

Geri M. Joseph

December, 2008

Geri M. Joseph is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Minnesota. From 1946 to 1953, she was a staff writer for The Minneapolis Tribune, specializing in social policy and politics. A winner of six American Newspaper Guild awards for outstanding journalism, she was also the first woman to win a Sigma Delta Chi award for a series on Minnesota's mental hospitals. From 1973 to 1978, she was a contributing editor and columnist for the Minneapolis newspaper, and numerous columns were reprinted by other newspapers, including The Washington Post.

Mrs. Joseph has been active in several non-profit and civic organizations. she served as president of the National Association for Mental Health, (now Mental Health America) a million member organization. Politics and government, women's affairs, young people and education were among other subjects of her civic involvement. Long active in Democratic politics, she held the positions of state chairwoman and national committeewoman for the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, and was elected to the then top national woman's office, Vice Chairman and Director of Women's activities for the Democratic National Committee. She served on President Kennedy's Committee on Youth Employment, President Johnson's Commission on Income Maintenance Programs and President Carter's Commission on Mental Health.

In 1978, Mrs. Joseph was named United States Ambassador to the Netherlands where she served until 1981. She did free-lance writing until 1984 when she joined the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. As a Senior Fellow, she had primary responsibility for several internationally-focussed programs and also organized and directed the Mondale Policy Forum, which included a young leaders program. Retiring from the Institute in November, 1994, she continued as a participant on several advisory committees. In 1997, she was elected chair of the Institute's Advisory Council on which she still serves. She is also a member of the Advisory board of the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance.

Mrs. Joseph has been a director of several business and civic boards, including Northwestern National Bank (now Wells Fargo), Northwestern Bell Telephone Co. (now Qwest), and Honeywell. She also was a director of the Hormel Foods Co. She has been a board member of Carleton College, the German Marshall Fund, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and Freedom House. She served on the Brookings Institution Task Force on the Middle East and co-chaired the Minnesota Attorney General Task Force on Child Abuse. She also was vice chair of Governor Perpich's Blue Ribbon Tax Study Commission. Mrs. Joseph is a founding member and former co-chair of the Minnesota Women's Campaign Fund. In 1992, she chaired the popular Minnesota Meeting, a Twin Cities luncheon program that brought prominent speakers to the community. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the International Women's Forum and served on the board of the Minnesota International Center.

2.

Among her awards and honors are an Outstanding Achievement Award from the University of Minnesota; an honorary Doctor of Laws from Bates College; an Award for Excellence from the University of Minnesota Journalism School; an honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Macalester College, and an honorary Doctor of Laws from Carleton College. Other honors include the Statesman Award from the Anti-Defamation League, the Public Leadership Award and the Humphrey Medal from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. In 2005, St. Paul Central High School inducted her into its Hall of Fame.

Mrs. Joseph and her husband, Burton M. Joseph, are parents of two sons. A daughter is deceased.