



Business and
Professional
Women / St. Petersburg-
Pinellas

**2022 Lifetime Achievement
Award Submission:
Helen K. Leslie**

ELAINE GORDON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - Established in June 1994 to recognize State Representative Elaine Gordon, a long-time supporter of BPW legislative issues and a member of BPW/Miami Shores. The award has continued to be awarded in memory of Representative Gordon to those individuals who continuously promote full participation, equity and economic self-sufficiency for Florida's working women.



It is with great pride that BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas recommends Helen K. Leslie for the Lifetime Achievement Award. Helen turned 100 on April 7, 2021, and sadly passed away on January 18, 2022, at which time she was still a BPW member, having been a member for 78 years.

Throughout her life, Helen Krauss Leslie served as an outstanding leader in local, state, national and international communities. She was listed in the Who's Who of American Women and Who's Who of the South and Southwest multiple times for her work with numerous committees, various organizations, and national and international governments.

In 1940, Leslie enrolled at St. Petersburg Junior College and was the only female in her Mechanical Drawing class. In 1943, she graduated from Auburn University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration as one of only two female graduates in the Business College. (Read about Leslie's time at Auburn [here](#).) Leslie was president and owner of J&W Supply House, Inc. and co-owner, secretary and treasurer of Krauss Company, Krauss Roofing Company, Inc., and Stone and Clay Products Corporation. In addition to her business work, she also served as a member of the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce, Board of Directors for the St. Petersburg College (SPC) Foundation, the Advisory Committee for Vocational, Technical and Adult Education for the Pinellas County Schools and co-chair of the Executive Committee for Goals for St. Petersburg. She received the Outstanding Service to St. Petersburg citation in 1962. Leslie was active in state-wide organizations including the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, the Florida Elections Commission and Florida Textbook Evaluation Committee.

Nationally, she served as chair for the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service, a member of the National Advisory Council for Small Business Administration, National Safety Council's Women's Conference, the Committee on Employee Recruitment and Job Development for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Visitors for Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base.

Leslie's membership in BPW involved activities at the local, state, national and international level. She served as President of BPW/Florida in 1951-52 and President of BPW/USA in 1965-66. The speech she gave at her installation in 1965 can be found in the Library of Congress as well as on the BPW/FL website in





the members-only area. BPW/St. Petersburg annually presents the Helen K. Leslie Award to the member who rendered the most assistance to the LO President and Helen was often on hand for presentation of this award.

During her tenure as President of BPW/USA, the Federation and/or the Foundation:

- Fostered the growth of Nike (high school) and Samothrace (college) Clubs at the local level to continue the Youthpower USA theme.
- Set National Business Women's Week (NBWW) permanently to be celebrated during the third full week of October.
- Gave a reception for Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, wife of the President of the Republic of China.
- Objected to the use of "male" and "female" in classified newspaper ads under the enforcement of Title VII and the EEOC.
- Celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Foundation.
- Introduced data processing to BPW's record-keeping.
- Adopted the "Know Your America" program sponsored by the All-American Conference to Combat Communism.
- Testified before Congress against policies that permitted discrimination against women in government employment.
- Sponsored a seminar on "The Nature of Modern Management" in Washington.
- Studied the issue of 'part-time employment' and its effect on women.
- Introduced the BPW Action Manual for use by clubs and individuals.



Miss Sally Butler, a lawyer from Indianapolis, Ind., and past national and international president, Business and Professional Women's Clubs, is the national representative at the convention at the Suwannee Hotel. She is shown, above, center, with Miss Helen Krauss, St. Petersburg, left, state president and Mrs. Wilhelmina Harvey, Key West, president-elect, right. (See story, Page 24)

Internationally, she served as chair of the Congress of Business and Professional Women of the Americas, as well as for the Hemispheric Friendship Committee of BPW/USA. She made six Hemispheric Friendship trips to Central and South America, helped to organize Business and Professional Women's Clubs in Costa Rica and Nicaragua, was a guest of the West German Government in 1965 to promote international understanding, and received a Certificate of Achievement from the American Bureau for Medical Aid to China for her outstanding service in 1965.

In honor of her accomplishments and contributions to the SPC community, the SPC Alumni Association presented Helen Krauss Leslie with the Outstanding Alumna Award in 2012. "Helen is a wonderful example of what a person can achieve when they combine passion, talent and a first-rate education," said John Brown, President of the Alumni Association.



Check out the following videos of/about Helen:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRz-iSs_vvg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0eUYdQ936s&t=10s>

<https://youtube.com/shorts/1ISbrm2lHZM?feature=share>



Helen mentored and guided numerous women, whether they were BPW members or not, which is one of the reasons she will be missed by so many. Note that Helen is with Young Careerist Mary Giddens in this picture.

One of the obituary comments for Helen said, “*Helen Leslie made a difference! Her faithful and brilliant leadership with the St Petersburg College Foundation Board and support of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art*

has provided students and families in our community with education and hope! Thanks forever, Helen. YOU have been a treasure and beacon to us all for every one of your 100 remarkable years!! Truly, may you rest in peace. We will never forget you.”

What more can be said. Helen K. Leslie was truly unique and is deeply deserving of the BPW/FL Lifetime Achievement Award.