

Ina O. Milton obituary



Ina O. Milton passed away on September 12, 2025, at the age of 82. She spent most of her years in her hometown of Washington, D.C., where she was a champion of the arts, an early pioneer in computer technology, a fiercely loving mother, a proud grandmother, a caring friend, and a lifelong teacher to many.

In the 1970s, while working at the U.S. Agency for International Development, Ina put herself through night school to earn an MBA at George Washington University. At a time when few women entered the field, she took courses in computer programming and went on to apply that knowledge in groundbreaking ways,

helping to automate payroll systems for federal agencies during the early days of computing.

Ina's toughness and smarts were matched by her generosity which she expressed in both large and small ways. More than anything, Ina was genuine-if she supported you, you knew it was because she truly liked and believed in you. She was a founding board member of Synetic Theater and later served as president of its board, drawn by a deep appreciation for its unique blend of movement, acrobatics, and physical storytelling. She supported the theater from the beginning and loved the people who made up the Synetic community. For decades, Ina taught English as a Second Language, leading classes and mentoring countless students, many of whom she stayed in touch with long after their time together. She also gave her time generously in other ways as well, volunteering at the White House and the Library of Congress.

Above all, Ina could be counted on--as a loyal friend, mother, and sister. She hosted large Thanksgiving gatherings for decades, made annual trips to the Outer Banks to be with friends, and always made time for a phone call to check in on life's ups and downs.

There was something quietly enigmatic about her. She had her own way of combining sensitivity, resolve, humor, pragmatism, and a deep sense of conviction about right and wrong. In her final days, when asked what she would want to say to her grandchildren, Teo and Stella, when they turned twenty, she replied, "Enjoy college, enjoy life, and keep smiling." It was said in her unmistakable way-simple yet powerful, her voice holding more feeling than the words alone could convey.

Ina is survived by her daughter, Lisa Milton; her two beloved grandchildren, Teo and Stella; her sister, Robin; her nephew, Michael; and her close-knit group of friends affectionately known as the "Usual Suspects." Private services were held.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](#).

Published by The Washington Post on Apr. 19, 2026.