



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Dr. Tom Conner to Deliver Hillsdale College Commencement Address

Hillsdale, Mich. — Hillsdale College announced that recently retired Professor of History Dr. Tom Conner will deliver the keynote address at the College’s 168th Commencement ceremony on Saturday, July 18, 2020. The Commencement ceremony has been rescheduled from its original May 9 date due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Honorable Amy Coney Barrett of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, who had been originally scheduled to speak at Commencement, was not available to speak on the new date.

Conner, who held the William P. Harris Chair in Military History at Hillsdale College, received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina in 1983. That same year, he began his teaching career at Hillsdale College. During his 37-year tenure at Hillsdale College, Conner held various administrative positions in addition to his teaching duties, including dean of social sciences, dean of faculty, and department chairman. He also served as advisor to a fraternity. He was voted Hillsdale College Professor of the Year four times and was named one of Princeton Review’s “Best 300 Professors” in 2012.

“When we learned that Amy Coney Barrett could not speak on our rescheduled Commencement date, the senior class officers unanimously agreed to ask Dr. Conner,” said Hillsdale College Provost Christopher VanOrman. “Tom Conner is dearly beloved by our students. I’m very pleased that he will send them off, and conclude his Hillsdale College career, in such a meaningful way.”

The rescheduled Commencement ceremony will be the culmination of a three-day celebration for the senior class beginning on Thursday, July 16. Hillsdale College will offer a travel stipend to graduating seniors who return to campus for Commencement. Details on the weekend’s events will be forthcoming.

Admission to the Commencement ceremony is by ticket only for graduates and their families, employees, and friends of the College. The College welcomes media coverage of Commencement. Any media interested in attending must register in advance by contacting Emily Stack Davis at pr@hillsdale.edu or (517) 803-3745.

About Hillsdale College

Hillsdale College is an independent liberal arts college located in southern Michigan. Founded in 1844, the College has built a national reputation through its classical liberal arts core curriculum and its principled refusal to accept federal or state taxpayer subsidies, even indirectly in the form of student grants or loans. It also conducts an outreach effort promoting civil and religious liberty, including a free monthly speech digest, *Imprimis*, with a circulation of more than 5.3 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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