# Pioneering Computing Figure Lynn Conway Passes Away at 86



Lynn Conway, a pioneering figure in computing and a trailblazer for transgender rights, has passed away at the age of 86. Conway, who was born in 1938 in White Plains, New York, co-invented Very Large Scale Integration (VLSI) during her time in Silicon Valley. This innovative methodology in microchip design has become foundational in modern digital devices such as smartphones and computers.

Throughout her early career, Conway faced significant personal challenges as she transitioned gender during a period when societal acceptance was minimal. In the 1960s, she was fired from IBM after revealing her plans to transition. Despite this setback, Conway continued her work at Xerox’s PARC research lab, where she collaborated with Carver Mead to develop VLSI.

Later in her career, Conway served as a professor at the University of Michigan. Post-retirement, she became an influential voice in the transgender community, using her personal website to provide guidance and support to others. In recent years, her contributions to technology and advocacy for transgender rights have been increasingly recognized. IBM issued an apology for her dismissal in 2020, and she was inducted into the National Inventors’ Hall of Fame in 2021.

Conway is survived by her husband Charlie Rogers, two children, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.