



Martien A. Halvorson-Taylor

2024 RICHARDS AWARD FOR PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

We are pleased to announce the 2024 Richards Award for Public Scholarship has been awarded to Martien Halvorson-Taylor.

Martien Halvorson-Taylor (PhD, Harvard University; Associate Professor, [University of Virginia, Department of Religious Studies](#)) is a scholar of the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Judaism. She has published on “exile,” “forced migration,” and “Diaspora” and is currently working on a commentary on the Song of Songs (IEKAT/IECOT, Kohlhammer).

An award-winning teacher at UVA, Halvorson-Taylor offers a body of work that translates deep biblical scholarship for a wider audience, bringing the best of our field beyond the academy. She has written on formations of the Hebrew Bible in *Writing the Bible* ([Audible](#)/Great Courses) and, as the Hebrew Bible editor for [Bible Odyssey](#), has designed a series on the Bible and the environment. As co-director of UVA’s [Religion, Race & Democracy Lab](#) (2018–2024), Halvorson-Taylor co-hosts the Lab’s ongoing podcast, [Sacred & Profane](#) ([iTunes](#)). Most recently funded by the NEH, *Sacred & Profane* lends historical depth to public interest in the legacies of the Bible and religions on current political, social, and environmental movements.

The goal of the Richards Award is to honor members of the Society of Biblical Literature who have demonstrated excellence in public scholarship. It seeks to recognize the powerful role of sacred texts in society and how those texts shape culture. The award is given in honor of Kent Richards and on behalf his mother, Eva Richards, who made a difference in seeking the common good, always encouraging the relevance of religion scholarship.

Nominees are evaluated for how they have contributed to and shaped public discourse, broadly defined. This may include writings (including op-ed pieces and blogs), websites attracting the public, public speaking (including media appearances and public lectures), teaching and mentoring, or other means through which the nominee has served the public.