

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

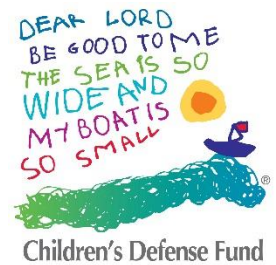
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## Marian Wright Edelman to Receive Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal of Citizen Leadership

**Washington, D.C.** – On April 13, 2016 Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, will become only the second person to be honored twice with Thomas Jefferson Foundation medals. These are the highest external honors the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and the University of Virginia bestow. The first twice honored was former Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Tomorrow Marian Wright Edelman will receive the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal of Citizen Leadership. In 1992 she received the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Law.

At 10:00 a.m. she will be the keynote speaker at the Founder's Day Ceremony at Monticello. This special recognition comes at a major inflection point in our nation's history as the country confronts continuing massive racial and economic inequality. Marian Wright Edelman said:

"I have lived my life fighting for equality and justice to make a better, stronger, fairer country for all of God's children and to close the still gaping distance between our nation's creed and our deeds. As a Black woman who grew up in the segregated, Jim Crow South and lived to see a Black man elected President of the United States, I have witnessed great but far from sufficient progress. Only an honest accounting, understanding and actions to overcome our shared past of slavery, Native American genocide, and the exclusion of women and all non-propertied White men will set us free and enable us to move forward together. I applaud the Thomas Jefferson Foundation for working hard to provide an honest accounting of this founding father who gave us our language of liberty and justice for all but contradicted those words by holding slaves throughout his lifetime. Only confronting the truth about our profound birth defects and struggling to overcome them with open eyes and hearts and deeds can make us all free and ensure America's future. Our nation must move forward and not backward and every citizen must ensure that our children and grandchildren will inherit a country better than we found it."

**Where:** Monticello

**When:** April 13, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.

**What:** Founder's Day Ceremony, keynote speaker, Marian Wright Edelman

**Live Stream:** [monticello.org/marian-edelman-live](http://monticello.org/marian-edelman-live).

**Where:** Nau Hall, Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, UVA

**When:** April 13, 2016 at 3:00 p.m.

**What:** Marian Wright Edelman speech open to the public

**Live Stream:** <https://livestream.com/UVA/BattenSchool>

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The [Children's Defense Fund](http://childrensdefense.org) Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.