

Mrs. Veena Nayyar Memorial Scholarship



Mrs. Veena Nayyar, a pioneer in the field of business and philanthropy, was a strong supporter of diversity and women's rights.

She had the unusual distinction of achieving a double Masters, something that was rare for women of her generation. Mrs. Nayyar completed her BA and Masters in English (Honors) from Miranda House in the late 1950s and went on to complete a Masters in Business Administration in the 1970s.

She began her career as an English teacher at St Xavier's in Delhi - a role of great importance to her personally and professionally. After her MBA, she held senior executive positions and subsequently started an extremely successful export business.

She then decided to shift focus to dedicating her life to improving the lives of the under privileged, with a special emphasis on women.

She was a strong champion of the 33% reservation for women in politics, a cause she championed through her first NGO, Women's Political Watch ("WPW"). WPW broadly focused on improving the political and economic position of women in India. She established various centers for skilling women from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. She also created Policy Foundation, an NGO that focused on research and advocacy for people at the bottom of the economic strata.

Mrs. Nayyar was recognized for her expertise and was invited to speak and participate at various local and international forums. She was also a member of various important government commissions including the SC/ST commission and the 11th Five-year National Plan on Development of Women's Economic Workforce.

She was married to the late Vice Admiral KK Nayyar, former Vice Chief of Naval Staff. Veena Nayyar was an active supporter of various organizations linked to the armed forces. Even in the last year of her life she donated a significant chunk of her savings to supporting the widows of soldiers who fought and died for India.

Mrs. Nayyar passed away on April 30, 2021. She is survived by her son Ashok Nayyar and daughter Gita Nayyar.

In keeping with her belief that the way to create a more gender balanced society was to educate women, Mrs. Nayyar's children have established 10 scholarships for students at Miranda House. These scholarships will be awarded to students from disadvantaged backgrounds to cover three years of tuition, fees and books. An additional 10 scholarships per year will be awarded in subsequent years.