Andrew (“Andy”) Goodman
Memorialized by Stephanie Wolf

Birth: November 23, 1943, New York, NY
Death: June 21, 1964, Neshoba County, Mississippi

Andrew Goodman was born the second of three sons of Robert and Dr. Carolyn Goodman on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. He attended the unconventional Walden School and during his sophomore year, he went to Washington, D. C. to participate in the Youth March for Integrated Schools. Upon graduation, he enrolled in Queens College with an intention of studying drama. In April 1964, he was accepted into the Mississippi Summer Freedom Project (sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality) to register black voters in Mississippi. He joined two other civil rights workers, Mickey Schwerner and James Chaney, in the hostile atmosphere of Meridian, Mississippi on June 21, 1964. At the end of Goodman’s first day in Mississippi, the three young men vanished. Their case made national headlines and the FBI soon uncovered the bodies of these three men in an earthen dam; all had been beaten and shot to death. On December 4, 1964, federal agents arrested nineteen men for “conspiring to deprive Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman of their civil rights.” No one was ever charged with murder in this case, although eventually eighteen Klansmen were tried for manslaughter. When a verdict was reached three years later, seven men were convicted, each serving less than eight years. On September 14, 2004, Mississippi State Attorney General Jim Hood announced that he was gathering evidence for a charge of murder and intended to take the case to a grand jury. Nine months later, long-standing Ku Klux Klan member Edgar Ray Killen was arrested. Exactly 41 years to the day after the murders and 80 years old, Killen was found guilty of three counts of manslaughter — not murder. He was sentenced to sixty years in prison—twenty years for each count, to be served consecutively. Less than two months into his sentence, Killen was freed on bail pending appeal and the case was closed. The film “Mississippi Burning” (1988) is based on this true story, as were many other films, novels, plays and songs.

"Your friendship was fleeting, and your murder was tragic. You are the symbol of all that was right with our fight for equality and peace, and everything that was horribly wrong about hatred and ignorance.” - Stephanie Wolf (classmate at Queens College)