



**Center for Women in Government & Civil Society mourns Founder and First Executive Director
Nancy Perlman**

A Tribute to Nancy Perlman

It is with great sadness that we announce that Nancy Perlman, an icon, a visionary, a pioneer and the founder of the Center for Women in Government has left our world on Saturday, April 14, 2018. The organization she created bears witness to an extraordinary woman who had the vision, the courage and the determination to build a sustainable infrastructure that to this day is working proactively to change systems of exclusions, one brick at a time, and offer women the tools that position them to dismantle barriers to leadership in the public sector.

In a letter to the Center in February 2018, Perlman reacted to the 40th anniversary of the Center by offering those reflections “I can’t tell you how gratifying it is to have helped create an institution that is still contributing to the recognition and development of women in the public sector... What could be more gratifying than giving women the tools to become change agents.”

Nancy has not only captivated all those who worked with her, who witnessed a brilliant mind, that is far ahead of its time easily moving organizational agenda forward and steadily advancing the Center’s vision, but Nancy also managed to captivate hearts and leave a lasting impact on everyone who crossed her path. She was indeed a transformative leader who left an enduring legacy.

“Nancy laughed a lot, worked hard, and never wavered from her goal: improving the lives of women employed in the public sector. Nancy was never afraid of change as she clearly expected that improvements in women’s working lives would benefit their families, their communities, their work environments, and our society as a whole. Nancy was right.”

Nan Carroll, Former Center Staff Member

“Nancy’s vision - that the Center could help government become a place where women could thrive, be treated equally and provide leadership - made changes that have benefitted decades of women and strengthened government in the process.”

Maud Easter, Former Center Staff Member

“As part of the staff for 10 years, it was extraordinary to be part of the team of smart, dedicated and talented women under the direction of such a charismatic, caring and can-do leader. We all grew more skillful and carried the experience of our time with Nancy with us in our subsequent work.”

Fredda Merzon, Former Co-Training Director and Acting Executive Director

“In the 70 s, Nancy was part of my life as a small group of us who believed strongly in government's capacity to get good things done, were steering through politics. A very different time. But, of course the Center was one of the good things to emerge. Truly a legacy of value.”

Ro Rosen, Former Center Board member

“It was truly an honor to be appointed in 1991 as Director of the then Center for Women in Government, the institution that Nancy founded, along with Linda Tarr-Whalen, and led so ably for its first ten years. Nancy was a remarkable visionary and powerful advocate for women's employment equity. As a successor to leadership of a center which has touched the lives and inspired the loyalty and commitment of countless women and men, I was always deeply moved by the admiration, respect, and affection that Nancy inspired in the staff and board members who worked with her. This was also true of the many women in public service, policy leaders, and public managers who were engaged in the Center's important work in employment equity, women's policy leadership, and sexual harassment prevention.”

Judith Sidel, Former Center Executive Director

“While I did not have the privilege of working with Nancy, her spirit was always present at the Center. She created an enduring feminist organizational culture that to this day is the glue that keeps this organization together and sets it apart. I have heard numerous stories about Nancy’s charisma, grace, vision and feminist leadership and drew a lot of inspiration from these narratives. We all knew we had to work hard to preserve this legacy and live up to Nancy’s vision.”

Dina Refki, Center Executive Director