

KLARA FIRESTONE BIOGRAPHY

Klara was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, after the end of World War II, to two Holocaust survivor parents. She came to the United States as an infant and was raised in West Los Angeles. Following in her mother's footsteps, she began her volunteer career in her early twenties in the pediatric department of Los Angeles County General Hospital. Later, she served as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) in Dependency Court, working on behalf of children under the protective custody of the Court.

In 1978 she was asked by Rabbi Abraham Cooper, Associate Dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center / Museum of Tolerance, to begin a group for children of Holocaust survivors, becoming the founder and first president of Second Generation of Los Angeles. She has been serving for the past 15 years in her second term as president of the organization. In addition to her work with Second Generation, she is a founding member of the Coordinating Committee of Generations of the Shoah International, the only international umbrella organization for the Holocaust Survivor community; she was an interviewer for Steven Spielberg's Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation; she represented the Second Generation as a Board member of the Council of Post-War Holocaust Organizations; and currently sits on the Board of the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust.

In 2003, Klara was honored (along with her mother) for her work in the Holocaust community, by receiving the first Bessie Gotsfeld Humanitarian Award of AMIT Los Angeles Council. In 2005, she was honored by the Children's Scholarship Fund (Rabbi Sholem Perl) for "Support in Rebuilding the Jewish People," as well as being recognized by The 1939 Society at their annual Gala for her work in the Holocaust community. In 2010, she was honored by SHARE!, the Self Help and Recovery Exchange of the County of Los Angeles, with their Frances E. Jemmot Award for her work providing support groups for children of survivors. In 2012, Klara received a special recognition award at the Jewish National Fund's Tree of Life Gala for her service to the Holocaust survivor community.

Finally, Klara has been a guest lecturer on the Holocaust at various organizations, synagogues and schools, and was a featured speaker at the 2004 City of Los Angeles' annual city-wide Holocaust commemoration.

Professionally, she was a legal secretary and paralegal for 31 years before returning to graduate school to earn her Masters degree in clinical psychology. She specializes in treating two unique populations . . . the Second Generation (children of Holocaust survivors) and transgender individuals.