

Thomas Jefferson MONTICELLO

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Muhtar Kent Featured Speaker for Monticello's 2011 Independence Day Ceremony

Muhtar Kent, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of The Coca-Cola Company, will be the featured speaker at Monticello's 49th annual Independence Day Celebration and Naturalization Ceremony.

Kent is a dual citizen of the United States and Turkey and someone whose life has been influenced by his travels around the world and shaped by opportunities he has had in the U.S. In a recent speech he said, "I work for a company that is unabashedly optimistic. We learned this trait from America itself. For the last 124 years, Coca-Cola has grown up right beside America. We have reinvented and renewed ourselves countless times, just like this great nation."

The Coca-Cola Company has been a longtime supporter of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation's global education mission. The company's philanthropy began with support for the creation and distribution of "Discover Jefferson Resource Kits" for teachers and school children, in conjunction with the international commemoration of the 250th anniversary of Jefferson's birth.

Between 1996 and 2007, Coca-Cola provided scholarship funds to bring international and national Coca-Cola Fellows to the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies. Since that time, the Coca-Cola Fellows have taught more than 5,500 students and published more than 71 scholarly articles and 15 books.

