Chapter H Cottey Program 2018

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*This information was taken from the Cottey website. A bag with the numbered facts was passed around and each member took one to read in order once the first part of the program was over. You could have as many readers as you want in the first part.*

Reader 1:

Religion, education, and society were strong influences on Virginia Alice Cottey. She was born in a log cabin on a farm nine miles southeast of the village of Edina in Knox County, Missouri, on March 27, 1848. Her parents had followed many members of her mother’s family, the Eads, from Bracken County, Kentucky, to Missouri. At that time, the Southern Methodist Church was organizing congregations in the same area, and meetings were held in the Cottey home for many years. These meetings were a source of inspiration and fellowship for isolated farm families, and a strong influence on Virginia Alice Cottey.

Following the Civil War, Ira and Sara Cottey actively pursued advanced educations for their children. Alice, as her family called her, was an avid reader, and largely self-taught as there simply weren’t a lot of educational opportunities for girls, although because of her parents’ dedication, she had the chance to attend two boarding schools. A love of teaching and learning and the realization of this shortfall in society had a strong influence on her life.

Reader 2:

Upon the death of her father in 1883, Alice realized that if she planned to start her own school she had better hurry up because at the age of thirty-five, she thought that she would soon be considered an old woman. She spent the summer after Ira Cottey’s death at home, helping her mother and studying a book on the life of Mary Lyon and the process she went through to establish Mount Holyoke. With the encouragement of her sisters, Mary and Dora, and armed with $3,000 in savings, she took the plunge.

In search of a location, she wrote to Southern Methodist ministers across the state of Missouri. Dora was teaching in Dallas, and she wrote to friends in Texas. She received an encouraging letter from Reverend W.T. McClure in Nevada, Missouri. In November 1883, Dora and Alice visited and were very pleased with the city, especially the encouragement of Reverend McClure and Mr. Harry C. Moore, mayor, and owner of the dry goods store.

The leaders of the community realized the opportunity a college would provide for the townspeople. Armed with her savings to finance the building, Alice proposed that if the city purchased the grounds for the college and donated them to her in a genuine warranty deed, she would proceed at once to erect a three-story building sufficient to accommodate eighty students. They offered six acres of a cornfield on the western edge of town where she could build a school.

Reader 1:

And build a school she did. She began with a little brick schoolhouse, a building that still stands today as the center portion of Main Hall. Originally named Vernon Seminary, its success was evident from the start. Named for the county in which it is located, the townspeople refused to call it that, referring to it as the “Cottey sisters’ school” or Cottey College. From its humble beginnings the College has grown to 14 buildings on an 11-block tract, and a scenic 33-acre wooded area used for campus gatherings and retreats.

In 1890, Alice married Samuel Stockard, a widower whose three children were boarding students in the school’s primary department. She accepted his proposal with the qualification: “I know that my school must always come first–it has been so from the beginning.” They were married in Main Hall parlor, with all of the students in attendance.

In 1926, Mrs. Stockard, as she was known after her marriage, received an invitation to join Chapter DW of the P.E.O. Sisterhood. While at the age of 78, she thought she was too old to become a new member, the educational purpose appealed to her and she thought she might contribute some service from her many years of experience. In November that year, the chapter’s education day program revealed the extent of the organization’s philanthropic contributions, all dedicated to women. A thought came to her, almost as a revelation “That is where Cottey College belongs.”

Reader 2:

On the convention platform of the 1927 convention of Supreme Chapter in Oklahoma City, Alice Cottey Stockard presented her life’s work to the Sisterhood. She proposed that P.E.O. accept the deed for the property with no debt against it and agree to raise an Endowment of not less than $200,000, with no time limit for its completion. Her proposal was met with shock and surprise. After extensive discussion and many questions, it was announced the following morning that a majority of the delegates, realizing the opportunity for greater service, had voted to accept her offer.

With that acceptance, Cottey became the only nonsectarian college in the nation owned and supported by women, for women, a characteristic still true today. For over 90 years, the College, its alumnae and the PEO sisterhood have worked together to realize Alice Cottey’s premise that women should have excellent educational opportunities and her dream continues today.

We want you to have a part in the program by sharing the Cottey facts that were passed out before the program. They are numbered, so we’ll go in numerical order.

Read the facts

Cottey Facts to Pass Around and Read

1. Graduates of women’s colleges are more than twice as likely as graduates of co-education colleges of receive doctorate degrees.
2. More than 90% of Cottey’s faculty hold PhDs or other highest degree in their fields.
3. Second year students participate in a trip outside of the U.S. The college pays for airfare and lodging while students are responsible for meals and incidental expenses. Destinations are announced each spring for the following year. Past classes have traveled to London, Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Rome and Florence. If a student chooses an alternative trip, she may be responsible for additional fees. Alternative destinations have included Japan, Peru, New Zealand, Guatemala and Thailand.
4. The colors and flower chosen for Cottey when it was founded were yellow and white and the marguerite.
5. Most Cottey students live in suites of 10-12 women in one of our residence halls. Each suite contains a shared living area, a small kitchen, a common bathroom and several single and double bedrooms. Each hall contains a reception area, sitting areas, a storage area, a quiet study room, a computer room, two pianos, TVs, cable and DVD players. Up to seven 4th year students may live in Cottey House, across the street from the campus.
6. The student faculty ratio at Cottey is 10:1 and the average class size is 13.
7. Nearly ½ of the graduates of women’s colleges have earned advanced degrees and 81% have continued their education beyond college.
8. Nearly ¼ of the current female members of Congress attended women’s colleges.
9. 33% of the female board members of Fortune 500 companies are women’s college graduates.
10. Listen to what one student had to say about her Cottey experience: Cottey College is a place of growth and discovery. It’s a place where students get to step out on their own, gain new levels of independence. Cottey made a really positive impact on my life. I learned to take responsibility for my actions and decisions. I learned to articulate my thoughts and concerns and advocate for myself and others. There’s no place on Earth I’d rather have spent those four years.
11. More than 40 student clubs and organizations, cultural events, performance, lectures, workshops and recreational activities are all free to students.
12. Each leadership position at Cottey is held by a woman.
13. Cottey offers cross-country/track, volleyball, basketball, softball and golf in its intercollegiate sports program.
14. The Serenbetz Institute for Women’s Leadership and Social Responsibility was established in the fall of 2010 to support Cottey College’s mission to education women so they may realize their full potential as “learners, leaders, and citizens.” The vision of the Institute is to be known as one of the nation’s premier women’s leadership programs.
15. Cottey College offers bachelor degrees in Business Administration-Management; Criminology; English, Environmental Studies; Health Sciences; International Business; International Relations; Liberal Arts; Organizational Leadership; Psychology; Secondary Education; and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies as well as Associate degrees in Arts, Sciences, and Fine Arts.
16. Approximately 98% of students receive some form of need-based or merit-based aid: academic, fine arts, and athletic scholarships are offered to eligible students.
17. In 2018, U.S. News and World Report recognized Cottey in the following categories: #2 in best value schools, #2 in lowest student debt at graduation, #3 in largest proportion of international students, #7 in best regional colleges
18. Listen to what one alum had to say about her Cottey experience: There is something about taking a FIRST step away from home to attend college. There is a certain unknown…a certain feeling of diving into an adventure of creativity that only Cottey College can offer you. When a student has a chance to attend Cottey, she should be prepared to be challenged, questioned and be totally prepared to become a leader in her field of work.
19. On the wall in the home of Miriam Stephens Kindred, class of 1951 is a formal portrait, taken on Wall Street of about 150 E.F. Hutton brokers. In the middle of this sea of very serious men in dark suits sits a lovely young woman wearing a white suit. That young woman is Miriam, a wonderfully successful stockbroker who credits her success to Cottey. Says Miriam, “In 1978, I became the first woman manager and stockbroker at E.F. Hutton. I realized it was because of Cottey.”