



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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Hillsdale College Announces Erika Kirk as 2026 Commencement Speaker

CEO of Turning Point USA will address the class of 2026.

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College is pleased to announce that Erika Kirk, CEO of Turning Point USA and widow of its founder, Charlie Kirk, will address the class of 2026 at the College's 174th Commencement ceremony in May.

"Charlie Kirk became a national and international sensation, and he built something amazing. At his memorial service were the great, the near-great, and tens of millions watching. But that isn't why we loved him. We loved him because he was, at heart, a student who worked hard to get it right," said Hillsdale College President Larry P. Arnn. "Erika Kirk, brave and widowed, intends to carry on. And we will help her."

Kirk is the CEO and chair of Turning Point USA, roles to which she was appointed following the assassination of her husband Charlie Kirk in September 2025. She received a bachelor's degree in political science and international relations from Arizona State University and a Juris Master in American legal studies from Liberty University. Her professional activities involve nonprofit and entrepreneurial ventures and include hosting the "Midweek Rise Up" podcast and leading PROCLAIM x BIBLEin365, a clothing and lifestyle company that seeks to equip believers to live out their faith and to learn the word of God from cover to cover.

"It is a great honor to be invited to speak at the Hillsdale College Graduation Ceremony on May 9," Kirk said. "Charlie loved Hillsdale deeply and was often a grateful student of its online courses, learning from Dr. Larry Arnn and the remarkable faculty, who are so committed to truth and the pursuit of wisdom. Hillsdale represents something rare in our time — a steadfast devotion to faith, learning, and the principles that sustain a free nation. I am sincerely grateful for the invitation and look forward to being there with all of you. God bless you."

The ceremony will be closed to the public but available to view on livestream.

For a photo of Charlie Kirk with Dr. Arnn, 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 7.5 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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