

CATHY COSTELLO

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Cathy Costello earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Classical Vocal Performance from the University of Kansas. She volunteers her time entertaining veterans and the elderly, raising money for Alzheimer's research and singing for churches, Governors, Presidents, DAR and other civic events. In the early years she taught primary education. She was married for 33 years to the late Labor Commissioner Mark Costello, and they raised their 5 children in Edmond, Oklahoma.

An entrepreneur in her own right, Cathy started her first business in high school to fund her college education. Together, Cathy and Mark developed and launched 8 businesses in 6 industries around the world. Today she is the owner and Chairman of the Board of her International and Global Technology Company, U.S.A. Digital Communications, Inc.

Cathy's late husband, Mark Costello was elected as Oklahoma's State Labor Commissioner serving from 2011-2015, but his second term was tragically cut short. Their oldest son has suffered with severe mental illness and schizophrenia for many years and on August 23rd, 2015 after a quiet dinner at a local restaurant, their son inexplicably stabbed Mark repeatedly to death during a paranoid, delusional psychotic break. Mark died in Cathy's arms.

Since Mark's death, Cathy invests her time as a state and national speaker on mental health issues. Cathy has been instrumental in passing landmark state and federal legislation to improve how we address mental health needs in our communities, health care approaches and the workplace and frequently appears on local and national radio and television including NPR and Sirius XM radio. By invitation, Cathy addressed the New Jersey Legislature in October of 2017 before 400 attendees to present her legislative reforms and the impact of mental health on the work force and the positive outcomes for AOT - Assisted Outpatient Treatment, a law she brought to Oklahoma bearing her husband's name. She was a presenter at the 32nd annual 'Leadership Oklahoma 2018' sponsored by the Chickasaw Nation. Cathy is passionate about CIT - Crisis Intervention Training and a frequent presenter during this 40 hour course for Police, Sheriff and Tribal Departments and Police Academies across the state, educating law enforcement and first responders to recognize and assist an individual in a mental health crisis. She continues to work on mental health reform bills at the State Capitol.

Cathy has been an advisory board member for the Mental Health Association of Oklahoma; a member of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness); a State Planning and Advisory Council Member for the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; National Council for Behavioral Health; Oklahoma Behavioral Health Association board member and a committee member for National Catholic Charities Partnership on Disabilities as well as a Crisis Intervention Training presenter. She is a board member for public policy news source 'Oklahoma Watch' and a member of AMBUCS "inspiring mobility and independence" and The Committee of 100, supporting police and first responders. Cathy has received the Dr. Krishna "Lifting the Stigma" award as well as the "A.C.C.E.S.S. Award" presented by the Oklahoma Council for Exceptional Children and OK-AHEAD. Cathy was also a 2022 recipient of the 55 Over 55 Inspiring Oklahomans award.

