2010 TJF MEDALS
Neubauer, Napolitano, Wilson honored

ARAMARK Chairman and CEO Joseph Neubauer, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, and environmentalist and ethicist Edward O. Wilson have received the 2010 Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medals.

The medals in citizen leadership, law, and architecture are awarded jointly by the University of Virginia and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. They annually recognize achievements of those who embrace endeavors that Jefferson excelled in and held in high regard, and are the highest external honors bestowed by the university, which grants no honorary degrees.

The 2010 medals were presented April 13—the anniversary of Jefferson's birth in 1743—by UVA President John T. Casteen III and TJF President Leslie Greene Bowman in a ceremony at the university's Old Cabell Hall, part of the school's Founder's Day activities.

"Jefferson wrote, 'Honesty, knowledge and industry are the qualities which will lead you to the highest employments of your country, and to its highest esteem,'" Bowman said when the 2010 recipients were announced in February. "It is Monticello's privilege to join with the university in honoring these three individuals and expressing our highest esteem for their outstanding achievements in fields that Jefferson held dear."

Neubauer, the recipient of the fourth Thomas Jefferson Foundation medal in Citizen Leadership, has been Aramark's chief executive for more than 25 years. Under his leadership, Aramark has consistently earned a place on Fortune magazine's annual list of the “World's Most Admired Companies.”

Aramark, headquartered in Philadelphia, is a leading provider of a broad range of professional services, including food, hospitality, facility, and uniform services. The company has approximately 255,000 employees serving 22 countries.

Neubauer, whose parents fled Nazi Germany, arrived in the United States at age 14, knowing almost no English. He earned his bachelor's degree from Tufts University and an M.B.A. from the University of Chicago.


Neubauer established a scholarship program at Tufts and the needs-based Horatio Alger Pennsylvania Scholars Program. In 2005 he received the Woodrow Wilson Award for Corporate Leadership.

Neubauer was the featured speaker April 13 at Monticello's commemoration of Jefferson's birth, an event held on the West Lawn.

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Napolitano, the recipient of the 34th Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Law, leads the nation’s efforts to secure the country in the face of threats ranging from terrorism to natural disasters. As head of Homeland Security, she has forged new partnerships with international allies and expanded information-sharing with federal, state, and local law enforcement to build a collaborative effort to detect and disrupt threats early on.

She served as governor of Arizona from 2002 to 2008, and was named by Time magazine in 2005 as one of America’s top five governors.

Napolitano was the first woman and first Arizonan chosen to chair the National Governors Association, and served as Arizona’s first female attorney general prior to her election as governor. Before taking elected office, she served for four years as a U.S. attorney for the District of Arizona.

Born in New York City and raised in Pittsburgh and Albuquerque, N.M., Napolitano is a graduate of Santa Clara University, where she won a Truman Scholarship and was the university’s first female valedictorian.

Wilson, the recipient of the 45th Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Architecture, is best known for having developed and popularized the fields of sociobiology and biodiversity. He has promoted the concept of “biophilia,” which suggests that, as humans co-evolved over millennia with nature, they need direct contact with nature to thrive. This concept creates a challenge for designers and planners to look for effective ways to integrate “green” features and elements into buildings and neighborhoods of the future.

The author of more than 20 books, Wilson twice won the Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction, in 1979 for On Human Nature, and in 1991, with co-author Bert Holldobler, for The Ants.

A native of Birmingham, Ala., he holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in biology from the University of Alabama and a Ph.D. from Harvard University.

In 1956 he joined the faculty at Harvard, where he is now Pellegrino University Professor Emeritus and Honorary Curator in Entomology.

Among the many awards and accolades afforded to Wilson are the U.S. National Medal of Science (1976), Carl Sagan Award for Public Understanding of Science (1994), and TED Prize (2007). He is a Humanist Laureate of the International Academy of Humanism.

The lists of all previous Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal winners are available at www.monticello.org/about/medals.html.