

Jim Free Honored by Former President

By GREG MENZA. ATLANTA, GA - A Columbia native who once worked in Congressional relations for President Jimmy Carter was recently honored by the former president.



Jim Free and his wife, Ann, were recognized for their support of the Carter Center's work to alleviate human suffering.

On Oct. 20 Carter dedicated the Upper Commons meeting area of the Carter Center in honor of the Frees. A 1965 graduate of Columbia Central High School, he is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Free.

Free worked in Congressional relations for the Carter administration from 1976 - 1980. In the mid-1970s, he was Chief of Staff for then-Speaker of the House Ned McWherter. Free is currently a principal in the Washington, D.C., governmental affairs firm of Smith-Free.

"Jim and Ann Free have been close family friends for more than 30 years," President Carter said. "Rosalynn and I are pleased to recognize their dedication to the Carter Center's work by naming this important space in honor of their tireless support."



Free organized Carter's 1976 Tennessee campaign for president and his 1980 campaign in the South. Jim and Ann married during the Carter administration and became close friends with the Carters while they were in the White House. They continued to support the humanitarian efforts of the Carter Center throughout the years.

"Ann and I have long admired the Carters for their honesty, integrity and dedication to improving the lives of the less fortunate. It is a privilege for us to work with the Carter Center as it advances peace and health worldwide--now and into the future," Free said.

Close family and friends, including former Tennessee Governor Ned McWherter and former Senator and Mrs. Jim Sasser, attended the ceremony at the Carter Center.

The Carter Center was founded in 1982 by President Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, in partnership with Emory University. A not-for-profit, nongovernmental organization, the Center has helped to improve life for people in more than 65 countries by resolving conflicts; advancing democracy, human rights and economic opportunity; preventing diseases; improving mental health care; and teaching farmers to increase crop production.

More information about the Center is available at www.cartercenter.org.

Originally published in The Daily Herald, November 14, 2005.