



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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Hillsdale College’s Blake Center for Faith and Freedom Hosts First Somers Seminar: “Religious Liberty and the American Founding”

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College hosted the first of two Somers Seminars this spring at its Blake Center for Faith and Freedom in Somers, Connecticut, on April 29-30. The seminar topic was “Religious Liberty and the American Founding.” Matthew Spalding, vice president of Washington operations and dean of the Van Andel Graduate School of Government, spoke on the origins of religious liberty.

“Abraham Lincoln, in his Lyceum address, talked about how America has ‘political institutions conducting more essentially to the ends of the civil and religious liberty,’ more than any other in history,” said Spalding, author of “Patriot Sage: George Washington and the American Political Tradition.” “It’s hard for us to recapture the significance of that combination — civil and religious liberty. We take it for granted.”

Khalil Habib, Hillsdale College associate professor of politics, also spoke at the conference on the separation of church and state.

The seminar is set to run again May 20-21. In addition, the Blake Center for Faith and Freedom will host community activities for those who live in and near Somers, Connecticut.

View photos from the event [here](#).

For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [here](#).

About the Blake Center for Faith and Freedom

Philanthropists Prestley and Helen Blake donated the buildings and acreage of their estate in Somers, Connecticut, to Hillsdale College in 2019. The Blake Center for Faith and Freedom is a religious institution that includes their home, an exterior replica of Monticello, Thomas Jefferson’s renowned Virginian estate. The College utilizes the property to host events that further its mission, focusing on the foundational principles of faith and freedom. To this end, most events held at the Blake Center will have clear religious themes, focusing on topics relating to Christianity, man’s relationship to God, and on faith generally.

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

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