

# Thomas Jefferson MONTICELLO

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## From the President

Dear Friends,

Influenced by the Enlightenment, Thomas Jefferson thought reason and knowledge were the foundations of a free society. As he wrote in 1786,

*I think by far the most important bill in our whole code is that for the diffusion of knowledge among the people. no other sure foundation can be devised for the preservation of freedom, and happiness.*

Honoring Jefferson's unwavering commitment to public education, Monticello and the University of Virginia launched a collaborative Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on Presidents' Day, providing a unique opportunity for anyone, anywhere, to learn about the "Age of Jefferson."

The six-week, noncredit course was available for free and could be taken on either Coursera or iTunes U. The course was also available in Spanish and Chinese translations.

The "Age of Jefferson" is taught by our very own Peter Onuf, a leading scholar of Jefferson and the early American republic, who is both the Thomas Jefferson Foundation professor emeritus at the University of Virginia and Monticello's senior fellow at the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies. Peter is also well-



known to many as "Eighteenth Century Guy" on the public radio program *Backstory with the American History Guys*.

In addition to the MOOC, Monticello launched **SeaofLiberty.org** on Presidents' Day — our interactive, online learning tool for teaching the power of Jefferson's ideas to middle school and high school students. Designed by talented teachers working with Monticello's team over three years, Sea of Liberty gives teachers and students the opportunity to explore, create and share digital projects with documents, letters and images related to ideas of liberty, freedom and self-governance.

Jefferson predicted that what he and the other founders had started in the Declaration of Independence would be for all men, everywhere. Jefferson wrote, "this ball of liberty ... is now so well in motion" and he hoped that it would continue to roll around the globe. As I write this letter, over 17,000 people around the world are enrolled in the "Age of Jefferson" and many have actively posted to the course forum. Monticello's new digital learning platforms provide an unparalleled opportunity to

Visit [www.monticello.org/ageofjefferson](http://www.monticello.org/ageofjefferson) to stream and download "Age of Jefferson" lectures on iTunes.

engage audiences in a global dialogue about Jefferson's ideas and actions and their continued influence to the present day.

You'll also find in this issue our annual Honor Roll of donors. We heartily salute and thank all of our donors and committed volunteers who support Monticello's mission. I am particularly grateful this spring to The Coca-Cola Foundation, which provided generous support for the development of Sea of Liberty. I hope you will feel inspired to add your own name to our Honor Roll by supporting one of the many programs aimed at preserving the mountain and the mind of Thomas Jefferson.

We invite you to participate. Schedule a visit, join us on the West Lawn this Independence Day, make a gift to the Monticello Annual Fund, or explore our online resources!

Warmest wishes for a happy Independence Day.

Sincerely,



*Leslie Greene Bowman, President and CEO*



On Sept. 12, 2013, President Barack Obama announced the appointment of Leslie Greene Bowman, Monticello president and CEO to the Committee for Preservation of the White House. Committee members advise on the preservation and interpretation of the museum character of the public rooms on the Ground Floor and State Floor of the White House and on additions to the permanent White House collection of fine art and decorative arts objects.