

# Tribute To Helen Armstrong

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## [Sen. Christopher J. Dodd](#)



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Mr. President, today I pay tribute to a gifted musician, successful entrepreneur, devoted wife and mother, constituent, and friend, Helen Armstrong, who passed away on April 28 of this year. Helen was an international virtuoso violinist who dedicated her life to enriching the lives of others through music.

Helen Armstrong was born on March 16, 1943, in Rockford, IL. Her career as a violinist began at the age of 3. Before long, she was enrolled at the Juilliard School where she quickly caught the eye of renowned instructors Ivan Galamian and Dorothy DeLay. She was among the select few chosen to study under them in pursuit of a solo career. Other violinists in this group include Helen's childhood friend Yitzhak Perlman and Pinchas Zuckerman. In 1976 Helen made her Lincoln Center debut and went on to perform with various orchestras including the Boston Pops, the Indianapolis Symphony, and the New Polish Philharmonic. She has also toured North America, Europe, and Asia as a recitalist.

But Helen Armstrong was not content to be a successful and highly accomplished musician. She was also an entrepreneur and philanthropist who brought music into the lives of others through performance and education. She founded Armstrong Chamber Concerts, Inc. and served as its artistic director for more than 22 years. What began one summer as a way to lure musicians out of New York City to perform in Helen's home in Washington, CT became a thriving enterprise encompassing performance series in Litchfield and Fairfield counties as well as Carnegie Hall recitals, corporate events, and educational programs in schools in Connecticut and New York City. At the heart of ACC is Helen's artistic vision to broaden public interest in chamber music through performance and education, and its primary focus has been to bring musical education to public and private schools through its unique Students' Music Enrichment Program. Over 100,000 students have benefited from this program thanks to Helen Armstrong's remarkable vision and dedication to this cause. One of the most noteworthy examples of Helen's benevolent spirit were her performances at a prison in Danbury. She counted those performances as some of her most rewarding outreach experiences, and said the music made the inmates feel that life was worth living. Helen dedicated her life to spreading her love of classical music, and she has touched the lives and hearts of countless citizens, including my own. I had the privilege of seeing Helen perform, and was truly captivated by her immense talent and passion. Her performance moved me to act as an honorary chairperson of the concert series she organized, and I am honored to have been associated with her organization.

Helen Armstrong was a remarkable woman in several respects. Along with her accomplishments as a solo violinist and founder of a successful nonprofit chamber music organization, she was a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother. She was widowed by her first husband, Alan Cohen, in 1978. Despite this terrible loss, Helen continued to promote ACC's mission and to perform while raising her two children. After a long relationship, she married Ajit Hutheesing in 1996. In addition to him, she is survived by her children Debbie and David, her grandchildren Brenden, Tyler, and Cailey, her sister Nancy, and her brother Robert. I offer my deepest condolences to all of them. They have lost a beloved member of their family. Helen's great talent and generous spirit will be sorely missed by them and countless others.