

Stan Orlowski

(1920-2003)

Architect, community leader

Engineers and architects are lucky dreamers who can put their dreams in concrete forms.

Orlowski's speech to the Association of Polish Engineers in Canada

In 1980, the *Toronto Star* in its article "Our Fellow Canadians" named Stan Orlowski "one of Canada's leading architects," known for supervising "the biggest building program in Canadian history: Ontario's twenty-two community colleges with a hundred-six campuses for a total of over four billion dollars."

Born in Skarzysko, Poland, Stanislaw Orlowski was active as a scout at the age of eleven. Arrested in 1940 by the Soviet occupiers of his homeland, he was sentenced to ten years of hard labour in Siberia. Released under the Polish-Soviet agreement of 1941, he joined the Polish Army under General Anders and followed its combat trail through the Middle East to Italy, eventually fighting in the famous Battle of Monte Cassino. Having earned a Master of Science degree from the Leicester School of Architecture, he immigrated to Canada in 1952.

After a few years with several architectural firms in Toronto, he became chief architect of Ontario Ministry of Education and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. His key professional achievement was the design, construction and supervision of Ontario's Community Colleges (1967-86). Since 1967, he was also lecturing at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, then received the honorary title of visiting professor of architecture and delivered over thirty lectures internationally.

As a consultant, he conducted thirty-eight major research studies in education. One of his unique international projects was "Project School-to-School" to raise standards in education and build colleges in Bermuda and in St. Vincent. In 1974, he was Canada's delegate to the International Union of Architects' Conference organized by UNESCO in Berlin.

Deeply engaged in community activities, Orlowski held numerous responsible positions, among them that of president of the Polish Engineer Association in Canada, president of the Canadian Polish Congress (1986-90), chairman of the Free World Polonia Coordinating Council (1986-94), president of the Millenium Foundation (a charitable organization offering scholarships to Polish Canadian students.) He organized a committee of the Canadian Polish Congress to raise funds for the chair of Polish history at the University of Toronto. Active in the scout movement at the international level, he was head of the World Order of Boy Scouts.

Stan Orlowski was a member of the Royal Canadian Military Institute and Empire Club of Canada; fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada; honorary member of the Ontario Association of Architects.

Photos from top left clockwise:

• Stanislaw Orlowski • Sheridan College designed by S. Orlowski • Mr. and Mrs. Orlowski with J. David Gibbons, Premier of Bermuda, and his wife, 1981, the opening of Bermuda College / Photo - Bermuda Press Bureau • S. Orlowski, President of the Polonia of the World Council
Other photos - family archives

