December 27, 1955. He was reared in a dual cultural environment. Upon graduation from Canisius College he studied medicine and law at the University of Buffalo and jurisprudence at the Jagiellonian University of Cracow, Poland.

Entering private practice as a physician at the age of 22, in the succeeding years he assumed various government medical positions, eventually being named Health Commissioner of the City of Buffalo, a post he held for 37 years. As a physician he advocated a law recognizing alcoholism as an illness, not a crime; he campaigned for the vaccination of children against smallpox; he recommended protective measures for people with communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis; he set sanitation standards for the community. He published and presented scores of papers on medicine. Dr. Fronczak was the official U. S. representative at many international congresses on medicine.

As a highly educated citizen of the community, Dr. Fronczak also took part in Polish community life by being a reporter for English language newspapers, and later, on the editorial staff of Polak w Ameryce. He was in demand as a speaker. As early as 1900 he represented his Alma Mater as a delegate to the 500th anniversary of the Jagiellonian University.

His acquaintance, and later, friendship with Maestro Paderewski, led to his deeper involvement in Polish matters. Dr. Fronczak took part in relief activities, directed by Mr. Paderewski, for Polish victims of war. He was asked to present a memorandum to President Woodrow Wilson for intervention on behalf of Poland’s independence. In 1918 Dr. Fronczak was appointed to the Polish National Committee in Paris as a representative of American Poles, and, as a Major in the American Medical Corps, he was responsible for the physical and moral wellbeing of the Polish Army in France. He fought in the trenches in Poland where he was wounded. After the end of the war he was part of the American Red Cross Mission doing relief work in Poland, and again after the Second World War as a Department of State officer for the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. For his services he received medals and decorations from the United States and many European Countries, including the Vatican.