



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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Hillsdale College Grants Honorary Degrees at Commencement Ceremony

John and Susan Cervini, Diana Davis Spencer, and Abby Spencer Moffat received honorary degrees in public service

HILLSDALE, Mich. — At its 172nd annual Commencement ceremony on May 11, Hillsdale College awarded Honorary Doctorate of Public Service degrees to John and Susan Cervini, Diana Davis Spencer, and Abby Spencer Moffat. Hillsdale College President Dr. Larry P. Arnn awarded the degrees.

John Cervini ('74) is the executive vice president for Institutional Advancement at Hillsdale College, where he received a bachelor's degree in business administration and minored in biology. He also played varsity football, was named Outstanding Scholar and Athlete in Michigan, started and coached the club lacrosse team, and belonged to Omicron Delta Kappa and Epsilon Delta Alpha. He was the first Hillsdale College football player selected by the College Football Hall of Fame as an academic and athletic All-American. Shortly after graduation, he began working for the college as director of Alumni Affairs, serving in that capacity for ten years, and was also director of the annual fund from 1979 to 1983. From 1975 to 1985, he served as an assistant football coach. In 1984, he became vice president of Marketing for the central region, and in 1985 he was promoted to vice president for Development, now known as Institutional Advancement. In his 50-year career at Hillsdale, he has overseen five successful capital campaigns.

Susan Cervini is a graduate of Northwood University with an established career in the fashion industry, serving in many roles related to womenswear management. She has owned and operated a home-based business selling designer quality clothing for 25 years. An avid gardener, she has been a member of the Hillsdale Garden Club since 1984, serving as chairman of several committees and more recently on the Executive Board. She is a 41-year member past president, and honorary member of the Hillsdale Woman's Club. A member of Holy Trinity Parish, she served as secretary of the board for Kids Need Moms, a program that promoted interaction between incarcerated mothers and their children, as a vestry member, and as a member of the choir since its founding 32 years ago. For the past 17 years, she has been a member of an a cappella trio, The Unforgettables, which performs at Hillsdale College, in the local community, and around the country. In 2015, she was named a Hillsdale College distinguished honorary alumna.

Diana Davis Spencer is the executive chairman of the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation. Her advocacy work includes legislation to improve education opportunities for special needs children. A journalist and author, she wrote for numerous publications and served as editor of the newsletter of the Foreign Policy Association of Hartford, Connecticut. She is a member of the Wilson Center Cabinet, a trustee emerita at Wheaton College (Massachusetts), a member of the Federalist Society's Board of Visitors, chairman of the U.S. Advisory Council of the American Swiss Foundation, and a board member of Northeast Harbor Library and Mt. Desert Festival of Chamber Music. She was also a member of the National Press Club and National League of American Pen Women. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's Charles H. Hoeflich Lifetime Achievement Award, the Clare Boothe Luce Award from The Heritage Foundation, and the Independent Women's Forum's inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award. She is a graduate of The Masters School and Wheaton College (Massachusetts). Widowed in 2002, she is the mother of two daughters.

Abby Spencer Moffat is president and CEO of the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation, a leading philanthropic institution focused on American founding values, national security, and education. She spearheads the foundation's strategy to increase collaboration among partner organizations. She was instrumental in the founding of the Daniel Morgan Graduate School of National Security, Code 3, and the Mysa School. She serves on the boards of the America Fund, The Heritage Foundation, and The Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University. She previously cultivated an extensive network of corporate contacts as the top headhunter for CWI/SAI, an executive search firm, and later was the owner of an event-planning start-up. She is the granddaughter of Shelby Cullom Davis and Kathryn Wasserman Davis and the mother of Spencer and Julia Moffat.

Awardees join the ranks of an esteemed list of honorary degree recipients, including poet Will Carleton (1876), cryptologist Elizebeth Smith Friedman (1939), entrepreneur Malcolm Forbes (1984), novelist Mark Helprin (2011), philosopher Sir Roger Scruton (2012), Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas (2017), and author and psychologist Jordan Peterson (2022).

View photos of the honorary degree recipients [here](#). To watch a recording of the commencement ceremony, 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 6.6 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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