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Hillsdale College Hosts Fall Convocation, Presents Academic Awards

Poet Dana Gioia discusses the power of beauty at traditional religious and academic celebration

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Students, faculty, and staff members gathered in Hillsdale College’s Christ Chapel for the College’s annual fall convocation on Nov. 11. The purpose of the traditional ceremony is to celebrate excellence among its students and faculty. This year’s keynote speaker was poet and literary critic Dana Gioia, who spoke on the importance of beauty in today’s world.

“So, what advice can a poet offer you today? My advice is: be poetic. Don’t write poems, unless you have to, but develop your capacity to perceive reality as a totality. Learn to think and speak and listen in the language in which we actually experience our life,” said Gioia. “Man is hungry for beauty ... We ignore it at the risk of misunderstanding ourselves, the world, and the cosmos, because only beauty can save the world.”

Gioia is a former chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts and poet laureate of the state of California. Having published several books of acclaimed poetry, Gioia is known as a central figure in the revival of rhyme, meter, and narrative in contemporary poetry.

Christopher VanOrman, College provost, announced the all-school grade point average (GPA) of 3.39 from spring 2021 as well as the winners of the school’s scholarship cups. Women’s fraternity Pi Beta Phi won the Sorority Scholarship Cup with a GPA of 3.51, and Delta Tau Delta won the Fraternity Scholarship Cup with a GPA of 3.43.

College President Larry P. Arnn presented the Fall 2021 Emily Daugherty Award for Teaching Excellence to Assistant Professor of History James Strasburg.

Photos from the ceremony can be viewed [here](#).

About Hillsdale College

Hillsdale College is an independent, nonsectarian, Christian 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 six million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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