



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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Hillsdale College Celebrates Spring Convocation

Roger Kimball of Encounter Books spoke on “Cultural Instructions and the Golden Thread,” and philosophy professor Lee Cole received the Daugherty Award for Teaching Excellence.

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College hosted its annual Spring Convocation in Christ Chapel on April 10. The traditional academic ceremony included remarks by Hillsdale College President Larry P. Arnn, a speech by Roger Kimball of Encounter Books, and recognitions of academic and teaching excellence.

Kimball, publisher of Encounter Books and a distinguished fellow at Hillsdale College, gave an address titled, “Cultural Instructions and the Golden Thread.” He discussed The Golden Thread Initiative, a collaboration between Encounter Books and Hillsdale College that aims to restore rigorous academic standards through textbooks and resources that bring students into living contact with the great ideas of Western civilization.

“In many cultural precincts today, we find that faculty and students alike regard education chiefly as an exercise in disillusionment and look to the past only to corroborate their own sense of superiority and self-satisfaction,” Kimball said. “The Golden Thread is meant to be an antidote to that bundle of entrenched and debilitating pathologies. They are so entrenched and so toxic that treating them effectively would be tantamount to a gestalt shift, a revolution in the zeitgeist, and that’s precisely the ambitious task that we have set ourselves with The Golden Thread.”

Kimball said that the current moment in American culture provides a rare opportunity for a project like The Golden Thread.

“We seem to be experiencing a sort of revolution in sentiment, a vibe shift that is as much cultural as it is political. In such moments, many things that had seemed insuperable yesterday

suddenly seem possible,” Kimball said. “It is an auspicious moment to bring forth The Golden Thread because the culture is newly receptive to our message of recovery. That is the encouraging part. The admonitory part is that such beneficent seasons do not last forever. Such opportunities are as fleeting as they are rare. We must, as Shakespeare has Brutus say in the play ‘Julius Caesar,’ ‘take the current when it serves, Or lose our ventures.’”

Dr. Arnn presented the Spring 2025 Emily Daugherty Award for Teaching Excellence to Lee Cole, chair and associate professor of philosophy. Cole, a 2004 graduate of Hillsdale College, earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in philosophy from Villanova University. He has taught at Hillsdale College since 2011.

Hillsdale College Provost Christopher VanOrman announced fall 2024 academic performance statistics and awards. Kappa Kappa Gamma won the Sorority Scholarship Cup with a GPA of 3.531, and Alpha Tau Omega won the Fraternity Scholarship Cup with a GPA of 3.510. The all-women’s GPA was 3.544, and the all-men’s GPA was 3.405. The all-school GPA was 3.474.

The top ten seniors were Abrial Cocelli (a December 2024 graduate), Kaylee Jackson, Nicole Marshall, Fiona Mulley, Njomeza Pema, Jacob Schulz, Lauren Smith, Hannah Tully, Vivian Turnbull, and Abigail Wagner.

Graduates of Hillsdale’s Diana Davis Spencer Graduate School of Classical Education attended the ceremony, as did 50- and 60-year alumni.

For photos from Convocation, 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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