# Technology Pioneer and Transgender Rights Advocate Lynn Conway Dies at 86



Lynn Conway, a pioneering figure in technology and a key advocate for transgender rights, passed away at the age of 86 on June 9, according to an announcement by the University of Michigan, where she served as a professor emerita. Conway was known for her groundbreaking work in the microchip industry during the 1960s and 1970s in Silicon Valley. She co-invented the Very Large Scale Integration (VLSI) method, crucial to modern digital devices, alongside Carver Mead.

Conway was born in 1938 in White Plains, New York, and graduated from Columbia University. She moved to Silicon Valley to work on an IBM supercomputer project but was dismissed after deciding to undergo gender transition. Despite facing significant personal and professional challenges, Conway continued her career at Xerox’s PARC research lab. Her work there led to the development of VLSI, a methodology that revolutionized microchip design.

Conway's career included a stint at DARPA and a professorship at the University of Michigan, where she retired in 1998. Post-retirement, she became a prominent figure in the transgender community, sharing her experiences and providing resources through her personal website. Her contributions to technology were eventually recognized with multiple honors, including her induction into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2022.

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