

**Cristine Wilson  
Medal for Equality  
and Justice**  
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**August 26, 2006**



IOWA  
COMMISSION  
ON THE  
STATUS  
OF WOMEN

***Making a difference  
in the lives of Iowa women***

Iowa Department of Human Rights  
Lucas State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
Tel.: 515/281-4461 or 800/558-4427  
Fax: 515/242-6119  
E-mail: [chr.icsw@iowa.gov](mailto:chr.icsw@iowa.gov)  
Website: [www.state.ia.us/dhr/sw](http://www.state.ia.us/dhr/sw)



# Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice

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# Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice

established and presented by the



*The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women is a state agency that seeks to assure equality for Iowa women. It also strives to recognize the contributions of Iowa women as well as the impact both men and women have made in improving the status of Iowa women. As part of that goal, the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice was established.*

*The Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice was established by the Commission in 1982 in honor of Cristine Wilson, the first chair of the statutory Commission. The medal is given to individuals whose lives and work have illustrated outstanding dedication and service on behalf of the ideals of equality and justice.*

# Governor Robert D. Ray



Governor Robert D. Ray was the first recipient of the Cristine Wilson Medal, which was presented in 1982. Governor of Iowa from 1969 until January, 1982, Ray signed House File 1140 in 1972 that provided for the statutory

establishment of a Commission on the Status of Women and required the Governor to appoint a chairperson and then make appointments for the 24-member Commission. A Governor's Commission on the Status of Women had been appointed in 1963, 1969, and 1971 without statutory mandate. In 1973, an Executive Order by the Governor was issued to set a strong state policy on hiring and job discrimination against minorities and women. During the Iowa State Fair in 1975, Ray inducted the first four women into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. Governor Ray used the state roster of women compiled by the ICSW to fill vacancies and make appointments to commissions and boards in the state; representation of women went from 14 percent in 1974 to 30 percent by the time he left office.

# Mary Louise Smith



**M**ary Louise Smith, 1977 member of the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame, was awarded the Cristine Wilson Medal in 1984 for her outstanding contributions in the public and political arena. During her tenure on the United States Civil Rights

Commission, the Iowa native was a persistent advocate for women and for the civil rights of all Americans. Smith began her political life at the grassroots level and during the early years became the architect of the Republican Party's state precinct program. From 1964-1997, she served on the Republican National Committee. In 1974, she cochaired the Committee with George Bush. With Bush's diplomatic appointment to China, Smith became the first woman to chair the Republican National Committee. In that capacity, she became the only woman of a major American political party to organize and call to order a national convention. Smith was also a founding member of the Iowa Women's Political Caucus and was active on many local, state, and national advisory boards. She died in 1997.

# Dr. Sue Follon

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Dr. Sue Follon, former executive director of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, was awarded the Cristine Wilson Medal in 1985. While serving as its director, the ICSW achieved some of its most notable accomplishments, including review of the *Code of Iowa* for gender bias and highly progressive laws with regard to pay equity, rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, and education. Follon's special contribution was in bringing together influential policymakers and private citizens, and working closely with the Iowa Legislature and Governor's Office in order to achieve success. The Volga, Iowa native received her B.A. degree from Iowa Wesleyan College, M.A. from the University of Northern Iowa, and Ed.D. from Drake University. Her roles as an educator included teaching secondary science and serving as an administrator at Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, Iowa. In March, 1985, she was named the first woman vice president at the University of Northern Iowa. Follon died in 1998. In 2002, Follon was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame.



# Dr. Patricia Geadelmann



**D**r. Patricia Geadelmann of Cedar Falls was presented the Cristine Wilson Medal in 1987. She personifies qualities of leadership and exhibits outstanding dedication and service on behalf of the ideals of equality and justice. Dr. Geadelmann

served on the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women from 1972, as chair from 1979 to 1987—years of significant progress in fighting sex discrimination and promoting equal opportunity. She is credited with such achievements as the 50 States Project, a national effort whereby each state was to review its legal code for gender-based discrimination and make subsequent changes. Iowa was the first state to complete the study and made over 100 suggestions for legislative changes, most of which have already been passed and are being implemented. She has been recognized through the White House Fellows program, the Governor's Award for Distinguished Service to State Government, and the National Governors' Association Distinguished Service to Government Award.

# Minnette Doderer



Minnette Doderer was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame in 1979. In the 1960s, she began her career in the Johnson County League of Women Voters. She then was elected to the Iowa House of Representatives from 1964 to 1968, to the

Iowa Senate from 1969 to 1978 and again to the Iowa House from 1981 to 2000. She was the first woman in the General Assembly to be elected to a leadership position when she was named House Minority Whip in 1967. She was a candidate for Lieutenant Governor in 1970 and 1978. She has been effective in areas such as prison reform, higher education, comparable worth, and juvenile justice reform. Her numerous awards include the Iowa State Education Association's Distinguished Legislative Service Award, the Sons of the American Revolution's Good Citizenship Medal, and the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence Gold Seal Award. Presentation of the Cristine Wilson Medal was made to Doderer in 1989. Doderer died on August 12, 2005.

# Kappie Spencer



**K**appie Spencer formerly of Des Moines has an extensive list of accomplishments in promoting equality and justice. Spencer has long been an effective advocate for equality for women. Most recently, she has almost single- handedly

taken the concept of gender balance on boards and commissions (as it was first enacted by Iowa) to state legislatures across the country, garnering support from key women's groups, advocates, and legislators. Other examples of her life commitment to equality and justice are her leadership in the Equal Rights Amendment effort in Iowa, her position as women's issues chair for the national American Association of University Women, and successful advocacy with Northwestern Bell to include married women's names in telephone directories. Presentation of the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice was made to Spencer in 1990.

# Dr. Charles H. Bruner

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**D**r. Charles H. Bruner of Ames was the 1992 recipient of the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice. Bruner serves as executive director of the Child and Family Policy Center, a nonprofit center designed to better link research and policy on issues vital to children and families. He retired in 1990 from the Iowa General Assembly, having shown leadership on issues of equality and justice during his four years in the House of Representatives and eight years in the Senate. He has published a number of articles and books on public policy issues, including a monograph entitled *Women, Work, and Poverty* and a book, *Realizing a Vision for Children, Families, and Neighborhoods*. Bruner currently is focusing his work on designing public policy approaches that can “succeed with children when current systems fail.” He is the husband of Amy Welch and the father of Ian, Alex, and Michael. He is the son of Iowa Women’s Hall of Fame member Charlotte H. Bruner.

# Louise Rosenfield Noun



Louise Rosenfield Noun was involved with the Iowa and American Civil Liberties Unions for years, serving as president of ICLU and a board member of ACLU. In 1971, she helped found the Des Moines chapter of the National Organization

for Women. She was also an author and historian of Iowa women's history. Her books include *Strong-Minded Women*, *More Strong-Minded Women*, and *Iowa Women in the WPA*, and she is also the author of many journal articles on women's history. Noun founded the Chrysalis Foundation that funds projects and programs that assist women and girls, and cofounded the Women's Archives at the University of Iowa, the first such repository in the nation. Support of the Archives included not only contributing her own papers but funds she received from the sale, at an auction, of her Frieda Kahlo painting. Noun was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame in 1981. Presentation of the Cristine Wilson Medal was made to Noun in 1993. Noun died in 2002.

# Mary Molen Wiberg



**M**ary Molen Wiberg was the 1994 recipient of the Cristine Wilson Medal. Wiberg epitomizes the seeking of equality and justice for women through her work at the Iowa Department of Education. Not only has she worked to promote

sex equity in career and technical education but she has promoted high wage careers and related training for single parents and displaced homemakers. Her efforts in welfare reform and programs to serve pregnant and parenting teens have complemented her work for women as have her 14 years as a member of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women and service on the board of the Friends of ICSW. She completed three terms as president of the National Association of Commissions for Women and also served as president of the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity, a consortium of states. Wiberg currently is the Executive Director of the California Commission on the Status of Women.

# Betty Talkington



**B**etty Talkington was a veteran worker for women in the labor movement. As former director of women's activities of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, Talkington provided leadership, direction, encouragement, and inspiration to women across the state. Over the decades, Talkington educated other labor leaders regarding their policies toward women and at the same time helped women find their voices and make their concerns known to their unions and their employers. Her work directly and indirectly influenced the working lives of thousands of Iowa women. She was active in both the 1980 and 1992 Iowa ERA campaigns, serving as a member of the ERA IOWA 1992 Board. Talkington also served on the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women that was formed by Governor Harold Hughes in October of 1963. She was one of a small group of charter members of the National Organization for Women in 1966. Talkington received the Cristine Wilson Medal in 1995. She died in 1998.

# Maude Esther White

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**M**aude Esther White received the Cristine Wilson Medal in 1996 for her lifetime dedication to assisting disadvantaged persons in education, employment, housing, and business. After holding a number of teaching and government

positions in California, White returned to Iowa where she became the first affirmative action administrator for the State. In 1980, she founded and directed, until 1991, the Des Moines Tutoring Center, a nonprofit organization that strives to encourage young people to reach their potential through education. She served on the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans, and the boards of Good Samaritan Urban Ministries, San Francisco LINKS, YWCA, American Association of University Women, and Girl Scouts of America. She was a past board member and president of the Des Moines Branch of the NAACP. In 1998, White was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. She died in 2003.



# Naomi Christensen



**N**aomi Christensen has been a lifelong civil rights activist. She and her husband farmed in rural Hastings, and she also served as Mills County Supervisor. While campaigning in 1992 for county supervisor, she successfully urged "yes"

votes on the Equal Rights Amendment. Christensen has served as chair of several county committees and was a local leader of 4-H for 23 years. She has served on the worldwide General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church and has been recognized as a national leader in the Methodist Church on equality for women. In 1977, Christensen served on the International Women's Year Conference Planning Committee. She served on the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women from 1982 to 1996, and as chair from 1988 to 1996. She is a member of numerous women's organizations, the Iowa Peace Institute, and many farm associations. Featured in Louise Noun's book *More Strong-Minded Women* (1992), Christensen received the Cristine Wilson Medal in 1997.

# Edna M. Griffin

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**E**dna M. Griffin has been called the Rosa Parks of Des Moines. In 1948, after being refused service at the Katz Drug Store lunch counter that did not serve African Americans, she helped organize protests and sit-ins and waged a legal campaign that ultimately opened Iowa's public accommodations to serve people of color. Griffin was involved in many other peace and human rights efforts. Born in Kentucky in 1909, she grew up on a New Hampshire farm and moved to Des Moines in 1947. In 1998, on the 50th anniversary of her successful desegregation efforts, Griffin was honored by Urban Dreams for her leadership and bravery. A dedication of a commemorative plaque was also held at the site that once housed Katz, followed by an evening reception/reunion/reenactment at the State Historical Building. Griffin was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame in 1985. In 1998, the Flynn Building, which housed Katz, was renamed the Edna Griffin Building. She was honored with the Cristine Wilson Medal in 1998. Griffin died in 2000. The Edna M. Griffin Memorial Bridge in Des Moines was dedicated in 2004.

# Governor Terry E. Branstad



**G**overnor Terry E. Branstad was the 1999 recipient of the Cristine Wilson Medal. Governor Branstad has long been an advocate for civil rights in Iowa. Under his leadership, hate crime legislation was passed; minority representation on

state boards and commissions was dramatically increased; the percentage of minorities working for the state doubled; the Iowa Civil Rights Commission backlog was eliminated, and a record was set for civil rights victories; and Iowa ranked high in the nation and region in the percentage of women department heads, including key positions. As part of state government reorganization in 1986, he created the Department of Human Rights, and later supported legislative removal of the sunset provision on that department. Governor Branstad was an ardent supporter of state affirmative action goals, signed comparable worth legislation, and was instrumental in Iowa becoming the first state in the nation to complete the 50-States Project, identifying for elimination gender-bias in the *Code of Iowa*.

# Suzanne O’Dea



Suzanne O’Dea is a feminist scholar and activist. Her newest publication, *From Suffrage to the Senate: An Encyclopedia of American Women in Politics*, is a two-volume reference guide listing people and events that have influenced the role of women in the United States. *Legislators and Politicians: Iowa’s Women*

*Lawmakers* delves into the experiences of the women who have served in Iowa’s General Assembly. However, O’Dea’s work for women does not stop with research alone. She worked tenaciously on two campaigns for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and the successful campaign in 1998 to add “and women” to the Iowa Constitution. As a member of its advisory board, O’Dea has fostered the mission of the White House Project to have more women run for public office by coordinating a local initiative to mentor young women interested in holding elective office. She served on the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women from 1992 to 2004 and was president from 1994 to 2004. As a fundraiser for the group, O’Dea wrote *Iowa Women of Achievement* and edited a weekly planner featuring Iowa Women’s Hall of Fame inductees. In 2000, she became part of a group raising money to build a sacred place at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women in Mitchellville. She was honored with the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice in 2000.

# Jane Elliott



Jane Elliott was the 2001 recipient of the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice. She has worked to combat discrimination, ignorance, and racism for over 30 years. Best known for her “Blue Eyes, Brown Eyes” discrimination exercise,

Elliott has attempted to encourage racial sensitivity in children and adults of all kinds. Believing that racism is a learned behavior, she facilitates the experience of prejudice and discrimination by labeling participants inferior or superior based on their eye color. From her first exercise, on April 5, 1968, the day following Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination, Elliott strove to “inoculate [children] against the disease of racism,” something she did until her retirement from the classroom in 1984. Since then, she has brought her work to adults, conducting workshops in corporate, military, and academic arenas. Elliott and her work have been the subject of several documentaries – “Eye of the Storm,” “Eye of the Beholder,” “A Class Divided,” “Blue Eyed,” and, most recently, “The Angry Eye.” For her extraordinary work, she has received the National Mental Health Association Award for Excellence in Education.

# Reverend Carlos Jayne

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**R**everend Carlos Jayne personifies equality and justice. He was a lobbyist for social justice issues, having retired as a “second career” United Methodist pastor and serving as Legislative Advocate for the church for almost 20 years. His advocacy includes issues affecting people who are homeless, in prison,

experiencing discrimination, or trying to get off welfare. He is active in opposing gambling expansion, preserving the environment and the family farm, opposing reinstatement of the death penalty, advocating worker rights, immigrant rights and economic justice for all, moving the criminal justice system toward restorative justice policies, supporting women’s reproductive rights, establishing civil rights for gay and lesbian persons, and the prevention of gun violence. Jayne has been the coordinator for Iowa Human Needs Advocates; served on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Committee for 15 years; is founder of Friends of Prisoners at Mitchellville, now known as Friends of Iowa Women Prisoners, and co-founder of the Justice Reform Consortium. He is past president of Citizens for Gambling Free Government, Des Moines Coalition for the Homeless and the Des Moines Area Hunger Hike. He served on both the Waterloo and Des Moines Human Rights Commissions. Jayne traveled to Nicaragua in 1984 with Witness for Peace and to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1988 and 1989 with Eyewitness Israel. In 1993, Jayne was awarded an Amnesty International Recognition for human rights work (Local Group 277). He was honored with the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice in 2002.

# Rekha Basu



**A**s an editorial-page columnist for *The Des Moines Register*,

Rekha Basu has been an outspoken champion of human rights, racial justice, sexual equality, and equal treatment for immigrants, lesbians and gays, disenfranchised youth and others living on the margins of mainstream America. Besides

chronicling the plight of a particular underrepresented group, or celebrating courage in activism and in confronting discriminatory “old-boy” networks, Basu’s columns frequently argue for a more just economic and foreign policy. Her columns have won her a variety of local and national journalism awards including *The Des Moines Register’s* Best of the Register award for commentary in 2002, the Vivian Castleberry Award for commentaries on women’s issues, and a South Asian Journalists Association commentary award for an essay on a Bangladeshi Muslim victim of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. Born in India to United Nations parents, Basu grew up internationally, went to school in New York, earned a master’s degree in political economy from Goddard-Cambridge Graduate School, and one in journalism from Columbia University. She got her start in journalism through the advocacy and alternative press. Her byline has appeared in such national publications as *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *USA Today* and *The International Herald Tribune*. Presentation of the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice was made to Basu in 2003.

# Marie C. Wilson



**M**arie C. Wilson, an advocate of women’s issues for more than 30 years, is founder and president of The White House Project, co-creator of Take Our Daughters to Work Day and author of *Closing the Leadership Gap: Why Women Can and Must Help Run the World*. Wilson founded The White House

Project in 1998 in recognition of the need to build a truly representative democracy – one where women lead alongside men in all spheres. Wilson started The White House Project while she was still president of the Ms. Foundation for Women, a position she held from 1984-2004. In honor of her work, the Ms. Foundation has created The Marie C. Wilson Leadership Fund. Over the last thirty years, Wilson’s accomplishments include directing women’s programs at Drake University, becoming the first woman elected to the Des Moines City Council as a member-at-large in 1983, co-authoring the critically acclaimed *Mother Daughter Revolution*, and serving as an official government delegate to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China in 1995. And, in the year 2000, in conjunction with Mattel, Wilson brought the world President Barbie. Wilson has been profiled in *The New York Times* “Public Lives” column, has appeared on *The Today Show*, *CNN*, *National Public Radio* and other national programs and is quoted widely for her expertise. Born and raised in Georgia, Wilson has five children and four grandchildren. She was honored with the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice in 2004.



# Susan C. Buckley



For over three decades, Susan C. Buckley has been an advocate for equality and justice in the State of Iowa across race, gender, and sexual orientation. Buckley created and directed the Pre-Vocational Training Program for Women with support from the Women's Educational Equity Act and Iowa Sex Equity Funds. For ten years, this highly innovative program

encouraged and prepared low-income Iowa women for careers in the skilled trades and technical occupations to ensure economic self-sufficiency. It served as a national model and a springboard for assistance to Iowa community colleges regarding nontraditional occupation opportunities for women. Buckley also served as the director of the Women's Resource and Action Center during the 1980s. She successfully led efforts to expand the University's Human Rights statement to include protection for gays, lesbians, and bisexuals, and, earlier, efforts to expand the Iowa City Human Rights Ordinance to include sexual orientation. Within the University, Buckley advocated successfully for comparable worth to be the basis of compensation; for appropriate sexual harassment policy, procedures, and training; and for the University to offer domestic partner insurance to employees (the first university or public college in the United States to offer such a benefit). As a core member of Women Against Racism, Buckley led anti-racism workshops and coordinated statewide and national conferences on racism, and its connection to other forms of oppression. Buckley is a co-founder of the Iowa Women's Foundation, which supports empowerment of women and girls. She was honored with the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice in 2005.

# Jane Jones Turner Burleson



Jane Jones Turner Burleson is an Iowa original, born and raised in Fort Dodge. In 1947, Jane went to work for the Hormel Packing Plant in Fort Dodge. While working in the sliced bacon department, the sausage production line, and eventually on the cut floor, she became active in the labor union, becoming a steward and serving

on the United Packinghouse Workers of America (UPWA) Local 31 Executive Board and working on civil rights issues nationally. Besides her union activities, Jane is a tireless activist in the community. She was the first woman and the first African American elected to the Fort Dodge City Council in 1983, a seat she continues to hold. She was also the first African American to run for the statehouse from Webster County. Although unsuccessful in this bid, she set the stage for other people of color to run in Iowa, and continues to serve as a role model for women in politics in Iowa. She counts among her numerous activities being a member of Coppin Chapel African Methodist Church (AME) for over fifty years, serving as Trustee and Secretary; volunteering with the Fort Dodge Martin Luther King Scholarship Committee; serving as President of the Fort Dodge A. Phillip Randolph Institute; being a member of the League of Women Voters; serving on the Webster County Diversity Team; and volunteering with the African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa in Cedar Rapids. In 2002, Jane was named the Citizen of the Year in Fort Dodge. She was honored with the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice in 2006.

