

UVA, Monticello Announce Recipients of 2023 Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals

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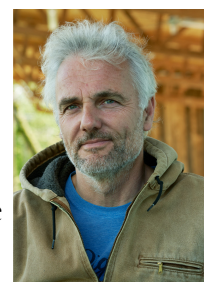
Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Jennifer Lyon, 434-984-7596



CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va., February 28, 2023

On April 13, the University of Virginia and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello will present their highest honors, the 2023 Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals, to a trio of national and international luminaries in the areas of Architecture, Citizen Leadership and Law. This year's awardees are:

Architecture: Andrew Freear is the Wiatt Professor and director of Auburn University Rural Studio. Freear lives in rural Hale County, Alabama, where for nearly two decades he has directed a program that questions the conventional education of architects, through which his students have designed and built more than 200 community buildings, homes, and parks in their under-resourced community.



Andrew Freear
(Photo credit: Timothy Hursley)

Citizen Leadership: Jason Rezaian is an award-winning writer and journalist for The Washington Post. A first generation American of Iranian origin, Rezaian became The Post's Tehran bureau chief in 2012. In 2014, he was arrested on unsubstantiated charges of espionage. Freed after 544 days of imprisonment, Rezaian has since used his platform to fight for the freedom and the liberty of others, championing the stories of other journalists imprisoned for doing their jobs and fellow Americans held hostage abroad solely because of their citizenship. His reporting continues to elevate the stories both of Iranians and those around the globe.



Jason Rezaian

Law: In 2018, lawyers **Menaka Guruswamy and Arundhati Katju** won a landmark case before India's Supreme Court that struck down a 157-year-old law that made gay sex illegal. The pair, who have become heroes of the LGBTQ community in their country, are currently spearheading a marriage equality case to be heard by the Supreme Court of India this spring.



Lawyers Menaka
Guruswamy and
Arundhati Katju

The Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals recognize the exemplary contributions of recipients to the endeavors in which Jefferson – the author of the Declaration of Independence, the third U.S. president and the founder of the University of Virginia – excelled and held in high regard.

“The Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals are a highlight of Founder’s Day, and this year’s recipients reflect the spirit and service mission of our founder,” UVA President Jim Ryan said.

“From an architect whose innovations better serve our communities, to a writer and journalist whose courage has inspired us all, to practitioners of the law who advocate for freedom and justice in the world’s largest democracy, these deserving winners have furthered human progress and exemplify the ideals of this University.”

The awards are presented annually in observance of Jefferson’s birthday, April 13 – known locally as Founder’s Day – by the president of the University and the president of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, the independent, nonprofit organization that owns and operates Jefferson’s home, Monticello. This year’s celebrations mark the 280th anniversary of Jefferson’s birth.

“Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1803 that ‘some ... are born for the public. Nature by fitting them for the service of the human race on a broad scale, has stamped them with the evidences of her destination and their duty,’” said Leslie Greene Bowman, president of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. “This year’s medalists may hail from different parts of the globe and work toward different objectives, yet they share this common sense of duty and devotion to principled leadership. We are honored to recognize their significant accomplishments.”

Bowman and Ryan will present the medals, struck for the occasion, at a luncheon on April 13 in the Rotunda Dome Room at UVA. Medalists will be honored at a formal dinner at Monticello the prior evening.

Guruswamy and Katju, the Law medalists, will give a public talk at 1 p.m. at the School of Law's Caplin Pavilion.

The Citizen Leadership medalist, Rezaian, will be the featured keynote speaker at Monticello's commemoration of Jefferson's birthday on April 13 at 10 a.m. on the West Lawn of Monticello.

Freear, the Architecture medalist, will give a talk that same day at 4 p.m. in the auditorium in Old Cabell Hall.

All of the talks are free and open to the public.

The complete schedule of Founder's Day events and details about how to attend the talks in person or view their livestreams can be found on the Founder's Day Page of UVA's Major Events website.

This year's medalists join a distinguished roster of past winners that includes architects Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, I.M. Pei, Frank Gehry, Toyo Ito, Zaha Hadid, Francis Kéré, and Sir David Adjaye OBE; eight former and current U.S. Supreme Court justices; former U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher; former U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch; special counsel, former FBI director and UVA alumnus Robert S. Mueller III; Gordon Moore, engineer, technologist and entrepreneur; Alice Waters, chef, food activist and founder of the Edible Schoolyard Project; Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund; Wendy Kopp, founder of Teach for America; oceanographer and author Sylvia Earle; Alan Greenspan, former chairman of the Federal Reserve; former Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano; the Honorable Carlton W. Reeves, second African American appointed to a federal judgeship in Mississippi; and several former and current U.S. senators and representatives, including the late U.S. Rep. John Lewis and the late U.S. Sen. John Warner, also a former secretary of the Navy.

About The Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello

The Thomas Jefferson Foundation was incorporated in 1923 to preserve Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, in Charlottesville, Virginia. Today, the foundation seeks to bring history forward into national and global dialogues by engaging audiences with Jefferson's world and ideas and inviting them to experience the power of place at Monticello. Monticello is recognized as a National Historic Landmark, a United Nations World Heritage Site and a Site of

Conscience. As a private, nonprofit organization, the foundation's regular operating budget does not receive ongoing government support to fund its twofold mission of preservation and education. For information, visit [Monticello.org \(https://www.monticello.org/\)](https://www.monticello.org/).

About the University of Virginia

Founded by Thomas Jefferson in 1819, the University of Virginia sustains the ideal of developing, through education, leaders who are well-prepared to help shape the future of the nation and the world. The University is public, while nourished by the strong support of its alumni. It is also selective; the students who come here have been chosen because they show the exceptional promise Jefferson envisioned.

Medalists' photos available on request.

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