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Two Hillsdale College-Affiliated Charter Schools Graduate First High-School Classes
Seven Oaks (IN) & Ascent of Douglas County (CO) reach commencement milestone

Hillsdale, Mich. — Two of Hillsdale College’s Barney Charter School Initiative (BCSI) schools, Seven Oaks Classical School in Ellettsville, IN, and Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County in Lone Tree, CO, graduated their first group of high-school seniors this spring.

“Commencement is a significant accomplishment both for the students and the school,” said Dr. Kathleen O’Toole, assistant provost of K-12 education at Hillsdale College. “Each senior has helped to set the standard for subsequent graduates in terms of work ethic and accomplishments.”

Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County has six graduating seniors. Madelynn Gorton is the class valedictorian and plans to attend Indiana University Bloomington to study biochemistry on a pre-med track. Salutatorian Christian Romero will attend Baylor University to study medical humanities on a pre-med track. Riley Hamilton, Andrey Beasley, Olivia Shipman, and Jarrett Dirks are also among Ascent’s first graduating class.

Seven Oaks Classical School has ten graduates. Valedictorian Carter Wolf will attend Indiana University to study physics, and salutatorian Emily Black will study English and Seminary at Grace College. Senior Ariel Tutterow, who will go to Indiana State University next fall to study nursing, was selected by faculty members to give the commencement speech. Other graduates include Nathan Brunner, Clay Close, Nathaniel Johnson, Jazmine Ragan, Jarek Reagan-Walls, Korbyn Reagan-Walls, and Joel Sands. Fifty percent of the graduating class are [21st Century Scholars](#), and 40 percent are first-generation college students.

Part of Hillsdale College’s K-12 outreach efforts, the Barney Charter School Initiative promotes the founding of classical charter schools and excellence in their teaching and operations so that public-school students may be educated in the liberal arts and sciences and receive instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue. Because of the College’s unique American Classical Education curriculum, all students study the liberal arts and sciences as part of preparation for American citizenship.

To view photos of the graduates of Ascent Classical Academy, [click here](#).

About the K-12 Education at Hillsdale College

Hillsdale College's K-12 Education Department supports school administrators, teachers, and parents with the educational and organizational resources they need to educate the nation's youth in the American and classical tradition. The Barney Charter School Initiative (BCSI), part of the College's K-12 efforts, promotes the founding of classical charter schools and excellence in their teaching and operations so that public-school students may be educated in the liberal arts and sciences and receive instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue. The Initiative has 20 schools in 9 states. The BCSI is made possible by a major grant from the Barney Family Foundation and matching gifts from other friends of Hillsdale College. For more information, visit [the BCSI website](#).

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

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