



PHOTOS BY GIORGOS CHARAL

FOR THE GREATER GOOD

The Evagoras & Kathleen Lanitis Foundation serves as the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of the Lanitis Group. Here, Evagoras C. Lanitis, Director of Lanitis E.C. Holdings and a member of the Foundation's Executive Committee, discusses its long history, the importance of giving back to society and the dual role of philanthropic institutions in today's world.

What were the reasons behind the decision to set up the Evagoras & Kathleen Lanitis Foundation?

The guiding principle of my late grandfather, Evagoras Lanitis, was this: "When we do a job, we must put the benefit of the country first and then our own." He repeatedly stated this fervent belief, frequently proclaiming that, "Our prosperity depends on the prosperity of our country." He and my late grandmother, Kathleen Lanitis, made a consistent effort to contribute as much as they could to local society, both practically and ethically, especially where there was a greater need, proving the truth of their principle. My grandfather's four children – Costas, Platon, Marios and Isabella – founded the Evagoras & Kathleen Lanitis Foundation after his passing in 1992 for two main reasons: to honour his memory and to continue their parents' social contribution in an organised and effective manner. Over time, the Foundation has evolved into the institution that serves as the vehicle for all the CSR initiatives of the Lanitis Group's subsidiary companies.

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construction of the Cyprus Anti-Cancer Association's Evagorio Palliative Care Centre, which they continue to support to this day. Thus, in addition to education, the health sector emerged as another pillar added to the list of the Foundation's social contributions.

Do you apply any strategies from your profit-making activities to your philanthropic endeavours? If so, could you provide an example of how this has been effective?

The Board of Directors and the Executive Committee, which decides on the annual budget and action plan, supervise the Foundation. The Executive Committee also decides on the monetary contribution of each subsidiary company of the Lanitis Group to the Foundation's fund, in order to have a shared pool. The Foundation's strategy is to contribute to a small number of well-chosen CSR initiatives over the long term, so as to maximise the impact of its offering.

The Foundation's activities mainly focus on culture, education and health. Why these areas in particular?

In terms of the Foundation's social contribution pillars, I would say that by supporting the causes that Evagoras and Kathleen Lanitis themselves supported, it is continuing along the way that they paved. The late Evagoras Lanitis always believed that society becomes more people-centric through cultural development and education, a belief that is shared by the entire Lanitis family. As a result, he contributed to the development of the Lanitio Gymnasium in Limassol by donating its stadium and its library. Additionally, together with other businessmen at the time, Evagoras Lanitis organised the first Radiomathon charity fundraising event in 1990, one that would ultimately evolve into the best well-known charitable organisation in Cyprus today. The Evagoras & Kathleen Lanitis Foundation remains one of the Radiomathon's strategic supporters in every way possible. After my grandfather's death from cancer, his children wanted to express their gratitude to those who had made an effort to be there for him during that difficult period. As a result, they financed the

From your perspective, why are philanthropic foundations important in today's society?

I believe that the importance of philanthropic foundations in today's society is twofold: they are of practical importance, in the sense that they contribute financially to a noble cause; and of theoretical importance, which is equally vital in the sense that they educate society on specific social issues and serve as role models for others to offer their support.

Looking forward, what do you hope to achieve through your philanthropic activities?

Through the CSR actions of the Evagoras & Kathleen Lanitis Foundation, the Lanitis Group strives to put into practice what my late grandfather said. In other words, "we try to support and help society in our country, because if our country is doing well, then we will be doing well too." I would like to close with one more of the late Evagoras Lanitis' beliefs: "When the time comes to leave this world, what remains is not what we've amassed but what we've given back to society."