

Madeleine May Kunin

B.S. cum laude, University of Massachusetts; M.S., Columbia University; M.A., University of Vermont; Program for State and Local Government and Fellow, Institute of Politics, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

Madeleine May Kunin is a former Vermont state legislator (1972-1978) Lieutenant Governor (1978-1982), and Governor of Vermont (1985-1991).

She is now a Marsh Scholar Professor-at-Large at the University of Vermont. She is giving guest lectures in a number of departments, including history and Women's Studies. She is teaching a seminar in "Women, Politics, and Leadership."

She serves as President of the board of the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) a non-governmental organization that she founded in 1991.

She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

She is also a regular commentator on Vermont Public Radio.

Previously Kunin was the Bicentennial Fellow-in-Residence at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, where she lectured on a variety of subjects, including her recent experience as U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland (1996-99) as well as on education, politics, the environment, leadership and women's issues. She was a Fellow of The Institute of Politics, Kennedy School, Harvard University and a Fellow at Harvard's Bunting Institute.

During her tenure as U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland, she dealt with the question of Jewish World War II assets and Nazi-looted gold. She helped to prod Switzerland to confront its past and take action. At the same time she worked to maintain a positive relationship between Switzerland and the United States, two countries that have a long standing friendship. Her knowledge of languages and government, and her familiarity with Switzerland, the country of her birth, enabled her to be an effective ambassador. Prior to her appointment as ambassador, she served for three and a half years as U.S. deputy secretary of education in the Clinton Administration. As chief operating officer of the department, Kunin served on the president's management council, which dealt with "reinventing government."

While at the U.S. Department of Education, Kunin played a key role in establishing a more efficient system of managing student loans, initiated an office of education technology, and worked on a series of legislative acts that included the Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act.

Kunin was a member of the delegation to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

She also continued the environmental work that had engaged her as governor of Vermont. She served on the President's Council on Sustainable Development, the board of the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation, and the President's Interagency Council on Women.

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Before coming to Washington, Kunin was involved in the 1992 Clinton campaign: co-chairing technology, and worked on a series of legislative acts that included the Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act.

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Before coming to Washington, Kunin was involved in the 1992 Clinton campaign: cochairing a national campaign of women for Clinton, serving as one of three members of a committee to assist the President in choosing his vice president, and acting as a key member of the presidential transition team.

Kunin's efforts in education, the environment, and women's issues played a large role in her rise through the political ranks of Vermont. She is the first woman to have served three terms as governor of any state and the fourth woman to be elected governor in her own right.

During her tenure, she substantially increased funding for education and concentrated on improving the quality of education. One of her environmental achievements was to establish the Vermont Housing and Land Conservation Trust Fund, a program that has created affordable housing and land preservation to the benefit of thousands of Vermonters. She initiated Dr. Dinosaur, a program to provide health insurance for Vermont children.

She has received more than twenty honorary degrees.

She is the author of two books, *Living a Political Life*, (Knopf, 1993) and *The Big Green Book*, (Barre Publishers, 1976).

Born in Zurich, Switzerland, Kunin immigrated to the United States with her mother and brother because of the threat of the Holocaust in 1940. Kunin has four children and five grandchildren. She is married to John W. Hennessey Jr., former Provost of The University of Vermont and Dean of Dartmouth's Tuck Business School.

Ambassador Kunin's Website: <http://www.mkunin.org>