



**HILLSDALE COLLEGE**

PURSUING TRUTH · DEFENDING LIBERTY SINCE 1844

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Hillsdale College Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship Celebrates 10th Anniversary**

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College’s Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship hosted its 10th anniversary celebration on March 25. The event featured keynote remarks from the school’s dean and an alumnus, an alumni panel on graduate career prospects, and a faculty panel on today’s politics. Current students, alumni, faculty, and staff attended.

The keynote remarks were given by the graduate school’s current and founding dean Ronald J. Pestritto and alumnus Clifford Humphrey. “The vision for our graduate program is centered on statesmanship, because we know that, while the knowledge of the good and the just must always be the objective of a proper political education, these timeless principles cannot be meaningfully understood outside the context of the particulars,” Pestritto said.

Humphrey, a 2020 doctoral graduate from the program, serves as executive director of the Institute for Civic Leadership at Troy University. He noted the dominating contemporary view is that leadership can be learned through merely studying various arts and skill sets; however, opposed to this is a deeper conception of leadership and statesmanship. “The ancient view...is more like becoming a roadmap that others read — to know what human excellence is and by which they are themselves measured. Such a condition gives one the ability to be able to see in any given dilemma what the truly good and beautiful choice is,” he explained.

Earlier in the day, the alumni panel members discussed their experiences at the graduate school and the career opportunities they have had since graduation. The faculty panel discussed “Prospects for Statesmanship.” Kevin Portteus, professor of politics, spoke of the need to recommit ourselves to thinking about what statesmanship calls us to do. “If the virtue of statesmanship is prudence or practical wisdom, then the requirements of statesmanship at any given moment are defined by partially the first principles of justice, but also partially by the particular situation on the ground at that moment,” Portteus said.

The Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship offers the Doctor of Philosophy in politics and the Master of Arts in politics. The aim of the school is to educate students in the language of American constitutionalism and to place its graduates in positions of public service in politics, in journalism, academics, and elsewhere. The program is designed for seeking study of the core

texts and original documents of the Western and American political traditions. The school has conferred 130 degrees, 117 Master of Arts in politics and 13 Doctor of Philosophy in politics.

For photos from the event, click [here](#).

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

### **About Hillsdale College Graduate School of Statesmanship**

The Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship was founded in 2010 “to educate students in the language of American constitutionalism and to place its graduates in positions of public service in politics, in journalism, in the Academy, and elsewhere.” Its courses of study, which culminate in either a Master of Arts or a Doctor of Philosophy in Politics, are centered around the core texts from the Western and American traditions of political thought — what Thomas Jefferson called the “elementary books of public right.” All admitted students received a full-tuition scholarship and admitted Ph.D. students receive an additional living stipend. For more information, [gradschool.hillsdale.edu](http://gradschool.hillsdale.edu).

### **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 6.2 million. For more information, visit [hillsdale.edu](http://hillsdale.edu).

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