As president and trustee of The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, Penelope McPhee directs the Foundation’s strategic focus on fostering opportunities for children and youth and enhancing the quality of life in Atlanta and beyond. One of the largest family foundations in the region, the Blank Foundation has made grants of more than $250 million since its inception.

Penny joined the Blank Family Foundation in 2004, from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation in Miami, where she led the $1.8 billion foundation’s grant-making programs. A national leader in the arts, she launched Knight’s national Arts and Culture Program in 1990 and became vice president and chief program officer in September 1996.

Penny has had a distinguished career as an author and television producer. Her television programs have won five Emmys, as well as prestigious awards from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Association of Television Program Executives. For seven years she was on the staff of WPBT, Miami’s public broadcasting station, where she launched its cultural affairs department and served as executive producer of cultural programming. In this capacity, she produced a wide range of award-winning cultural documentaries, performance programs and dramas for local, regional and national broadcast.

She is also a noted author whose pictorial history of the civil rights movement, “Martin Luther King Jr. A Documentary: Montgomery to Memphis,” was recognized in 1980 as one of the “Best Books of the Decade” by the American Library Association. Her 1986 book, “King Remembered,” received the New York State Martin Luther King Jr. Medal of Freedom.

In 2008, Penny was elected to the YWCA of Greater Atlanta’s Women of Achievement and selected by Business to Business magazine as a woman of achievement. She currently serves on the boards of the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Voices for Georgia’s Children, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Atlanta Education Fund and the Atlanta Committee for Progress. In 2007, she chaired Mayor Franklin’s Task Force on Arts and Culture Funding. She has recently served on the board of the Council on Foundations, the Emory University Board of Visitors, the Mayor’s Task Force on Early Childhood, the American Red Cross Georgia Disaster Campaign Cabinet and The Southern Regional Business Council. She is also a past board member of the Southeastern Council of Foundations and past president of Grantmakers in the Arts, a national affinity group of arts funders.

Penny has a master’s degree from the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University, and was graduated with honors from Wellesley College, where she received her bachelor’s degree in English and theater arts. She and her husband, Raymond H. McPhee, a retired film and television producer, have one daughter, Cameron Brook McPhee.