

Monticello welcomes 25 young African leaders to Jefferson's home

by Monticello - July 3, 2015

Monticello welcomes 25 young African leaders to Jefferson's home. This year's Mandela Washington Fellows have officially arrived on the grounds at Monticello. The 25 young, bright African leaders arrived early yesterday morning. Their first stop at Monticello: a tour of the house! The Fellows eagerly listened as they were guided through the house by Mr. Ed Imhoff. Mr. Imhoff gave a very detailed and enthusiastic tour, discussing everything from Jefferson's interests and family life to his relationship with Sally Hemings and slavery. The Fellows asked many questions about Jefferson's time at Monticello and his influence in America.



The next stop was the classroom. First, the Fellows were joined by Andrew O'Shaughnessy, the Saunders Director of the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies at Monticello, as well as a Professor of History at the University of Virginia. O'Shaughnessy discussed Jefferson's key ideals and the lasting impact they have had on Americans. He pointed out that what binds Americans is not race, ethnicity, or religion, but rather the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence – the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.



The Fellows were then joined by Monticello's very own Director of Gardens and Grounds, Gabriele Rausse. Mr. Rausse discussed Jefferson's lasting impact on agriculture and plant life at Monticello. Jefferson made some key decisions that allowed for Monticello to be a successful farm. After that, the Fellows attended a conference on African and African American religion.

Overall, it was a great first day at Monticello for the Mandela Washington Fellows. It was clear they were excited to be here and learn about the influence and life of Thomas Jefferson. Monticello is excited that the Fellows will be joining us through July 4 (<https://www.monticello.org/july4>)!

Learn more about the Mandela Washington Fellowship here: <http://presidentialprecinct.org/presidential-precinct-hosting-mandela-washington-fellows/> (<http://presidentialprecinct.org/presidential-precinct-hosting-mandela-washington-fellows/>).

BRINGING HISTORY FORWARD (HTTPS://WWW.MONTICELLO.ORG/EXHIBITS-EVENTS/BLOG/?CATEGORY=BRINGING-HISTORY-FORWARD)

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