



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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Hillsdale College's Kathleen O'Toole Gives Commencement Address at Founders Classical Academy of Leander

Address focuses on the purpose of education, civilization

Hillsdale, Mich. — On June 5, 2020, Kathleen O'Toole, assistant provost for K-12 education at Hillsdale College, delivered the commencement address at Founders Classical Academy of Leander in Leander, Texas. Before joining Hillsdale College, O'Toole served as the founding headmaster of the school.

“Order and liberty are not permanent, and civilization rests on the virtue of American citizens,” said O'Toole in her address. “You have studied the moral and intellectual virtues, and learned that virtue at its peak involves civic virtue. As you go forward, draw on the education you have received, and defend civilization itself.”

O'Toole delivered her address in an outdoor ceremony consisting of the Class of 2020 and their immediate families. Due to social distancing restrictions, the event was closed to the public but available via livestream.

The Class of 2020 included 34 students, who graduated with a collective average SAT score of 1237 and ACT score of 26. Graduates will be pursuing degrees in the liberal arts, computer science, technology, and engineering, with some taking a gap year to do missionary work. This was the school's fourth commencement ceremony.

“As the first employee of this school, Dr. O'Toole helped build its academic program and culture from the ground up,” said Mr. Doug Sowers, headmaster at Founders Classical Academy of Leander. “It was fitting that she address the graduating seniors during these unprecedented times.”

Dr. Kathleen O'Toole is assistant provost for K-12 education at Hillsdale College. O'Toole attended the University of Dallas, where she graduated with a bachelor of arts in politics. She studied American politics and political philosophy at Claremont Graduate University, where she was an editor for the *Claremont Review of Books*. In addition, she was awarded a Publius Fellowship from the Claremont Institute. Currently, Dr. O'Toole serves on the boards of the Classic Learning Test and the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Study of Core Texts and Ideas at the University of Texas at Austin. She and her husband, Daniel, live in Hillsdale.

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.

About Founders Classical Academy of Leander

Founders Classical Academy of Leander is a tuition-free classical charter school located 25 minutes north of Austin, Texas. Founded in 2014, its mission is to train the minds and improve the hearts of young men and women through a rigorous, classical education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in good character and civic virtue. The school is a campus of [Responsive Education Solutions](#) and an affiliate of the [Hillsdale College Barney Charter School Initiative](#). To find out more about Founders Classical Academy of Leander, visit <https://founders-leander.responsiveed.com>.

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