



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 6, 2022

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Hillsdale College Welcomes New Students to Campus at Freshman Convocation

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College welcomed the class of 2026 to campus at Freshman Convocation on Aug. 21. Faculty and new students and families gathered to hear a performance by the Hillsdale College chamber choir, perspectives from members of the senior class, and an address by President Larry P. Arnn.

After a procession of Hillsdale College faculty members, the ceremony began with an invocatory prayer by the college’s chaplain, a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and music from Hillsdale College’s chamber choir. Seniors Olivia Ols and Noah Hoonhout then reflected on their own experiences at Hillsdale College and offered advice to the class of 2026.

“I encourage you to give yourself to Hillsdale and trust yourself to the College, to the faculty, to the curriculum, and, most importantly to your fellow classmates, if you do this, you will not be disappointed,” said Hoonhout “Allow yourself to be led. You’ll see pretty quickly that the secret to Hillsdale’s excellence is that everyone here shares the same mission.”

Dr. Arnn then addressed students and parents, welcoming them to campus and into this unique partnership, which is essential to the work of at Hillsdale College

“We don’t make it difficult. We don’t have anything to do with that. The standards are what they are,” said Dr. Arnn. “There are things to know. They are beautiful things to know. They will make you better if you know them. We can’t learn that for you. We can only help you. And we will.”

From the ceremony, students and parents left to attend separate dinners, symbolizing the students’ setting out on their own for the first time.

“Aristotle says that you can recognize a beautiful thing if it makes you want to cry,” said Arnn. “So, I want you to remember today, as you drive away from here without your kid, what an achievement it is to get them to this stage. It’s going to pay dividends for years.”

The class of 2026 is comprised of 404 students, representing 44 states. This class is the most selective in Hillsdale College history — with preliminary statistics indicating an average 3.94 GPA and 20% acceptance rate.

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

Photos of the ceremony can be found [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 6.3 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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