

The Emerson-Hoopes Scholarship

This scholarship was created by Bill Etnyre, the grandson of Belle Emerson Hoopes Gibson, for students pursuing an accredited social work degree (BSW or MSW) from the University of Washington.

Words from the Creator:

This scholarship is given in honor of my maternal grandmother, Belle Emerson Hoopes Gibson, born in 1875, and her sister, my great-aunt Jesse Mae Emerson, born in 1872. Their father died at a young age, and in order to support the family, Belle, Jesse, and their two brothers began teaching at the age of 16 in country schools in rural northern Illinois.

My grandmother taught until she married at age 24, as married women were rarely allowed to teach in public schools. Aunt Jesse never married and made a career as a teacher and later a principal in schools in Illinois and Colorado.

I knew them when they were elderly; they were great story tellers and regaled my sisters and me with tales of "the olden days." They could speak in accents and make sound effects. They loved learning and were avid readers into their 80s and early 90s. Their love of learning was a strong influence in my life.

I am blessed that I can share this love of learning with young people who have a desire to improve the lives of others by pursuing education in social work.

Bill Etnyre lives in Seattle, Washington.