Faye Wattleton

Faye Wattleton fought for women's rights, opposing legal restrictions on abortion (1). Faye was the first African American to be president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). PPFA is the world's largest and oldest voluntary reproductive health organization. PPFA has services available to an average of four million Americans each year.

Faye was born on July 8, 1943. Her full name is Alyce Faye Wattleton. She attended Ohio State University when she was 16 years old and received a Bachelor's Degree in nursing in 1964. She practiced nursing for two years at Miami Valley Hospital School of Nursing. After nursing for two years she earned a full scholarship to a graduate program for maternal and infant health care in New York City (1).

Faye eventually earned a Master of Science degree in 1967. She began to focus on problems dealing with unwanted pregnancies and inadequate prenatal care, which she had seen while at school when she was an assistant public health director. In 1978, Faye was appointed the first black, first female, and youngest president in PPFA's history (2). During Faye's time as president, the visibility and legislative influence of antiabortion forces galvanized the movement that was described as pro-choice rather than pro-abortion.

Faye was awarded the Humanist of the Year in 1986. This was a very special award to her because she was the youngest, first black women, second black, and sixth women to accomplish this achievement (1). Faye resigned in 1992 form Planned Parenthood to host a daytime talk show. At the time of her departure from Planned Parenthood, Planned Parenthood had become the nation's seventh largest charity. She now speaks to local colleges and at special occasions.

1. Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia Deluxe. (1998). Faye Wattleton. The Learning Company, Inc.
2. Faye Wattleton. (2001). Fabulous, Fearless Faye. <http://www.emory.edu/WOMENS_CENTER/Faye.html>.
3. National Women's Hall of Fame. (1998). Faye Wattleton. National Women's Hall of Fame.