

## **Sally J. Pederson**

Sally J. Pederson served as Lieutenant Governor of Iowa from 1999 to 2007. During her time in office she led successful efforts to expand access to health care for children, require insurance coverage for mental illness, and create 1,000 new units of affordable housing for people with disabilities.

She chaired the Governor's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce Council, and served as a chair of the Board of Directors of Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates (IJAG), part of a national initiative focused on helping students most likely to drop out of school to graduate and become successfully employed.

Prior to her years in public office, Pederson was active in efforts to expand opportunities for people with disabilities. In 1990, Pederson spearheaded the creation of The Homestead, an agency providing innovative solutions to the challenges facing children and adults with autism.

She served as president of Polk County Health Services and as board president for the Autism Society of Iowa. She also served on the boards of the National Alliance for Autism Research (now Autism Speaks), Blank Children's Hospital, The Des Moines Playhouse, Very Special Arts Iowa, YWCA Aliber Child Care Center, the YMCA, the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation, Character Counts, and the State Special Education Advisory Panel. She is a former Trustee of Union Theological Seminary in New York.

In 2005, Pederson was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. In 2006, she served as honorary chair of the first-ever Special Olympics USA National Games. In 2007, she received the Spirit of Friendship Award from Iowa Best Buddies. In 2009, she received the Interfaith Alliance Award and the YWCA Women of Achievement Award.

Pederson is past chair of the Iowa Democratic Party, the Democratic Lt. Governors' Association, and past member of the Rules & Bylaws Committee of the Democratic National Committee.

Pederson is founder and chair of the Advisory Board for REACH (Realizing Education and Career Hopes), a two-year college program for students with cognitive disabilities, at the University of Iowa. Pederson is a director of the Northwest Area Foundation. She serves as co-chair of Justice Not Politics, as an advisor to the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence and to OneIowa, a marriage equality advocacy organization. Pederson is an adjunct assistant professor of Global Health at Des Moines University. Currently, Pederson is Executive Director of the Iowa Initiative to Reduce Unintended Pregnancies.

She is a former executive at Meredith Corporation in Des Moines, where she was the senior food editor of Better Homes & Gardens magazine.

Pederson and her husband, Jim Autry, have an adult son with autism.