

Naomi W. Fredrickson Overton (1925-2008)



Naomi Winifred Fredrickson came to California from Iowa as a baby with her parents. Growing up among the orange groves near Anaheim, she attended St. Olaf College for two years before attending USC where she earned her B.S. degree in Business in 1946, the same year she married Paul Eugene Overton.

Naomi worked in merchandising and as an interior decorator before joining her parents in founding Fredrickson Enterprises in 1962. The company invested in land—then mostly citrus groves—primarily in Orange County, California. She became president of the company in 1968, continuing in this role for 35 years. An astute businesswoman far ahead of her time, she instilled in her children both a strong work ethic and a spirit of philanthropy.

When Naomi's two oldest daughters attended California Lutheran College, the Overtons supported the school with their time and resources, as evidenced by Overton Hall, the stained glass windows of Samuelson Chapel, two endowed scholarships, and Overton Court. Naomi was also a very active church and community volunteer. She was honored with one of USC's highest awards for her years of service, and established a scholarship program in her name.

Naomi's four children (Tina, Becky, Jim and Mary) and six grandchildren (Fred, David and Steven Brende, and Rebecca, Kathryn and Reeves Caldwell) were very important to her. For Naomi, family gatherings were occasions to bring the entire family together. California Lutheran University and her family honor her generosity of spirit, her love of family and her model of principled business leadership in naming the Overton Summer Research Internship in Economics, the Overton Prize in Economics and the Overton Graduate Fellowship in Economics.