

# Thomas Jefferson MONTICELLO

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## Work begun on Montalto center

THE THOMAS Jefferson Foundation has begun development of an education and conference center on Montalto, Jefferson's "high mountain."

"With its panoramic views of Monticello, the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the surrounding landscapes, Montalto presents a spectacular location for a world-class education and conference center," said Leslie Greene Bowman, the Foundation's president.

The peak adjacent to Monticello rises 410 feet above the "little mountain" and is historically significant as Jefferson's first land acquisition. Jefferson was 28 in 1771 when he asked the tract's owner, Edward Carter, to agree "to give me as much of his nearest mountain as can be seen from mine, and 100 yards beyond the line of sight."

Currently under way on Montalto is the restoration and renovation of Repose, an early 1900s residence built with native stone in the American Country House style. Once the work that began in November 2009 is completed, the house will be able to accommodate a range of programs and events, including lectures, seminars, conferences, retreats,



**Repose, the house atop Montalto that dates to the early 1900s, is being restored and renovated to accommodate a wide range of programs and events.** T.J.F.

and dinners. It also will feature the latest in teleconferencing technology.

Also in progress on Montalto is construction of a geothermal heating and cooling system, similar to the systems that serve Monticello's Jefferson Library and the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith Education Center.

The leadership gift for the Montalto project was made by Robert H. Smith shortly before he died in late December 2009.

Monticello's Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies will play the central role in

developing programs for the new center on Montalto.

"Our vision is to engage a global audience in a dialogue about Jefferson's ideas and ideals through multiple channels. This new facility will greatly help us advance that vision," Bowman said.

The Thomas Jefferson Foundation purchased Montalto in 2004 with the help of private donors. In 2008, the foundation placed 150 acres of the property in a conservation easement with the Piedmont Environmental Council, thus preserving Jefferson's view in perpetuity.

"Stewardship of the land around Monticello is extremely important to the Foundation," Bowman said. "The work we're doing on Montalto will make it a more accessible and functional site while preserving its historic and scenic properties."

COMMENTS?

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