



Philanthropy

Our founders knew the importance of giving back to their communities, and the earliest chapters raised funds to support libraries. The benefits of literacy and education have always been a driving force for Pi Beta Phi.

Philanthropy: A Driving Force

From the beginning, the I.C.s were interested in altruistic work, and the founders knew the importance of giving back to their communities. “We, the I.C. Sorosis, deeming it necessary and well to assist in the relief of the poor and suffering.” At the 1910 Convention, D.C. Alpha **EMMA HARPER TURNER** proposed the establishment of a settlement school, now known as Arrowmont. This school would honor the twelve founders and would be established on the fiftieth anniversary of the Fraternity in 1917. The site chosen was the Appalachian Mountains,

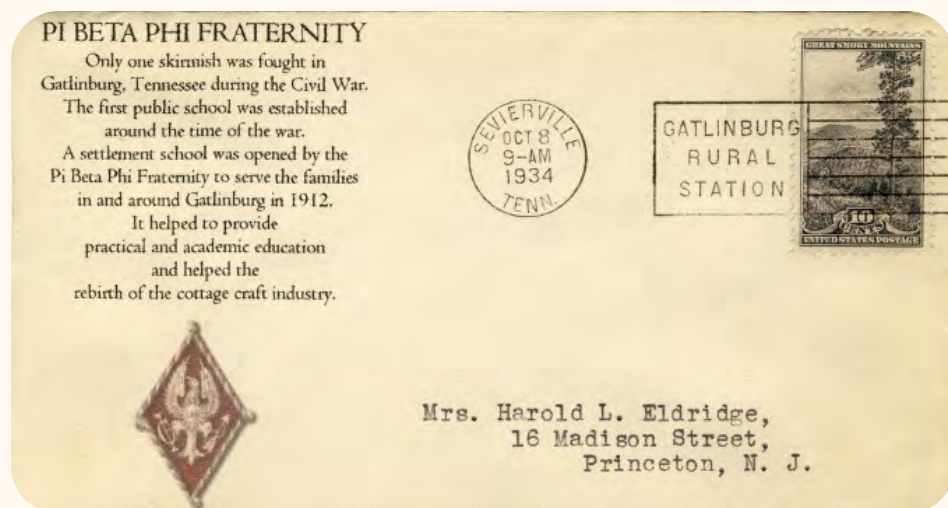
an area designated by the U.S. Bureau of Education at Washington as the most in need of education. Grand President **MAY LANSFIELD KELLER**, Maryland Alpha, visited Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and was adamant that the Fraternity needed to place its school there.

The spirit of helping others has survived through the years, and Pi Beta Phi demonstrated a devotion to this principle when Arrowcraft was established. The Settlement School not only provided much-needed

education for local children but also helped strengthen the Gatlinburg community by creating a market for handmade crafts such as baskets, woven goods and furniture. In 1922, the opening of the Jennie Nicol Memorial Hospital further expanded this impact, addressing medical needs and offering hygiene education to the community. For some of the students, the craft skills learned at the Settlement School meant relief from tending the crops and by 1935, weaving was the big industry of Gatlinburg.

In 1924, Grand Council and Settlement School Committee voted to secure and use a trademark for articles made at the School and Grand Council recommended a content for an appropriate trademark be started. The prize for the best design went to Wyoming Alpha **ALICE WALLACE WRIGHT**, who designed an arrowhead that was used as a basis for the Arrocraft Trademark. The Settlement School lives on today in both Pi Beta Phi Elementary School, which is part of Sevier County Public Schools, and the Arrowmont School for Arts and Crafts.

After World War II, Canadian Pi Phis felt that establishing a distinctly Canadian philanthropy would unify Pi Phis in Canada and would create favorable public relations. The Loan Fund was made available to the eight Canadian schools of



social work and put into place in 1954. At the 1967 Convention, Arrow in the Arctic was established to commemorate the dual centennials of both Canada and Pi Beta Phi. Money was sent to supply books to the libraries of the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The Canadian government supplied an adequate budget for

the purchase of books, but there was no money available for extras such as expensive reference volumes. In July, 1967, a check for \$1,000 was presented to the Commissioners of the Territories to be divided equally between the libraries. Today, Arrow in the Arctic continues to support libraries in the most remote parts of the far North.



Reading and Literacy Efforts

Most of Pi Beta Phi's philanthropic endeavors have focused on literacy and education. From expanding access to books in rural communities, to supporting families during and after times of war to strengthening libraries in Canada's northernmost regions, Pi Phis have always believed in the power of philanthropy. In 1990, Grand Council announced a new service project for clubs and chapters, Links to Literacy, joining several national groups to combat illiteracy, a critical problem in the United States. Champions

are Readers® (CAR), Pi Phi's own reading enrichment program, was adapted by the Links to Literacy committee in 2003 from a creative concept that originated with the Houston, Texas, Alumnae Club. The CAR program enables volunteers to offer a turnkey reading enrichment program to their own schools and communities during a designated month of the school year. The CAR program can be used for one classroom or several, once during the year or repeated in the school year and can also be implemented at after-care programs. An important feature of this program is the recognition of the importance that family members participate in a child's reading behavior and habits. It is also designed to be used by any size group of volunteers, and not all volunteers are required to be members of Pi Beta Phi. While CAR remains today, Links to Literacy evolved

over the years, and to better express the mission of the Fraternity, is now known as Read > Lead > Achieve®.

Read > Lead > Achieve is Pi Beta Phi's philanthropic effort, which seeks to inspire a lifelong love of reading that can unlock true potential by creating a more literate and productive society. The program encompasses all of Pi Beta Phi's reading initiatives, which include Arrow in the Arctic, CAR and Fraternity Day of Service. Alumnae clubs and chapters across North America celebrate Fraternity Day of Service on or around March 2 by participating in numerous reading activities across North America. Pi Beta Phi hosts a Fraternity Day of Service Signature event each year with a large-scale book distribution in cities across North America. In partnership with First Book®, the books and supplies

are provided to local schools, after-school programs and community programs serving students from low-income families and Title I schools. Pi Beta Phi Literacy Grants, previously known as FDS500 grants, became an extension of Fraternity Day of Service in 2014. Chapters and alumnae clubs can nominate local organizations and community partners for a \$2,000 grant to purchase new books and school supplies for children in need. Pi Beta Phi partners with First Book to distribute the grants in a form of a gift certificate to the First Book Marketplace, where recipients can make purchases based on the unique needs of the community they serve. Through their philanthropic efforts, Pi Phi have given away more than a million books and donated over a million dollars.



The Literacy Fund

The Literacy Fund at Pi Beta Phi Foundation plays a critical role in the success of Read > Lead > Achieve. Gifts to The Literacy Fund support all Pi Phi reading initiatives under Read > Lead > Achieve, including Champions are Readers, Arrow in the Arctic, Fraternity Day of Service, Pi Phi's First Book® Partnership and much more.

Additionally, the Foundation has the Local Impact Grants program, which provides a way for Pi Phis to support reading programs and access to books for children in their local communities. As chapters and clubs fundraise for The Literacy Fund, they can nominate an organization in their community to receive a Local Impact Grant from

our Foundation. The program allows chapters and clubs to direct 25% of their fundraising contributions to a literacy-focused nonprofit, matched dollar-for-dollar by a grant by our Foundation. In 2025, the Foundation reached a significant milestone, \$1 million donated in Local Impact Grants. ✨

