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Federation mourns loss of former AFT President Sandy Feldman

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of former AFT President Sandra Feldman, who died recently after a long battle with cancer. Feldman headed the AFT from May of 1997, following the death of Al Shanker, until she stepped down in July of 2004 due to her own ill health. She rose from her position as a 2nd grade teacher in New York City to lead the United Federation of Teachers before taking the helm of the AFT.

AFT President Ed McElroy paid tribute to Sandy's life and legacy, "*Sandy's death is a great loss for the AFT personally and professionally and for the children of our nation. She was a leader without comparison and will be remembered for her vigorous commitment to better the lives of teachers and school staff she represented and the children they served. Presidents, members of Congress, educators and business leaders relied on her expertise and ideas to help forge their own opinions on how to help those who needed it most.*"

Feldman's career in education, which spanned more than four decades, grew out of her early activity in the civil rights movement. An advocate for civil rights and social justice, she was an activist in the Freedom Rides and the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Perth Amboy/AFT President Donna M. Chiera said of Ms. Feldman, "*I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with and learn from someone of Sandy's experience and knowledge. Having been appointed to AFT's Program and Policy Council back in 1996, Sandy went out of her way to make me feel at home and at ease in the midst of 'giants' like Al Shanker, Randi Weingarten and, of course, herself. When she became AFT's president, elected by the Executive Council to fill Al Shanker's unexpired term, I was lucky enough to be in her presence at Washington's famed Mayflower Hotel. She was a lady of grace and style, but I will always remember her for her commitment to America's kids, particularly those most vulnerable and most in need of our help. America has lost a great champion.*"



Donna M. Chiera and Sandra Feldman, May 1997.