

History and Administration

Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans' youngest son, Conkey Pate Whitehead, was born in Chattanooga, reared in Atlanta, and educated in local schools before matriculating at Yale University. He served as an officer of the Whitehead Realty Company and other family business enterprises. Influenced by the generous example of his parents, Conkey provided in his will for the creation of the Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation as a memorial to his mother. The Foundation was chartered in 1946.

The Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation is governed by a self-perpetuating board of trustees. The Foundation shares a common administrative arrangement with the Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation, the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation and the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation.

The Foundation does not make grants to individuals. Applications for individual scholarship aid should be made directly to educational institutions. All other correspondence, including inquiries from institutions eligible for Foundation support, should be directed to the President of the Foundation.



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Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation



Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation Inc.

50 Hurt Plaza, Suite 1200
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Tel: (404) 522-6755
Fax: (404) 522-7026
www.lpwhitehead.org

The Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation is a charity dedicated to the support of women in nine southeastern states. The Foundation devotes most of its resources to the Lettie Pate Whitehead scholarship program, which provides scholarship grants to schools and colleges for deserving female students. The Foundation also supports selected nursing homes and hospices in Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia serving the needs of elderly women.

Scholarship Program

Annual scholarship grants are made to accredited educational institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

In accordance with guidelines prescribed by the founder, the grantee institutions award scholarships on the basis of need to Christian women who reside in one of the specified states.

More than 200 institutions participate annually in the Lettie Pate Whitehead scholarship program.

Thousands of women receive financial assistance each year in individual amounts determined by the recipient institutions.

While most of the Lettie Pate Whitehead scholarships go toward undergraduate higher education, the Foundation maintains a special interest in health education. A significant number of its scholarship grants target the medical, nursing, and allied health fields.

“I want to thank the Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation for what it is providing for me and numerous other students: a chance to experience much needed relief from financial burdens along with hope to pursue our passion through education.”

– Scholarship Recipient

Lettie Pate Whitehead

Lettie Pate Whitehead was born Letitia Pate in Bedford County, Virginia, in 1872. She was educated at private schools in Bedford and Lynchburg. In 1895, she married Joseph Brown Whitehead, a young attorney, and they made their home in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Mr. and Mrs. Whitehead had two sons, Joseph B., Jr. and Conkey Pate.



In 1899, Mr. Whitehead and an associate approached The Coca-Cola Company with the idea of bottling Coca-Cola, a fountain beverage then growing in popularity in the South. The two entrepreneurs secured an exclusive contract to bottle and sell Coca-Cola throughout most of the United States. Mr. Whitehead and his family moved to Atlanta in 1903 to further develop the Coca-Cola bottling business. It prospered, and Mr. and Mrs. Whitehead quickly became business, church and civic leaders in Atlanta.

Mr. Whitehead died in 1906 at the age of 42. Mrs. Whitehead immediately assumed responsibility for the family's business affairs, overseeing not only the expansion of the Coca-Cola bottling business, but also the family's real estate investments. She served as Chairman of the Board of the Whitehead Holding Company and President of the Whitehead Realty Company. Mrs. Whitehead became one of the first women to serve on the board of directors of a major American corporation, serving as director of The Coca-Cola Company for almost twenty years beginning in 1934.

Seven years after Mr. Whitehead's death, Mrs. Whitehead married Colonel Arthur Kelly Evans, a retired Canadian army officer. She and Col. Evans made their principal residence in Hot Springs, Virginia, where she became active in cultural and civic affairs.

Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans felt a keen sense of duty to those in need. A gracious and generous woman, she contributed to numerous charities in Georgia and Virginia during her lifetime. She also served as a trustee of Emory University, Agnes Scott College, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond.

“I believe Mrs. Whitehead is a remarkable inspiration to young women in America and across the world. Her leadership qualities, generosity, and lifetime achievements are what I envision in a role model.”

– Scholarship Recipient

Her benevolence extended also to England and France. She made personal donations to the Queen's Fund for air raid victims, furnished ambulances for the French, and served on the board of the American Hospital in Paris.



Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans survived both of her sons and her second husband. Her oldest son, influenced by his mother's generosity, created the Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation as a memorial to his father. Before her death in 1953, she established the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation. Through the benevolence of those two foundations and the Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation, charitable institutions and individuals continue to benefit from the extraordinary legacy of Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans.