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LEO S. ROWE PAN AMERICAN FUND / DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT [www.oas.org/rowe](http://www.oas.org/rowe)  
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## Dr. Leo Stanton Rowe

### The founder of the Rowe Fund the educational loan program of the OAS

*For sixty years, the Rowe Fund has helped citizens from Latin America and Caribbean OAS member countries finance their higher education in universities across the United States fulfilling the vision of Dr. Rowe by strengthening of the hemisphere's democratic institutions, imbuing a sense of social justice, and upward mobility in its citizens and contributing to the advancement of society.*

#### **PERSONAL INFORMATION:**

Dr. Leo Stanton Rowe was born in McGregor, Iowa, on September 17, 1871, and died on December 5, 1946, in Washington, D.C. He was the son of Louis Rowe and Catherine Raff. As a boy he moved to Philadelphia, where he went to school. In 1887 he graduated as Bachelor of Arts from Central High School. He then entered the University of Pennsylvania, graduating with a Bachelor of Philosophy degree in 1890. He traveled to Europe, where he visited a number of countries, among them France, Italy, Austria, and Germany, receiving his doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Halle in 1893. In 1895 he received a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania. During his lifetime he was awarded several honorary doctorates from universities in Latin America and the United States. He also taught political science and municipal government at the university level. As a young man he entered public life in the United States, occupying various governmental posts related to Latin American affairs, until in 1920 he was named Director General of the Pan American Union (the precursor to the Organization of American states).

#### **DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE PAN AMERICAN UNION (1920 – 1946)**

He served with exemplary dedication and vision as Director General of the Pan American Union (the precursor to the Organization of American States "OAS"), from 1920 up to the day of his death. His constant desire was to bring the American nations together and create a feeling of solidarity. He was recognized for his great human values, devotion to his work and wisdom in finding solutions to difficult problems. He was also recognized for his modesty, simplicity, humor, understanding, and way with people. Throughout his life he was characterized by his sensitivity, tolerance, and ability to recognize the achievements of his colleagues, who were all fond of him.

He participated in numerous Inter-American conferences and meetings held in Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Lima, Panama City, Havana and Rio de Janeiro and also in the United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco, California.

## **CONTRIBUTION TO THE PAN-AMERICANISM**

His life revolved around two main concerns: advancing Pan-Americanism and promoting education. He devoted the greater part of his life to fostering understanding and integration among the American nations, demonstrating special interest in the education of Latin American youth, whom he assisted during his lifetime, and to whom he bequeathed a legacy in his will; which reads:

***"[...] and the entire remainder thereof unto the Pan American Union, hereinbefore mentioned, to be administered by the Governing Board of the Pan American Union as a revolving Fund for Latin American Students\* who may desire to study in universities or colleges of the United States. This Revolving Fund may also be used by the Governing Board as a Loan Fund for the entire personnel of the Pan American Union under regulations prescribed by the Governing Board."***

\* At the time of his will, the Pan American Union was made up of the United States and Latin American countries only.

From 1920, when he took charge of the Pan American Union, he dedicated himself to laying the basis for projects and programs for the development of pan-American conferences and technical meetings. From the beginning he also fought for the principle of non-intervention in the Latin American countries. He was an advocate and implementer of the Good Neighbor policy, promoting cooperation, solidarity, peace, and mutual assistance among the 21 nations that made up the Pan American Union.

During his life he also devoted his efforts to the union of the Americas, thus becoming an important leader of Pan-Americanism. Three characteristics define the work of Dr. Leo S. Rowe as Director General of the Pan American Union:

- ❖ Lover of the ideal of Pan-Americanism
- ❖ Friend of peace
- ❖ Promoter of the economic welfare of the Latin American nations

***"And now, Mr. Secretary and members of the Governing Board, permit me to assure you that my heart and soul are in this work. All the strength and energy of which I am capable are at your service. It has been and is the one ambition of my life to contribute, even in some small measure, toward the closer union between the republics of America; and if, under your guidance, I may be able to make such a contribution to that great cause, I shall consider that I have not lived in vain."***

*Final Words of Dr. Leo S. Rowe  
in the speech of possession to the position as  
General Director of the Pan-American Union,  
in the seat of PAU, Washington, D.C. 1920*