

# Awardees

## *President Jimmy Carter*

HONORARY VIETNAMESE AMERICAN



### **A LIFE COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE, COMMUNITY & HUMAN RIGHTS**

VANG 2009 is pleased and honored to present the Honorary Vietnamese American Golden Torch Award to President Jimmy Carter, for his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development.

During his presidency (1977-1981), Carter's mediation was a vital contribution to the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt. During a time when the cold war between East and West was still predominant, he placed renewed emphasis on the place of human rights in international politics. In addition, President Jimmy Carter signed the Refugee Act of 1980, which provides a definition of a refugee, creates the Office of Refugee Resettlement, sets the number of refugee admissions at 50,000 per year (unless in case of an emergency), and allows a refugee to adjust his/her status after one year to become a permanent resident and, after four more years, to become a U.S. citizen. On January 21, 1977, President Carter pardoned all Vietnam War Draft Evaders Through his Carter Center, which celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2002, Carter has since his presidency undertaken very extensive and persevering conflict resolution on several continents. He has shown outstanding commitment to human rights, and has served as an observer at countless elections all over the world. He has worked hard on many fronts to fight tropical diseases and to bring about growth and progress in developing countries. Carter has thus been active in several of the problem areas that have figured prominently

in the over one hundred years of Peace Prize history.

In a situation currently marked by threats of the use of power, Carter has stood by the principles that conflicts must as far as possible be resolved through mediation and international cooperation based on international law, respect for human rights, and economic development.

For his life's work and contributions, in 2002, President Carter was awarded the Norwegian Nobel Peace Prize.

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Jimmy Carter (James Earl Carter, Jr.), thirty-ninth president of the United States, was born October 1, 1924, in the small farming town of Plains, Georgia, and grew up in the nearby community of Archery. His father, James Earl Carter, Sr., was a farmer and businessman; his mother, Lillian Gordy, a registered nurse.

He was educated in the Plains public schools, attended Georgia Southwestern College and the Georgia Institute of Technology, and received a B.S. degree from the United States Naval Academy in 1946. In the Navy he became a submariner, serving in both the Atlantic and Pacific fleets and rising to the rank of lieutenant. Chosen by Admiral Hyman Rickover for the nuclear submarine program, he was assigned to Schenectady, N.Y., where he took graduate work at Union College in reactor technology and nuclear physics, and served as senior officer of the pre-commissioning crew of the Seawolf, the second nuclear submarine.

On July 7, 1946, he married Rosalynn Smith

of Plains. When his father died in 1953, he resigned his naval commission and returned with his family to Georgia. He took over the Carter farms, and he and Rosalynn operated Carter's Warehouse in Plains, a general-purpose seed and farm supply company. He quickly became a leader of the community, serving on county boards supervising education, the hospital authority, and the library. In 1962 he won election to the Georgia Senate. He lost his first gubernatorial campaign in 1966, but won the next election, becoming Georgia's 76th governor on January 12, 1971. He was the Democratic National Committee campaign chairman for the 1974 congressional and gubernatorial elections.

On December 12, 1974, he announced his candidacy for president of the United States. He won his party's nomination on the first ballot at the 1976 Democratic National Convention, and was elected president on November 2, 1976.

Jimmy Carter served as president from January 20, 1977 to January 20, 1981. Significant foreign policy accomplishments of his administration included the Panama Canal treaties, the Camp David Accords, the treaty of peace between Egypt and Israel, the SALT II treaty with the Soviet Union, and the establishment of U.S. diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. He championed human rights throughout the world. On the domestic side, the administration's achievements included a comprehensive energy program conducted by a new Department of Energy; deregulation in energy, transportation, communications, and finance; major educational programs under a new Department of Education; and major environmental protection legislation, including the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

In 1982, he became University Distinguished Professor at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and founded The Carter Center. Actively guided by President Carter, the nonpartisan and nonprofit Center addresses national and international issues of public policy. Carter Center fellows, associates, and staff join with President Carter in efforts to resolve conflict, promote democracy, protect human rights, and prevent disease and other afflictions. Through the Global 2000 program, the Center advances health and agriculture in the developing world.

President Carter and The Carter Center have

engaged in conflict mediation in Ethiopia and Eritrea (1989), North Korea (1994), Liberia (1994), Haiti (1994), Bosnia (1994), Sudan (1995), the Great Lakes region of Africa (1995-96), Sudan and Uganda (1999), and Venezuela (2002-2003). Under his leadership The Carter Center has sent forty-five international election monitoring delegations to elections in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. These include Panama (1989), Nicaragua (1990), Guyana (1992), Venezuela (1998), Nigeria (1999), Indonesia (1999), East Timor (1999), Mexico (2000), China (2001), and Jamaica (2002).

The permanent facilities of The Carter Presidential Center were dedicated in October 1986 and include the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum, administered by the National Archives. Also open to visitors is the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in Plains, administered by the National Park Service.

Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter volunteer one week a year for Habitat for Humanity, a nonprofit organization that helps needy people in the United States and in other countries renovate and build homes for themselves. He also teaches Sunday school and is a deacon in the Maranatha Baptist Church of Plains. For recreation, he enjoys fly-fishing, woodworking, jogging, cycling, tennis, and skiing. The Carters have three sons, one daughter, eight grandsons.

*Awardees*

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