



David Freeman

April 11, 2026

It is with deep respect, admiration, and love that we remember Dr. David Freeman, a distinguished professor at Colorado State University, whose life's work and quiet generosity left a lasting mark on both the world as well as those closest to him.

For decades, Dr. Freeman dedicated himself to teaching, mentoring, and discovery. At Colorado State University, he was more than a professor—he was a guide, a steady voice of wisdom, and a champion for his students. His classroom was a place of rigor and curiosity, where students were challenged to think broadly and act purposefully. He believed education was not an end in itself, but a responsibility—one that carried beyond lecture halls and into the lives of others.

That sense of purpose shaped his lifelong commitment to agricultural development. Through research, international collaboration, and hands-on fieldwork, Dr. Freeman worked to strengthen farming practices and food systems in communities around the globe. His efforts helped create sustainable solutions, empowered farmers, and improved livelihoods in places where such progress was not easily won. Though he rarely called attention to his accomplishments, his impact lives on in the resilience of the communities he served and in the many students who continue his work.

Born into a hard working family in Glendive, Montana at the end of the Great Depression, he learned the value of hard work and the importance of an education. The badlands of Makoshika State Park were his playground and the family Dairy Queen was his work place. He began his post-high school academic career at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana (Class of 1961), an institution that remained near and dear to his heart throughout his entire life, and an institution he credits as the foundation of his successes. Rocky is where he met the love of his life, Sandra, and where the two joined hands and their hearts with a commitment to one another for the remainder of their lives. When he was accepted to the Master's program at the University of Pittsburgh, the two of them boarded a Northern Pacific Train bound east, and began their life together as he built his career. After completing his Master's program in Pittsburgh, he found his way to Washington DC and into the newly established US Peace Corps program. It was 1962 and he was the new desk officer for the US Peace Corps Nepal Desk, and it was here that David and Sandra discovered and developed a passion around international development, and particularly for South Asia. His success and accomplishments with the Peace Corps created an opportunity to return to academia and complete a PhD program at the University of Denver, folding together his developing interest in agricultural development and international affairs.

Yet for all his professional achievements, it was in his family that Dr. Freeman found his greatest joy and deepest pride. He was a devoted and loving husband, whose partnership was rooted in respect, warmth, and enduring affection. To his children, he was a constant source of encouragement, intelligence and strength—present for the everyday moments, generous with his time, and unwavering in his belief in who they could become. He celebrated their successes, supported them through challenges, and filled their lives with a steady, reassuring love that will never fade. He taught his children that your word is your bond, a handshake means something,

character is paramount, and integrity is everything.

He brought the same patience, wisdom, and quiet strength to his home life as he did to his profession. He listened deeply, encouraged generously, and led by example. His family knew him not for his titles or accomplishments, but for his kindness, his integrity, and his unwavering presence. Those who knew him best will remember not only his intellect and dedication, but his kindness, humility, and gentle humor. He led not with fanfare, but with consistency and care—showing through his actions what it means to live a life of integrity and service.

Dr. David Freeman leaves behind a legacy that reaches far beyond titles or accolades: in the students he inspired, the communities he helped strengthen, and the family he cherished above all else. His life was one of purpose and compassion, and he will be deeply missed, always remembered, and forever honored. His legacy cannot be captured fully in words: a life of driven purpose, unbound humility, and service to family, friends and community. His influence will live on in the fields he helped cultivate, the students he mentored, and the family he cherished above all.

He is preceded in death by his father (Simon/1972), Mother (Helen/2002), Wife of 62 years (Sandra/ 2022), Sister-in-law (Pamela/2024) and Grandson (Ren/2023). He is survived by his Brother Jim, Sister Corinne (Jerry), Sons (Brent/Renea, Brad/Sonya and Bryan/Nicole), Daughters (Rebecca/Ryan, Arshi/Rob, and Rakhshi), Grandchildren (Navarre/Emily, Kiana/Koby, Nai'a, Remington, Lexington, Alex/Teresa, Hannah, Noah, Kira, Ishara, and Shifa), and Great Grandchildren (Lainey, Emma, and Josie)--all who carry his memory into the future.

As a lifelong lover of books, a man in constant pursuit of knowledge, and a

person with a genuine love of reading, please consider a donation in any amount to the Rocky Mountain College Library (406) 657-1008 or to his childhood playground, the Friends of Makoshika (406) 939-4254.

In honor of David's life, accomplishments, and memories, a graveside memorial service will tentatively be held at 10:30 AM on July 15, 2026, at Grandview Cemetery with a reception to follow at Bohlender Funeral Chapel in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Upcoming Events

Graveside Memorial Service

JUL 15. 10:30 AM (MT)

Bohlender Funeral Chapel
121 W. Olive St.
Fort Collins, CO 80524

Tribute Wall



“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Bohlender Funeral Chapel - April 21 at 09:46 AM