



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

PURSuing TRUTH · DEFENDING LIBERTY SINCE 1844

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 5, 2025

CONTACT:

Emily Stack Davis

517-803-3745

PR@hillsdale.edu

Follow on X [@HillsdalePR](https://twitter.com/HillsdalePR).

Hillsdale College Welcomes Class of 2029 to Campus

Traditions include Freshman Convocation, discussions on the Honor Code and academic honesty, faculty-freshman dinners, and Welcome Party.

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College welcomed the class of 2029 to campus at Freshman Convocation on Aug. 24. Incoming freshman and their families attended, along with College faculty.

The class of 2029 includes 385 students, representing 40 states, the District of Columbia, and ten foreign countries. Preliminary statistics indicate an average 3.95 GPA and 19% admit rate, with 61% of admitted students choosing to attend Hillsdale, a yield rate among the highest in the country.

“These students are ready and willing to meet the challenge of a Hillsdale education, and we are excited to welcome them to campus,” said Provost Christopher VanOrman. “The things they learn over the next four years will help them grow into men and women of character who are capable of virtuous self-government and ready to serve those around them.”

The ceremony began with prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and music from the Hillsdale College Chamber Choir. Seniors Alba Isabel Blanco Padron and Matthew Riehle addressed the incoming freshmen.

Padron described how narrow escapes from communism and an encounter with Jesus ultimately brought her from Venezuela to Hillsdale, after she had tried and failed for three years to pursue her dream of going to college. She challenged the incoming class to grow in their willingness to do the hard thing and in humility.

“In coming here, I have come to accept that I depend on others — on my friends who are willing to move me in and out of dorms every single semester, on my family who tirelessly cheer me in chasing my dreams, and on God when my strength fails,” Padron said. “I won’t tell you that it has been easy or that I have done it perfectly. In fact, I’ll tell you quite the contrary: college is really, really hard. It has been the most daunting and difficult of endeavors that I’ve undertaken, but it has also been one of the sweetest.”

Hillsdale College President Larry P. Arnn addressed new students, their families, and College faculty.

“There’s a reason why a college is called that — that’s a word that means partnership,” Dr. Arnn said. “It turns out we are the most independent beings on earth, and we are also the most connected beings on earth. Our central faculty, the one most in respect of which we are created in the image of God, means both thinking and talking. And when we do that together, we think and we talk better. And so we need each other, and therefore we will be civil to each other, and we will cultivate friendship with each other.”

Before students and parents went to separate dinner parties, the freshman class agreed to uphold the Hillsdale College Matriculation Pledge and recited it in unison:

We, the students of Hillsdale College, commit ourselves to diligent study and patient reflection. Having come to learn, we are proud to do so with integrity and will conduct ourselves with exemplary honor. As sacrifices past and present make possible our education, we too become stewards of this College for the generations yet to come. We pledge ourselves to the pursuit of truth, the love of the good, and the cultivation of beauty, for the sake of our minds and hearts and for an ennobled society. By so doing, we embrace the high calling of liberal education.

Later in the week, incoming students attended lectures on the Hillsdale College Honor Code and academic honesty.

All incoming Hillsdale College students sign the Honor Code, which reads,

A Hillsdale College student is honorable in conduct, honest in word and deed, dutiful in study and service, and respectful of the rights of others. Through education, the student rises to self-government.

Freshmen also attended the Student Activities Board Welcome Party and a freshman and faculty dessert reception hosted by Dr. and Mrs. Arnn.

For photos from Convocation, click [here](#). For a video about 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 6.9 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

###