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Bob Woodson Receives Freedom Leadership Award, Gives First in Series of Christ Chapel Drummond Lectures

Woodson's lecture on faith, conservatism, and race addressed a positive path forward

Hillsdale, Mich. — Hillsdale College announces the newest recipient of the Freedom Leadership Award, Robert L. Woodson, Sr., founding president of the [Woodson Center](#), an organization dedicated to serving low-income neighborhoods, promoting civics education, improving race relations, and developing community leaders.

Woodson gave a lecture on campus on April 23 titled “Conservatism and Race: A Positive Path Forward.” The lecture was the first of the Christ Chapel Drummond Lecture Series.

Woodson spoke about how his Christian faith informs the Woodson Center’s mission and the response of the [1776 Unites](#) initiative to the radical left’s misuse of the legacy of slavery.

“In our essays, we demonstrate that black America should not be defined by slavery alone but by the resilience and self-determination that was evident in response to those oppressive conditions,” Woodson said. “Most people don’t know the history of our response to oppression.”

Woodson recalled mediating structures that people of color put into place to educate, provide work, and empower their communities after the abolishment of slavery. He recounted many of the success stories that this resilience inspired.

“What helped blacks sustain themselves in the face of slavery and discrimination was their two-parent households, their Christian faith, and their commitment to self-determination,” Woodson said.

The Freedom Leadership Award is one of Hillsdale College’s highest honors, and it was issued to Mr. Woodson in recognition of his long service in promoting public policies in keeping with America’s founding principles. Other award recipients include notable persons such as Margaret Thatcher, Jeane Kirkpatrick, and William F. Buckley Jr.

“For decades, while public figures pose and wrangle about the poor and racial injustice, Robert Woodson has transformed the lives of many thousands,” said David Whalen, professor and

associate vice president for curriculum. “He does so because he understands responsibility, authentic human dignity, and the freedom through which people actually flourish. Where others just talk, Woodson has achieved near miracles.”

Woodson is the author of [*Lessons from the Least of These: The Woodson Principles*](#) and is the winner of the Heritage Foundation’s 2020 Salvatori Prize for American Citizenship and the 2018 William Wilberforce Award recipient.

The Christ Chapel Drummond Lecture Series was established by Brian and Melody Drummond and broadly treats matters of faith, learning, and related issues of the day. The lectures take place at Hillsdale College’s Christ Chapel, which was dedicated in 2019 by Associate Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

Click [here](#) for photos.

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 5.6 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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