



International fellows enrich scholarship

The “international” isn’t in there for show.

Since its founding in 1994, the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies has been devoted to fostering Jefferson scholarship, disseminating its findings, and highlighting the currency of Jefferson’s ideas and ideals around the globe.

The Smith International Center has “shown the flag” overseas through scholarly conferences held in England, Scotland, Germany, Poland, Italy, France, and Austria. In March, the Smith ICJS will co-sponsor a three-day conference, “The Call for a New World Order: Thomas Jefferson’s Separation of Religion and State,” in Prague, Czech Republic.

But the Center’s foreign policy works in both directions: To date, 60 individuals from 20 countries outside the United States have done research while in residence at Monticello through short- and long-term fellowship programs.

“The international fellows offer a different perspective that enriches the study of Jefferson,” said Andrew O’Shaughnessy, Saunders Director of the Smith ICJS. “They have the fresh insights of outsiders and are less governed by our national outlook. They often introduce a comparative context with their knowledge of other countries.

“They also help Monticello advance its mission to educate by spreading abroad the knowledge and understanding of Jefferson that they have developed as a result of their residence at the Center.”



Kathryn Cooper, a teacher from Manchester, England shares some of her research with fellow Barringer Fellow Jeffrey Hinton of Las Vegas.

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Monticello



International fellows

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During this past summer, the Smith International Center welcomed three international fellows to its Kenwood campus – professors Max M. Edling from Sweden and Maurizio Valsania from Italy and teacher Kathryn Cooper from England.

Edling, a research fellow and lecturer in the history department of Uppsala University and author of the

2003 book *A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State*, characterized his month-long residence at the Smith ICJS on a Coca-Cola International Fellowship as “intellectually stimulating and very productive.”

Edling said the resources available to him at Monticello’s Jefferson Library and at the University of Virginia were valuable in his research into how the United States’ method of financing military needs developed from the idiosyncratic method used during the American Revolution – which left the nation independent, but also weak and insolvent – to the more efficient system of mobilizing resources that was in place by the War of 1812. But he also greatly appreciated the human side of his time in residence.

“Because I personally make up 50 percent of Sweden’s early Americanists, I live a lonely life,” Edling explained. “My colleagues are wonderful, but it was nonetheless stimulating to talk to historians who share my research interests.”

Valsania, a professor of the history of philosophy at the University of Turin and former chair of the university’s education department, also appreciated interacting with other scholars during his month at the Smith International Center.

“Sharing ideas with a very supportive community of experts” was the best aspect of his Coca-Cola International Fellowship, Valsania



An aerial view of the Smith ICJS' Kenwood campus.

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International fellows

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said. “Andrew and his colleagues have been able to create a milestone in the field of early American studies. They are open-minded, thoughtful, interdisciplinary, and supportive. They are keen on hosting scholars who come from different experiences and methodologies as the best means to turn history into a sort of fresh, intriguing, and exciting adventure.”

Valsania said he chose to pursue his research into America’s distrust of American history – how disturbing uncertainties and reservations entered the minds of the builders of the American identity at the very moment they were drawing the blueprints for the nation’s future – at the Smith ICJS “because it is an internationally acknowledged community of scholars and because of its interdisciplinary commitment.”

For Cooper, who teaches university-preparatory history, politics, and classics classes to 16- to 18-year-old students at Loreto College in Manchester, England, merely being in Virginia was a significant aspect of her two-week residence at the Smith International Center.

“The books and resources are great, but just seeing the actual sites associated with early American history has been invaluable,” she said. “Visiting Monticello has made Jefferson a real person to me.”

Cooper, whose research focused on Colonial America, was the first non-U.S. recipient of a Barringer Research Fellowship for Teachers of American History, a program established in 2004. She was selected as part of a partnership agreement between the Smith ICJS and the British Association for American Studies.

COMMENTS? newsletter@monticello.org