

Michelle Dominique Laxalt

July 25, 1954 - August 19, 2023



Michelle Dominique Laxalt passed away peacefully in Reno, NV, on Saturday, August 19th at the age of 69. She leaves behind her three children, Adam, Tori, and Tessa, her four grandchildren, and a large extended family of siblings, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Michelle was born on July 25, 1954, to her father, former Nevada Governor and U.S. Senator Paul Dominique Laxalt, and her mother, Jacklyn Ross Laxalt. She grew up in Carson City into a family of six children, spending most of her time at her family's rambling home on the outskirts of town. She also spent much of her time in the quiet of the Carson City home of her Basque immigrant grandparents, Dominique and Theresa Laxalt, who gave her loving guidance and support that shaped many of her values. From early childhood, she showed a Basque beauty, a high intelligence, and an amazing sense of humor.

Michelle was a teenager when her father was elected Governor of Nevada and the family moved

into Nevada's Governor's mansion. When Paul was later elected by Nevadans to the U.S. Senate, Michelle, at the age of 20, accompanied her father to Washington D.C., where she had a front row seat to history and worked with her father to make the Reagan Revolution a reality. She was fiercely loyal to her father, whom she loved and supported until he passed at age 96 in 2018.

Michelle had a distinguished career in government, serving in positions both in the executive and legislative branches. She served in the Reagan Administration as the Director of Legislation at the Agency for International Development (AID) and as the senior legislative liaison officer for the Department of State's Under Secretary for Military and Security Assistance. Ms. Laxalt had extensive experience in the legislative branch as well, serving in various positions in the offices of U.S. Senators Ted Stevens, Jake Garn, and James Buckley.

Working at the time as a single mom, Michelle's brilliance, tenacity, and hard work led her to form her own business in 1984. She became the first Republican woman in Washington to form her own consulting firm. By 1993, she was named by the Washingtonian magazine as one of the top 50 lobbyists in Washington, DC. In 1997, she performed perhaps the most heroic act of her life. With the help of her beloved mother (a substance abuse counselor and recovering addict), she forced her 18-year-old son into treatment and saved his life. She always felt blessed to have such a wonderful mother, who she greatly mourned the loss of only a few years later.

Michelle navigated the complexities of issues, politics, and personalities in our nation's capital for businesses across America that included legends of the 20th century like Roger Milliken, Jack Valenti, and T. Boone Pickens. She also took time to advocate for causes near and dear to her heart, and she did so without taking a dime. Michelle was instrumental in helping pass what the late, great Senator Orrin Hatch described as the "most comprehensive child crimes and protection bill in our Nation's history", the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006. Senator Hatch proudly praised Michelle for her determined efforts on the floor of the Senate as they passed the bill.

It was during these years that Michelle became a well-known television pundit. She frequently appeared on Fox News, Fox Business, the Networks, and on CNN's Crossfire with Larry King. She hosted a nationally syndicated radio show called Newsmaker for many years and became a member of the American Women in Radio and Television.

Yet, through all her professional successes in Washington, Michelle remained a fierce, lifelong advocate for her family, the many causes she championed on behalf of so many people, and for her beloved home state of Nevada. Michelle's strength, determination and courage became especially apparent when, in her early fifties, she began to develop Multiple Sclerosis, and yet continued to work and excel for a number of years thereafter. She moved back to Nevada after she could no longer work in 2012. Back home, she supported her son when he was elected by Nevadans to serve as Attorney General in 2014 and invested her time in her daughters' lives and careers.

In addition to her children to whom she was so devoted, Michelle leaves four grandchildren Sophia, Isabella, Jack, and Lilliana. As they grow up, they will come to know the story of their beautiful, strong and courageous grandmother.

May the souls of the faithfully departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Requiescat in peace. We love you. Recitation of the Holy Rosary will be held on Friday, August 25th at 5:00 pm at St. Thomas Aquinas Cathedral, 310 W. 2nd Street, Reno, celebrated by Bishop Daniel Mueggenborg of Reno. Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, August 26th at 10:00am, also at the Cathedral, celebrated by Bishop Gregory Gordon of Las Vegas. Interment will be held at Lone Mountain Cemetery in Carson City, NV. Condolence messages can be expressed in Michelle's Book of Memories at www.waltonsfuneralhomes.com.