



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

PURSUING TRUTH · DEFENDING LIBERTY SINCE 1844

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 27, 2026

CONTACT:

Emily Stack Davis

517-803-3745

PR@hillsdale.edu

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

Hillsdale College's Matthew Spalding Wins ISI Book of the Year Award

'The Making of the American Mind: The Story of Our Declaration of Independence' won the annual award from the Intercollegiate Studies Institute.

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Matthew Spalding, Kirby Professor in Constitutional Government and Dean of the Van Andel Graduate School of Government at Hillsdale in D.C., won the [Intercollegiate Studies Institute's Conservative Book of the Year Award](#) for his new book, "[The Making of the American Mind: The Story of Our Declaration of Independence](#)" (published by Encounter Books). His work will be honored at ISI's Conservative Book of the Year Award Ceremony on May 1 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

"I'm honored to have my book recognized with this award," Spalding said. "I hope that learning the wonderful story behind the Declaration inspires a renewed love for our country and a renewed admiration for America's principles and the patriots who united to defend them."

"The Making of the American Mind" tells the story of the Declaration of Independence, weaving together the meaning of the document with the history and stories of the men who pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to support it.

The prize recognizes a work of nonfiction published this year that advances understanding of conservative principles, makes an outstanding contribution to the literature on its subject, and avoids factional or partisan argumentation. The winner will receive ISI's Paolucci Book Award and a \$10,000 cash prize.

Multiple past award recipients are affiliated with Hillsdale College:

- Chris Rufo, distinguished fellow, "America's Cultural Revolution" (2024)
- Dan Mahoney, senior visiting fellow, "The Statesman as Thinker" (2023)

- Victor Davis Hanson, Wayne and Marcia Buske Distinguished Fellow in History, “The Dying Citizen” (2022)
- Wilfred M. McClay, professor of history, “Land of Hope” (2020)
- Bradley J. Birzer, professor of history “Russell Kirk: American Conservative” (2016)

For more information about the award and a complete list of finalists, click [here](#). To order Spalding’s book, click [here](#). For Spalding’s bio, click [here](#). For a headshot of Spalding, click [here](#).

For photos from Spalding’s book lecture at Hillsdale’s Blake Center for Faith and Freedom, click [here](#). For photos of Hillsdale in D.C., click [here](#). For photos of Hillsdale College, click [here](#). For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [here](#).

About the Van Andel Graduate School of Government

The Van Andel Graduate School of Government in Washington, D. C., was founded in 2019 to extend Hillsdale College’s unique teaching mission to working professionals in the nation’s capital. Its course of study, which culminates in a Master of Arts in Government, integrates first principles with prudential thinking by means of a rigorous core curriculum and careful study of primary sources. Courses are taught by graduate school faculty members and visiting fellows that boast a wide variety of scholarly expertise and experiences in government. All admitted students receive full-tuition scholarships. For more information, visit dc.hillsdale.edu/school-of-government.

About Hillsdale in D.C.

Hillsdale College’s campus in Washington, D.C., extends the College’s educational mission to the nation’s capital by teaching and promoting the principles and practice of American constitutionalism. As the home of the Washington-Hillsdale Internship Program, the James Madison Fellowship Program, the Van Andel Graduate School of Government, and a variety of lectures and events open to policymakers and the public, Hillsdale in D.C. seeks to inspire and form students, citizens, practitioners, and statesmen who will restore America’s principles and revive self-government in the political life of the nation. For more information, visit dc.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 7.5 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

###