

ANN RICHARDS

During her lifetime of public service, former Texas Gov. Ann Richards has won widespread acclaim for her accomplishments as an elected official and as an inspirational national leader and role model. Presently a senior adviser with Verner, Liipfert, Bernhard, McPherson and Hand, a Washington, D.C.-based law firm, Richards burst onto the national scene in 1988, when she delivered the keynote address to the Democratic National Convention. Beckoning the nation to unify behind the belief that we can do better for ourselves and our children, Richards also offered a memorable salute to the achievements of women, reminding her worldwide audience, “Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels.”

Combining her command as a speaker with years of achievement as Texas state treasurer and a Travis County commissioner, teacher and activist, Richards entered the 1990 gubernatorial campaign and was elected the 45th governor of Texas.

During her tenure, Texas instituted site-based decision-making in its public schools, increased prison space and introduced a nationally respected substance-abuse program in its prisons. The state also became the nation’s leader in the creation of new manufacturing facilities and new or expanded corporate facilities.

A longtime advocate of civil rights and economic justice, Richards created the most representative and inclusive administration in Texas history. She also sought to make government more efficient, authorizing audits that saved the state \$6 billion.

Born in Lakeview, Texas, Richards graduated from Waco High School in 1950 and attended Baylor University on a debate scholarship. After graduating, she went to the University of Texas at Austin, where she earned her teaching certificate. From 1955 to 1956, she taught social studies and history at Fulmore Junior High School in Austin.

In addition to her work in law, Richards currently serves on the boards of J. C. Penney, T. I. G. Holdings and the Aspen Institute. And she makes as much time as possible for her family, which now includes six “nearly perfect” grandchildren.