



Mary Ellen Imlay is this year's **Philanthropist of the Year** honoree. Mary Ellen Imlay is Chairman and President of [The Imlay Foundation, Inc.](#) and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Imlay Investments, Inc.

Mary Ellen has been active in the Atlanta non-profit community for many years having previously served on the Boards of the Woodruff Arts Center, Atlanta Botanical Garden, and Volunteers in Medicine of Hilton Head, South Carolina, along with the Art Advisory Council for the City of Brookhaven. Mary Ellen currently serves on the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Foundation Board of Trustees, Georgia Public Broadcasting Board of Directors, and Historic Oakland Foundation Campaign

Committee and Advisory Board. Mary Ellen was honored by Fernbank Museum of Natural History as the Honorary Chair of the 2020 Timeless Affair gala, and as the honoree for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's 2018 Hope and Will Ball.

A native Georgian from Decatur, Mary Ellen attended Furman University and Georgia State University. She gained business experience with Management Science America, Dun & Bradstreet Software, and Imlay Investments, Inc., founded by her late husband, John P. Imlay, Jr.

Together, John and Mary Ellen committed themselves to supporting Atlanta non-profits through The Imlay Foundation, established in 1989. The Foundation partners with non-profit organizations across the Atlanta region, investing in the work of people whose empathy, passion and hard work seek to create a better community for each and every member. Beginning with her appointment as a Board Member, Executive Director, President, and Chairman, Mary Ellen has poured her energy into active leadership of the family foundation for 28 years, and is currently engaged in developing a path to philanthropic leadership for the third generation of family members. As detailed through her years of generosity, Mary Ellen's philanthropy is strategic and inspirational, driven by her personal and professional belief that people are the key to creating better communities. She is deeply committed to a philanthropy that honors equity and inclusion in our communities, and is extraordinarily dedicated to grantmaking that makes a profound difference for an organization at a particular point in time, motivating others to give.

Key among the many grants nurtured and implemented by Mary Ellen through The Imlay Foundation over the decades are: the establishment of the Imlay Innovation Fund, an endowed joint partnership between Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and Georgia Tech to identify critical clinical pediatric needs that can be addressed through technology solutions; the design, development and installation of the transformative Mary Ellen Imlay Channel Garden in Storza Woods at the Atlanta Botanical Garden; seed funding for Georgia Public Broadcasting's new Virtual Reality statewide school curriculum; the restoration of Historic Oakland Cemetery's 1899 Bell Tower; and the building of the accessible, zero-entry swimming pool at Camp Twin Lakes.