

Alice King Was Kids' Advocate

FIRST LADIES are in a unique position to raise the visibility of an issue that has long been marginalized. And those that do it well — like Betty Ford, who allowed us to talk openly for the first time about breast cancer, and Rosalynn Carter, who championed immunizations — can count saving lives as a very tangible part of their legacies.

Alice King was that kind of leader by bringing children issues to the forefront, particularly issues of abuse. There is no doubt that countless innocent young lives were saved, and the quality of those and many other lives improved.

Before New Mexico Voices for Children spoke on behalf of the state's most vulnerable residents, children had a voice in Alice King. As an advocate, she not only had the governor's ear, she also captured the attention of the entire state with her deep commitment to the health and well being of New Mexico's children.

Our debt to Alice King is very personal. She paved the way for the work we took up in 1987. She had already put children issues on the table and got policymakers to consider implementing new programs and tackling old problems for the first time.

She was a visionary with an open heart and a determination that New Mexico will be a better place for children. In her work she gathered people together from all over the state and, in doing so, brought collaboration to the forefront as a means to achieve her goals.

She listened to everyone, as no voice was too small. ... She was a great lady indeed. She will be missed, but her legacy will live on.

NANCY JO ARCHER
Board chairwoman
N.M. Voices for Children
Albuquerque

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A debt to Alice King

To the editor:

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Members of the NM Voices staff and board are deeply saddened by the loss of this singular First Lady. We counted Mrs. King among our allies and often were honored by her presence at our events. I counted her among my friends.

She was a great lady indeed. She will be missed, but her legacy will live on.

*Nancy Jo Archer
Board Chair, New Mexico
Voices for Children*