

To Become a P.E.O.

P.E.O. membership is by invitation, which is extended at the request of the local chapter. P.E.O. is not just another club, and the difference is clearly shown in the way we increase our membership. We do not merely add members. We choose sisters.

We are a faith-based organization that embraces a great diversity of talents, personalities and age groups, yet every member has a place in the Sisterhood. Each serves in her own way and, in the united effort, the Sisterhood is enriched and strengthened.

P.E.O. Membership

Membership in P.E.O. carries with it responsibilities beneficial to the members, local chapters and the Sisterhood. P.E.O. provides an opportunity to grow by accepting new challenges. Each member is expected to participate fully in the chapter's activities. A member may be asked to serve as an officer, to present a program, to participate in fundraising, to be a member of a committee or to serve as a hostess for a chapter meeting.

A member benefits from attending chapter meetings, for through this experience she will realize the full value of P.E.O. Even if a member is unable to fully participate in her local chapter, she can still support the work of the organization and its support of women's education by paying annual dues. To be considered an active member, annual dues must be paid to the member's local chapter by the end of February.

Members of P.E.O. affirm their belief in God and work together for the general improvement of themselves and society.

Benefits to Becoming a P.E.O.

The privilege of belonging to a respected, established women's organization with a multi-generational membership, where members:

- Participate in philanthropic outreach to positively impact women's lives in their community, state/province and worldwide
- Help to provide life-changing educational opportunities for women
- Are involved in opportunities for personal growth and developing leadership skills
- Share in fun and friendship with wonderful and diverse women
- Become part of a sisterhood, beyond their own chapter, which provides loving concern and support to all members



Guide for When You Are Invited



*Women Helping Women
Reach for the Stars*

P.E.O. came into being because seven young women wanted their friendship to deepen and endure throughout their lives. P.E.O. has grown in *members, strength* and *influence* since its founding in 1869. The idealism and loving spirit are just as relevant today as in the days of our Founders.

History of P.E.O.

P.E.O. is a sisterhood based upon the principles of friendship and loyalty. It began as a small society on the campus of Iowa Wesleyan University on January 21, 1869, but soon chose to go off campus and into a broader field of service.

P.E.O. has grown and changed over its more than 150 years, with chapters now located throughout the United States and Canada. At its inception, the Sisterhood took an active role in equal rights through the promotion of educational opportunities for women and continues to work through six educational philanthropies of the International Chapter. Although P.E.O. has neither political involvement nor religious affiliation, members are encouraged to act in accordance with their individual beliefs.

The P.E.O. Sisterhood

All P.E.O. chapters follow the same procedures for business meetings and the initiation of new members. Each meeting is opened with scripture, prayer and our Objects and Aims. Our emblem is the star. The marguerite is our flower and our colors are white and yellow.

Each member receives The P.E.O. Record, our bimonthly magazine. The P.E.O. website is www.peointernational.org.

P.E.O. friendship extends from chapter to chapter.

A procedure for transferring provides an opportunity for members to belong to other chapters if they change their residence, or if the time or day of the meeting at their current chapter prevents attendance on a regular basis.



P.E.O. Philanthropies

The P.E.O. Sisterhood supports the following women's college and five educational assistance programs:

Cotter College A nationally ranked, fully accredited, independent, liberal arts/sciences college for women located in Nevada, Missouri, has been owned/supported by P.E.O. since 1927 and offers baccalaureate and associate degrees in a variety of majors. Cotter College, a debt-free institution, welcomes women from around the world.

P.E.O. Educational Loan Fund (ELF) is a revolving loan fund established in 1907 to lend money to qualified women students to assist them in securing a higher education.

P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship Fund (IPS) was established in 1949 to provide scholarships for international women students to pursue graduate study in the United States and Canada.

P.E.O. Program for Continuing Education (PCE) was established in 1973 to provide need-based grants to women in the United States and Canada whose education has been interrupted and who find it necessary to return to school to support themselves and/or their families.

P.E.O. Scholar Awards (PSA) was established in 1991 to provide substantial merit-based awards for women of the United States and Canada who are pursuing a doctoral-level degree at an accredited college or university.

P.E.O. STAR Scholarship (STAR) was established in 2009 to provide scholarships for exceptional high school senior women to attend an accredited postsecondary educational institution in the United States or Canada in the next academic year.

The P.E.O. Mission Statement

P.E.O. is a philanthropic organization where women **celebrate** the advancement of women; **educate** women through scholarships, grants, awards, loans and stewardship of Cotter College; and **motivate** women to achieve their highest aspirations.