

## **NCWO Mourns the Loss of Pioneering Journalist and Feminist Leader**

### **Mal Johnson**

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October 30, 2007, Washington, DC – The National Council of Women's Organizations is deeply saddened by the passing of Mal Johnson on Sunday, October 28. Ms. Johnson served on NCWO's Executive Committee and chaired its Global Issues Task Force, where she was an exceptionally effective liaison for women's rights to embassies from around the world. Ms. Johnson also edited NCWO's recent publication, *50 Ways to Improve Women's Lives: The Essential Women's Guide to Achieving Equality, Health and Success*.

Mal Johnson began her career as a television reporter at the former WKBS in Philadelphia. The first female reporter hired by Cox Radio and Television News, she moved to Washington and traveled the world over the course of her 27 years there. As Cox's White House correspondent, Ms. Johnson covered five presidents as well as Capitol Hill, the State Department, and various Federal agencies. In 1980, she was promoted to Senior Washington Correspondent and assigned additional duties as National Director of Community Affairs.

In addition to her leadership role at the National Council, Ms. Johnson served on many boards, including the International Association of Women in Radio & Television and the Communications Consortium Media Center. She was a founding member of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, the

National Association of Black Journalists, and the National Broadcast Association for Community Affairs. She is the former National Chair of the American Women in Radio and Television Foundation. Inducted into the Journalists Hall of Fame in 2000, a television documentary of her life is in the archives of the History Makers of America. Upon her retirement, Ms. Johnson established a consulting firm, Medialinx International, and pursued a career as a volunteer leader for women's rights, especially for women of color and international women.

NCWO Chair Susan Scanlan noted that, "The National Council of Women's Organizations—and the world—has lost an important piece of our history. Even as an octogenarian and challenged by illness, Mal never retired from the fight for feminism and fairness. She was a dignified and forceful leader who inspired so many young women, especially women of color. For that reason, we are pleased to announce the creation of the Mal Johnson Sistership Program to provide a paid fellowship, or "sistership," for young women of color at NCWO. How proud and delighted Mal would be to hand a deserving young woman the opportunity to participate in public policymaking at its source!"

Thanks go to Ms. Johnson's many friends, especially Tesa Leon, for suggesting this leadership development initiative in her honor. More information on NCWO's Mal Johnson Sistership Program will be provided at an upcoming press conference and memorial ceremony to be announced soon.

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