Every great once in a while, a person comes along who both changes lives in the community and leaves a legacy for others to follow. Such a person passed away this weekend, Gwen Jackson.

In her 90 years, she rose from a Red Cross volunteer in 1961 to become a leader of numerous not-for-profits at the local and national level. To rise may not be the most accurate term as it implies only vertical movement whereas Ms. Jackson’s influence was felt across multiple sectors of business and civic participation.

Her influence was felt not only in the organizations in which she participated such as YWCA, NAACP, and American Red Cross, but also in the lives she encountered. And quite frankly as a prominent Black woman, Ms. Jackson’s undoubtedly influenced many who never had a chance to meet her.

I ask that in addition to recognizing her, we also honor her legacy by continuing to give back to the community.

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