

RESOLUTION HONORING DR. CELIA "JO" THOMASON

WHEREAS, On July 25, 2003 Celia "Jo" Thomason answered the Maker of all mankind's call and departed this life. Jo, as she was fondly called was a resident of Albuquerque, New Mexico. She was a consummate traveler, reader, gardener, crossword puzzler and cook.

WHEREAS, Jo received her Masters Degree and Doctorate in Education from the University of New Mexico and a Bachelors Degree from the University of Minnesota. With courage and determination she proceeded onward utilizing her knowledge and experience to ultimately influence and impact the field of special education as a world leader, trainer, and advocate for policy and practice for individuals with exceptionalities. This leadership led Jo to serve as Executive Director of the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE), to lead CASE delegations to Russia, and to serve as Chairperson for the 1987-1988 International Conference on Special Education in the People's Republic of China.

WHEREAS, in her professional life, Jo advocated for individuals with disabilities through multiple venues. As a special education administrator for the Albuquerque Public Schools she promoted and influenced the integration of children and youth with disabilities in general education. Using her experience and knowledge she provided expertise to public school systems, state departments of education, the US Department of Education, the University of British Columbia as a visiting professor, the Malagase Republic, the New York City Health Project, the White House Conference on Disabilities, and with presentations at conferences, conventions, seminars and workshops. Jo was additionally recognized by the Albuquerque community for her service as a member of the Albuquerque YWCA Board and Chairperson of the Foster Grandparents Advisor Board.

WHEREAS, Jo has held positions of high honor and prestige, she will be remembered most for her outstanding leadership in the Council for Exceptional Children, serving as International President (1982), receiving the CEC Outstanding Contributor Award (1993), and serving as the CASE Executive Director, and receiving the CASE Outstanding Contributor Award (2002). Jo was also the recipient of the Washington State University Outstanding Service Award and the New Mexico Jo Thomason Outstanding Leadership Award named in her honor.

WHEREAS, she expressed her views with a forceful conviction on all human rights concerns with determination, emotion and humor. She was respected for her flexibility, her open-mindedness, her ability to focus on a goal, and her ability to articulate the critical issues of our time with grace and eloquence. Through such articulation and representation she significantly advanced local, state, provincial, national, and international public policy for individuals with exceptionalities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council for Exceptional Children, during the Annual Meeting of the CEC Representative Assembly in New Orleans, Louisiana, 17th Day of April, Two Thousand and Four, and on behalf of exceptional children and their families, the members of the Council of Exceptional Children and the Council of Administrators of Special Education, unconditionally acknowledges the many outstanding contributions made by Jo Thomason during her career and expresses its deep appreciation and admiration for her life's work in advancing the quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities.