

# Mr. Jefferson MONTICELLO

## Visitor Center LEED Certification



The Thomas Jefferson Foundation has been awarded LEED Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council for the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith Education Center, which had its grand opening in April 2009.

The 42,000-square-foot center on the Monticello grounds is the first visitor center at a World Heritage site in the United States and one of only five visitor centers in the country to earn LEED Gold certification, the second-highest level that can be attained. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a voluntary, nationally recognized standard that supports and recognizes environmentally sound practices in building design, construction, and operations.

“As Thomas Jefferson proved when he proposed the notion that we are all equal and ought to be free, progress comes from melding the lessons of the past with innovation for the future,” said Rick Fedrizzi, president, CEO, and founding chair of the U.S. Green Building Council. “As we face today’s biggest challenges — economic uncertainty, environmental and human health threats, and global climate change — green building once again offers solutions that combine scientific and technological breakthroughs with our best ideas from the past.

“It’s wonderful that visitors to the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith Education Center will be able to learn about one of history’s greatest achievements in a place designed and built to help us achieve a better future.”

Located on the lower slope of Monticello mountain, the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith Education Center comprises five pavilions set in a “pinwheel” around a central courtyard. The three-level complex follows the contour of its hillside setting and blends into the wooded landscape.

The center’s sustainable elements include a geothermal heating and cooling system; two green roofs; the extensive use of locally sourced and sustainably produced building materials; energy efficient elements such as double-glazed windows and louvered blinds; advanced storm water removal; water and energy conservation measures; enhanced wastewater treatment; and recycling protocols.



The central courtyard of the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith Education Center is one of the facility's two green roofs.



(Clockwise from left) The Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith Education Center, the Halsey Water Garden in the central courtyard, and the shuttle stop. Photographs by Glenn Neighbors/ASG

“In developing this modern facility we were inspired by Jefferson’s inventive mind. Visitors are surrounded by examples of Jefferson’s conservation ethic throughout Monticello, the remarkable house he designed, and we wanted to build on that,” said Leslie Greene Bowman, president of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. “Sustainable design is a Jeffersonian concept. It also advances our preservation mission and makes good business sense over the long haul. We’re proud that our visitor center has been recognized with this standard in environmental sustainability, and we thank my predecessor, Daniel P. Jordan, and his team for their leadership in this area.”

The center was designed by Ayers/Saint/Gross, an architecture and design firm headquartered in Baltimore. The construction manager was Barton Malow Company, a construction management and general contracting firm headquartered in Southfield, Mich.



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