



Keynote Speaker

Governor Barbara Roberts

Barbara Roberts was elected Governor of the State of Oregon in November of 1990, becoming not only the first woman governor of her state but also one of the first 10 female governors in the nation. During her four-year term (1991 to 1995), Governor Roberts was recognized as a strong advocate for environmental management, human rights and civil rights, and creative workforce development. She also became a nationally acknowledged leader in the field of government redesign and reinvention.



Prior to being elected governor, Barbara Roberts was elected Oregon Secretary of State, serving from 1985-1991. She was a member of the Oregon House of Representatives from 1981-1985 and served as Majority Leader in 1983 and 1984. Roberts also served as a county commissioner, elected school board member for 10 years and a community college board member for a four-year term. She also served on over 25 non-profit boards over the last thirty years. She began public service as a citizen advocate for disabled children as she fought for the educational rights of her autistic son before the Oregon Legislature in 1971.

Following her time as Governor of Oregon, Barbara Roberts held a position at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government for four years, where she served as director of the state and local government executive programs. She was also a senior fellow at the Harvard Women and Public Policy Program.

Barbara returned to Oregon in 1998, taking a position at Portland State University's Hatfield School of Government. At the Hatfield School, she served for five years as the Associate Director of Leadership until her retirement in early 2005.

A descendant of Oregon Trail pioneers and a fourth-generation Oregonian, Governor Roberts was married to the late State Senator Frank Roberts. She has two adult sons, two grandchildren ages 27 and 25, and 16 step-grandchildren ages 10 years to 35 years, including 10 Chinese-born grandchildren. All her children and grandchildren live in the Portland area.

