



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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CONTACT:

Emily Stack Davis

517-803-3745

PR@hillsdale.edu

Hillsdale College Holds 2025 Robert H. and Susan M. Rewoldt Essay Contest in Politics
Students wrote essays dealing with the topic ‘Consent in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century American Politics.’

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College held its 2025 Robert H. and Susan M. Rewoldt Essay Contest in Politics this spring. This year’s topic was “Consent in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century American Politics.” Emma Verrigni, Patrick McDonald, and Vivian Turnbull took first, second, and third place, respectively.

“The quality of our students’ writing is outstanding,” said Provost Christopher VanOrman. “Each of the participants offered a thoughtful argument and a unique approach to the topic. We were very pleased with their essays.”

Verrigni’s essay, “Too Late to Assimilate: How Mass Immigration Undermines Self-Government” won first prize. Verrigni argued that immigration undermines the shared values that underpin consent and dilutes the voting power of citizens.

“Modern immigration breaks the social compact by admitting new members without the consent of current citizens, and those new members do not have the cultural values that the founding fathers thought self-government required,” Verrigni said.

McDonald won second place for his essay “The Ineluctable Unelected: How the Administrative State Eroded Popular Consent.” McDonald argued that the delegation of authority to unelected and increasingly powerful administrative agencies has undermined the consent of the governed.

Turnbull won third place for her essay “From Consent of the Governed to Consent of the Government: The Erosion of Political and Sexual Consent in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century America.” Turnbull argued that when consent is unmoored from natural law, the state

ultimately consents to give rights rather than people consenting to limited government to protect their rights.

First place received \$5,000, second \$3,000, and third \$1,000. The contest, which is organized through the Politics Department and the Office of the Provost, is open to all Hillsdale College undergraduate students. This year there were 10 submissions, and Mike Driscoll, visiting assistant professor in politics, served as the faculty judge.

In 2019, Mrs. Susan M. Rewoldt established an endowment to fund an annual essay contest on political topics, made possible through a generous bequest to Hillsdale College from her late husband, Robert H. Rewoldt. Mr. Rewoldt's bequest has also funded the Robert H. and Susan M. Rewoldt Scholarship for the George Washington Fellowship Program and the Robert H. and Susan M. Rewoldt Endowed Merit Scholarship in Politics for students with a major in politics.

For headshots of the winners, click [here](#). For photos of Hillsdale College, 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 6.8 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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