

# Thomas Jefferson MONTICELLO

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[www.monticello.org](http://www.monticello.org)

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## From the President

A little more than three years ago, I took up the reins as President of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. As I travel around the country, people often ask me "So, what's new at Monticello?" If you are following us online or in the pages of this newsletter, you have read about how we're connecting with people through their interests. New tours, exhibitions, and publications as well as dozens of special events focused on archaeology, the enslaved community, and Jefferson's legacy in gardening, food, and wine are engaging new audiences who want to learn about Jefferson's ideas and explore his 5,000-acre plantation.

None of this would be possible without the energy and creativity of the Monticello staff. Their ability to respond to new opportunities has amazed me. Increasingly, the staff's achievements are supported by the contributions of Monticello volunteers. So when people ask me "What's new?" I say "Volunteers!"

The remarkable expansion of our volunteer corps began in the spring of 2009 when we started a pilot program to place volunteers at our new Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center. The new recruits worked in museum exhibits to answer questions and to provide another friendly contact point with guests. Since then,



**Paul Legrand, beekeeper, left, and Brian Hartscock, Operations Manager for the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants, install new beehives at Monticello.**



growth in the number of our volunteers and the range of skills they bring to Monticello has been extraordinary.

This year 83 individuals will contribute their time and talent by working regular schedules side by side with our professional staff. In 2011, these volunteers contributed over 9,000 hours to advancing our mission of preservation and education, amounting to a thirty-fold increase in man hours over the past three years.

Dozens of others help us manage large one-day events, like the Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello, which is supported by volunteers from the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange and the Piedmont Master Gardeners Association. Mark and Alec Lorenzoni have spearheaded the Montalto Challenge 5K race. Other volunteers help us welcome our newest American citizens on July 4th.

The scope of contributions by Monticello volunteers reflects the breadth and ambition of our strategic plan. This year we are welcoming "garden ambassadors" who will serve as an additional resource for visitors in the gardens. Our "Trailblazer" volunteers help preserve the natural beauty of the Saunders-Monticello Trail, now celebrating its tenth anniversary as the most popular park in Central Virginia.

Monticello volunteers include a youth movement. Each summer we welcome undergraduate and graduate student interns from

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the University of Virginia and other leading institutions. The contributions and creativity of our student interns goes well beyond stuffing envelopes (although there is some of that too!). Fourth-year UVA student Annie Johnson has created new Facebook pages and designed ads and brochures, creating a buzz around special events. Georgetown sophomore Samantha Lin participated in the Foundation's inaugural Liberty Today Summit, providing a student's perspective for the digitally immersive teachers' forum. Students in the Viticulture program at Piedmont Virginia Community College are working with Gabriele Rausse, Monticello's Assistant Director of Garden and Grounds, to plant pinot noir grapes atop Montalto.

Volunteers lend their expertise in a hundred different ways. Paul Legrand maintains Monticello's beehives, providing essential pollinators for the orchards and also producing a fantastic Monticello honey! Bill Bergen, an experienced facilities management executive, is working with Ken Mitchell, our Director of Facilities, to develop a master plan for enhancing the lighting in our wooded parking area.

We are grateful to our friends, donors, and especially our corps of committed volunteers who support our mission of preservation and education. I hope you will feel inspired to add your name to our Honor Roll of donors by supporting one of



**Samantha Lin (left), Georgetown University, 2011-2012 Monticello Education and Visitor Programs intern, participates in the inaugural Liberty Today Summit held at Montalto.**

the many programs that preserve history at Monticello.

We invite you to participate—schedule a visit, become our friend on Facebook, visit our website, make a gift to the Monticello Annual Fund, or become a volunteer!

Warmest wishes for a happy Independence Day.

Sincerely,

*Leslie Greene Bowman, President and CEO*