TJF Medals go to Warner, Scalia, and Brundtland

U.S. SEN. John W. Warner of Virginia, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, and Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway, United Nations special envoy on climate change, are the 2008 recipients of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals.

The medals recognize outstanding achievement in three fields of great interest to Jefferson – citizen leadership, law, and architecture. They are sponsored jointly by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and the University of Virginia and are the highest external honors bestowed by the university, which grants no honorary degrees.

The Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals are presented each year during UVa’s Founder’s Day activities, which mark the anniversary of Jefferson’s birth on April 13, 1743. The recipients are also honored at a formal dinner at Monticello.

Warner is the second recipient of the TJF Medal in Citizen Leadership. The inaugural award was presented last year to Alan Greenspan, former chairman of the Federal Reserve.

Warner was first elected to the Senate in 1978 and is serving his fifth term. (He has announced that he will not seek re-election this year.) A former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, he is the second-longest serving U.S. senator from Virginia.

Warner is a graduate of Washington and Lee University and UVa Law School. He served in the Navy in World War II and in the Marine Corps in the Korean War. His career in public service has included terms as an assistant U.S. attorney, undersecretary of the Navy, and secretary of the Navy.

Scalia is the 32nd recipient of the TJF Medal in Law. He joins two other sitting Supreme Court justices, Anthony M. Kennedy and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, in receiving the award.

Scalia was appointed to the Supreme Court by President Reagan in 1986. He currently ranks second in seniority among the associate justices.

A graduate of Georgetown University and Harvard Law School, Scalia taught at UVa Law School from 1967 to 1971. Prior to being appointed to the Supreme Court, he served as a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Washington, D.C., Circuit and as assistant attorney general for the Office of Legal Counsel.

Brundtland is the 43rd recipient of the TJF Medal in Architecture. A physician, politician, diplomat, and activist, she is one of very few non-architects to receive the honor.

Brundtland holds a medical degree from the University of Oslo and a master’s degree from Harvard. After working in Norway’s public health system, she was named minister of the environment in 1971 and in 1981 was elected prime minister, becoming the youngest person and first woman to hold that position. She was prime minister three times (1981, 1986–89, and 1990–96).

In the early 1980s, Brundtland chaired the U.N. World Commission on Environment and Development. In 1998, she began a five-year term as director-general of the World Health Organization, and was named U.N. special envoy on climate change in 2007.