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# MIZZOU

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## Around the Columns

### Leap of legacy

At first glance, it looked like a regular track meet between Mizzou and the University of Virginia (UVA) April 3 at Audrey J. Walton Stadium. But unusual details seemed to pop up every few minutes:

Over the public address system, the announcer called out the names of events such as the Monticello Mile and the Continental Congress Steeplechase. As the announcer introduced events, he also delivered mini-lectures about

Thomas Jefferson. This was no ordinary track meet. It was the Jefferson Cup, and it sounded as though there may be a quiz at the end.

Rather than heading off to separate quarters after the events, both teams gathered at the statue of Jefferson on Francis Quadrangle. Chancellor Brady Deaton greeted them, said a few words about Jefferson, and all adjourned to dinner together at the athletics dining hall.

After dinner, Deaton spoke to the athletes about [the third president's ties to MU](#). "Mizzou and the University of Virginia are wedded in history," he said. Jefferson was the founder not only



After the April 3 Jefferson Cup (a Thomas Jefferson-themed track meet between Mizzou and University of Virginia), the teams gathered for photos at the Columns on Francis Quadrangle. In a new version of the standing broad jump, this UVA track member hopped from column to column.

of UVA but also of public education in the United States. MU's constitutional charter even describes the institution as a Jeffersonian university. Jefferson's big idea, Deaton said, is that knowledge should serve society.




The brainchild of this event was track Coach Rick McGuire, who in his 26 years at MU has coached 125 All-Americans, 101 conference champions and 45 Olympics trials qualifiers. He earned his doctorate in sport psychology at UVA where he became enamored of Jefferson's ideas, and he found to his delight on arriving at MU that Jefferson's presence was strong here as well. The first MU-UVA meet took place at UVA in 2008, complete with a tour of Jefferson's campus and a talk by a Jefferson scholar. McGuire wanted give his athletes an experience they'd never forget. Sure enough, that meet ended with both teams sharing a victory lap.

This event at Mizzou was part two. The evening became even more curious when Patrick Lee, an actor portraying Thomas Jefferson, took the stage. The take-home message was not only pure Jefferson, it was also pure McGuire, who is famous for cultivating nurturing relationships that help his athletes succeed on and off the track: Jefferson did not wish to be remembered as a president, because that was an honor given to him by others. Instead, he preferred to be remembered for what he had given to others as an architect of political, intellectual and spiritual freedom in the United States. "A legacy resting on awards will not last," Jefferson told the athletes, "But a legacy built on service to others will last generations."

McGuire later told the athletes that the two-day track meet was "a celebration, not a war. These two teams represent the best of what NCAA athletics is about," he said. "You are great students and great people."

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