



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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Hillsdale College Blake Center Acquires American Art Collection

The collection includes rare and valuable portraits of America's founders.

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College has acquired a collection of contemporary and historic American art, which will be on permanent display at Hillsdale's Blake Center for Faith and Freedom in Somers, Connecticut. The College acquired the collection, which includes rare and valuable portraits of America's founders, through a purchase and gift annuity arrangement with Shane Newell of Chicopee, Massachusetts.

"It is uniquely satisfying for an art collector to see his carefully curated collection remain intact rather than be sold at auction," Newell said. "The private sale and matching charitable gift annuity allowed me to support the college I believe is most important to our country while ensuring my lifelong pursuit of American portrait art remains assembled."

The collection contains several sculptures and many portraits of America's founders, including original paintings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as master copies and contemporary works.

"This Collection is a New England treasure and magnificent addition to the College's art holdings," said Alan Crippen, executive director and chaplain of the Blake Center. "We are thrilled to have it on display at the Blake Center for Faith and Freedom's Monticello facility. Its acquisition by the College is a wonderful beginning to celebrating America's 250th year."

The collection includes George Henry Story's final portrait of Abraham Lincoln, the most valuable Lincoln portrait ever sold. Story created a series of Lincoln paintings during World War I from life sketches he had made years earlier in the Oval Office. Story's Lincoln paintings are

displayed in the Oval Office, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Metropolitan Museum. This is the only one in a private collection.

For photos of the collection, click [here](#). For more information about the collection, click [here](#). For photos of the Blake Center, click [here](#). For photos of Hillsdale College, click [here](#). For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [here](#).

About the Blake Center for Faith and Freedom

Philanthropists Prestley and Helen Blake donated the buildings and acreage of their estate in Somers, Connecticut, to Hillsdale College in 2019. The Blake Center for Faith and Freedom is a religious institution that includes an exterior replica of Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's renowned neo-classical home in Virginia. The College utilizes the property to host events that further its mission, focusing on the foundational principles of faith and freedom. To this end, most events held at the Blake Center have clear religious themes, focusing on topics relating to Christianity, man's relationship to God, and faith generally. For more information, visit blakecenter.hillsdale.edu.

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 7.3 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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