



Ambassador Andrew Young

Andrew Jackson Young Jr. is a pioneering American politician, diplomat and civil rights leader whose career has spanned more than six decades of transformative change. Beginning as a pastor, Young became an early leader in the civil rights movement, serving as executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and a close confidant to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

As a strategist and negotiator, Young played key roles in the historic campaigns in Birmingham, St. Augustine, Selma and Atlanta that led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. He was with Dr. King in Memphis when King was assassinated in 1968.

In 1972, Young was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, becoming the first African American elected to Congress from Georgia since Reconstruction. During his time in Congress, he sat on the Rules and the Banking and Urban Development Committees, helped to establish the U.S. Institute for Peace and negotiated federal funds for Atlanta's public transit system.

In 1977, President Jimmy Carter appointed Young as the first African American United States Ambassador to the United Nations, where he championed human rights and advocated for the peaceful settlement of conflicts in Africa.

Young served two terms as Mayor of Atlanta (1982-1990), bringing billions in new private investment to the city and continuing programs that included minority- and female-owned businesses in city contracts. He played a pivotal role in bringing the 1996 Summer Olympics to Atlanta and has founded numerous organizations working on public policy, education, health and human rights.

Young has received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, France's Légion d'honneur, the NAACP Spingarn Medal, and more than 45 honorary degrees. His life exemplifies the power of nonviolent resistance, strategic advocacy and sustained commitment to justice and equality.



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