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Newark Mourns For Trailblazing Ex-Councilwoman, Mildred Crump

Crump served as the first Black woman elected to the Newark City Council.

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Posted Sun, Dec 1, 2024 at 6:12 pm ET | Updated Wed, Dec 4, 2024 at 9:50 am ET



Mildred Crump, a former city councilwoman in Newark, died Sunday. She was 86. (Shutterstock)

NEWARK, NJ — The Newark community is mourning for a “trailblazer” who served as the first Black woman elected to its city council: Mildred Crump.

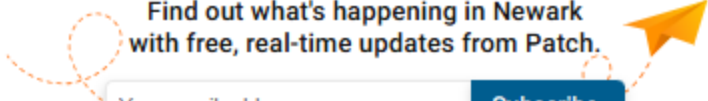
Crump, a former councilwoman in New Jersey’s largest city, died Sunday. She was 86.

Crump also broke a barrier as the first female president of the

Newark Municipal Council. She was also a longtime community activist, and has been [praised](#) as a “consummate and consistent advocate for women, children, senior citizens, the disabled, working families and those in need.”

Crump’s son, C. Lawrence Crump – who currently [holds the council president position](#) that his mother once occupied – shared the news of her death on Sunday.

“She loved doing what she did... being a public servant for the people,” he [wrote](#).



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Several of Crump’s peers mourned the longtime Newark resident’s death.

Gov. Phil Murphy said that he and first lady Tammy Murphy were saddened to learn of Crump’s passing, calling her a “giant, trailblazer and a dear friend.”

“Throughout her life, Mildred broke barriers and was well-accustomed to being the first – both professionally as the first Black braille teacher in New Jersey and in her political career as the first Black woman elected to the Newark City Council and the first woman to serve as its president,” Murphy said.

“A model public servant, Mildred deftly advocated for the most vulnerable in her community, working to uplift New Jersey’s women, children, senior citizens, families and residents with disabilities,” the governor added.

women, children, senior citizens, individuals with disabilities and working families."

"Although the honors and awards she received are too numerous to list here, Mildred remained ever humble and preferred to discuss her strong faith and her cherished family, including her son Larry, who she was proud to see assume her position as a Passaic Valley Sewerage Commissioner," the PVSC stated.

The city's mayor summarized the feelings of many in Newark, who are reeling at the void Crump left behind.

"Anyone who knew or was impacted by the heart and mind of Mildred Crump feels deep sadness at her passing today," Newark Mayor Ras Baraka wrote. "Yet, we cannot deny that our sadness is overshadowed by profound gratitude for how she plied her considerable gifts and talents to make the world a better place. Hers was a life brimming with countless acts to improve the lives of people not only here in Newark, but clear across the globe."

"The fact that she was the first Black woman to attain many stations in life is but a byproduct of her conviction in the righteousness of uplifting others, and as we remember her through the years to come, her name will rise first as one who defied every barrier to chart her own course and blaze a trail for the rest of us," Baraka said.

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Lt. Gov. Tahesha Way also mourned Crump's passing.

"Throughout her distinguished career in public service, Mildred broke down barriers and blazed a trail for countless people, including myself," Way said. "I am **praying** for Mildred's family and loved ones during this difficult time. She will be dearly missed."

U.S. Sen. Cory Booker, a Newark resident, also mourned Crump's death.

"To be the first is a privilege, and Mildred did not shy away from this responsibility when she became the first Black woman elected to the Newark City Council and the first woman to serve as the governing body's president," he wrote.

"She opened the doors of opportunity for so many and demonstrated unwavering commitment in her decades-long service to the City of Newark, delivering meaningful, material improvements for all of us that call Newark home," the senator continued. "Mildred was a mentor, colleague, and friend to me—an example of leadership and public service. She will be sorely missed, but her legacy as the Matriarch of Newark will endure. It is my hope that we may all live up to the standards that Mildred set for us."

It wasn't only politicians who remembered Crump fondly. The Newark-based Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) is also mourning for Crump, who served as a board commissioner for more than seven years.

The agency noted that Crump was the first Black woman to serve as in that role, also serving as board secretary during the entirety of her tenure between November 2015 and February 2023. Spokespeople called Crump an "extraordinary woman who will long be remembered for her tireless advocacy for