

BABETTE JOSEPHS
RECIPIENT OF THE
LEORNA BERSON COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



Born in New York, Babette moved to Philadelphia in 1962. From 1985 to 2012, she served our neighborhood (where she has lived for more than 50 years) as a State Representative in the PA General Assembly. In 2001, she was the only House member to vote against a bill requiring public school students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance daily. As the Democratic Chair of the House State Government Committee, Babette's proudest achievement was killing an amendment to the state constitution which would have restricted marriage to one man and one woman.

Since retirement, Babette has remained active: she sits on the Boards of the local ACLU affiliate, as well as JSPAN (Jewish Social Policy Action Network); she appears weekly on public access TV as co-host on Conversations Across Time, a program which seeks to deepen understanding of contemporary events through challenging conversations with prominent figures (10 pm Tuesdays, Comcast 66, Verizon 39); and she has continued her work as an Eighth Ward committee person. In 2012, Babette was honored both by the ACLU and National Organization for Women. And, particularly significant as we commemorate Earth Day, she has never owned a car!

Please join CCRA as we thank Babette Josephs for all she has contributed to our community.

LENORA BERSON COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Lenora Berson (1928-2011) loved our Center City neighborhood, and worked tirelessly to make it great right up until her death at the age of 83. She served as President of CCRA from 1999 until 2001, and she strategized about, and led, numerous CCRA activities, including opposition to the Crosstown Expressway which had been proposed to run along South Street. As noted by Representative Mark Cohen, Berson, who lived most of her life in this neighborhood, was “an impassioned advocate who could teach a class, do social work, organize testimony and demonstrations, write speeches, lobby elected officials, initiate candidacies for public office, mastermind election campaigns, write articles and books, take photographs worthy of being shown in art galleries, promote Philadelphia’s hidden gems, and organize events to promote the city that no one else thought of.”

There are few who can match Lenora’s energy and tenacity. The Award given in her name is intended to pay tribute to Lenora and to recognize others who have had a substantial positive impact on our neighborhood.