Christopher, Irwin, Scheck, Neufeld receive TJF Medals

FORMER Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher, installation artist Robert Irwin, and Innocence Project co-founders Barry C. Scheck and Peter J. Neufeld have been awarded the 2009 Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals.

The medals, which are sponsored jointly by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and the University of Virginia, recognize outstanding achievement in three fields of great interest to Jefferson — civic leadership, law, and architecture. They are the highest external honors bestowed by the university, which grants no honorary degrees.

The Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals were presented April 14 during Founder’s Day activities at UVA. The recipients also were honored at Monticello that evening.

Christopher, the third recipient of the TJF Medal in Civic Leadership, was the 1982 recipient of the TJF Medal in Law. He served as secretary of state under President Clinton from 1993 to 1997. Prior to that, he served as deputy attorney general (1967-69) and deputy secretary of state (1977-81).

Irwin, the 44th recipient of the TJF Medal in Architecture, has works on exhibition in major galleries and museums, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York and Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington. His largest project to date is the 134,000-square foot Central Garden at the Getty Center in Los Angeles.

Scheck and Neufeld, recipients of the 33rd TJF Medal in Law, co-founded the Innocence Project, which advocates for post-conviction DNA testing to exonerate the wrongfully convicted and for criminal justice reforms, in 1992 as a nonprofit legal clinic affiliated with Yeshiva University’s Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. They also have a civil rights litigation firm, Cochran Neufeld & Scheck.