



# HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Hillsdale College Receives Collection of Rare String Instruments**

*David and Bonnie Hough donated the four instruments for use by the Hillsdale College Joy String Quartet.*

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Through the generosity of David and Bonnie Joy Hough, Hillsdale College has received a collection of rare string instruments to be used by a newly established student ensemble: the Joy String Quartet.

“Anyone who knows David and Bonnie Joy knows cheer and grace emanate from all that they do,” said Hillsdale College President Larry P. Arnn. “This gift is a magnificent example of that goodness.”

The Hillsdale College Hough Collection of Rare String Instruments includes a Nicolo Amati violin, a Francesco Rugeri violin, a Giulio Gigli viola, and an Alexander d’Espine cello. These instruments, crafted by Italian master luthiers from Cremona and Turin during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, are not only a precious heritage from the past, but also a rich resource for musical education in the present and a legacy for the future of the arts at Hillsdale College.

Hough said that the student orchestra performance during the 2019 dedication of the college’s Christ Chapel inspired him and his wife to establish a string ensemble and donate instruments for its use. “I started to dream of establishing a full string quartet, comprised of all historical instruments,” Hough said. “With the help of Melissa Knecht and Jim Holleman, my wife’s and my dream was brought to life with the Joy Quartet. May the Joy Quartet be enjoyed for many years to come under the talented hands of select Hillsdale students, as these brilliant instrument makers would have dreamed.”

The instruments are used by student members of the Joy String Quartet. The quartet currently consists of seniors Peter Kalthoff on violin, Michael Eller on violin, Ethan Tong on viola, and Paul Trainor on cello. The students most recently performed during the college’s annual fall convocation in Christ Chapel. The ensemble is named in honor of Mrs. Hough, who attended Hillsdale College in the 1980s. Mr. Hough became a member of the Hillsdale College Board of Trustees in 2021.

“I love orchestral performance and it’s why I’m studying music at Hillsdale College,” said Eller. “It’s truly the opportunity of a life time to play on such incredible historical instruments. I and

the other members of the Joy String Quartet are grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Hough for making it possible.”

For photos of the instruments and the Joy String Quartet, click [here](#).

For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [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 6.2 million. For more information, visit [hillsdale.edu](http://hillsdale.edu).

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