

Hillsdale Academy

The Academy year began with the news that its seniors had placed second out of 800 Michigan high schools on the ACT. This performance matched the Lower School's continued 99th percentile performance on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. The ACT scores among the rising seniors, class of 2012, were also impressive as Sabeek Pradhan scored a perfect 36 on the test while the average for the entire class was a 27. That Hillsdale Academy does not "teach" to these tests suggests that the Academy curriculum, as published in the *Hillsdale Academy Reference Guides*, continues to prove its worth.

The 2011 Commencement ceremony included speeches from salutatorians Carly Hubbard and Michelle McAvoy, as well as the valedictory address from Andrew Alvarez. Both Hubbard and Alvarez completed the year as National Merit Scholars. Dr. Robert Blackstock provided the commencement address, warning the seniors to avoid the terrors of the socialist and communist states that dominated the last century. The seniors of this class are heading off to Hillsdale College, Princeton University, the University of Michigan, the University of Arizona, the University of Notre Dame, the University of Mississippi, Hope College, and the University of Minnesota, among other fine colleges and universities.

Among the Lower School students, Gretchen Siegel of Mrs. Charyl Sanford's fourth grade triumphed in the Academy Lower School National Geographic Geography Bee. This competition at the Academy, directed by Mrs. Karen Somerville, included students through the eighth grade. Her impressive performance won Gretchen the admiration of her school and of her community as well as a place at the state competition. Gretchen finished tenth in her section at state competition, a very fine performance for a fourth grader.

Ten students of the music department, led by Mrs. Gail Mowry, including Elizabeth Bianchi (3rd grade), Anna Jenkins (7th grade), Sam McArthur (7th), Sam Waldvogal (7th), Maria McElroy (8th), and Larkyn Dasch (8th) won first and second place vocal and instrumental awards at the local Artworks Music Competition, and many other students were applauded in this competitive event. The all-school Christmas concert was built around a theme informed by Handel's *Messiah*. In the spring concerts, the orchestra presented Vivaldi while the choir performed *How Deep the Father's Love For Us*. Emily Péwé, a junior at the Academy, was accepted into the prestigious Credo Chamber Music Festival at Oberlin Conservatory of Music. Students attending Credo, one of the most highly selective "music camps" in the country, have gone on to attend Juilliard, Curtis, and Eastman School of Music, and now hold significant

positions in professional orchestras and on college faculties. Sabeek Pradhan, also a junior at the Academy, for the second time won the 2010 Young Composer's Award, given by the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra. Mrs. Mowry's drama club produced a fun and rowdy production of the play, *Peter Pan and Wendy*. Nearly the entire Upper School and many Lower School students participated, bringing a great deal of energy to three sold-out performances at the local Sauk Trail Theatre.

The Hillsdale Academy athletic program this year included over 90 percent of the student body in grades 6 through 12. The girls won the MITCA Team State Track Championship for the second year in a row. Students won at conference championships in cross-country, basketball, and track, and were conferred regional titles in cross-country and track. The golf team finished in the top ten at the MHSAA Finals for the second year in a row; the cross-country, basketball, and volleyball teams earned academic all-state honors; and the girls' basketball team won the "Top 100 Sportsmanship Award" in the state. Senior Heather Lantis led the way, earning All-State in volleyball, First Team All-State in basketball, and All-State in two track and field events. Heather also won the prestigious MHSAA Scholar Athlete Award for Class D. Seniors Shena Albaugh, Carly Hubbard, Elizabeth Whalen, and sophomore Shaley Albaugh also earned All-State and State Champion status in track and field. The Albaugh sisters combined to go first and second at the state finals in the 800-meter run.

All five varsity boys' teams won their respective conference titles. The cross-country team won their second consecutive Class D Coaches Association State Championship, while the boys' basketball team won their first-ever district title. The boys' track team finished in the top ten at state for the third year in a row, and the golf team won their first-ever conference title. The boys' soccer team won the Hillsdale County Cup and the Independent Soccer League Title, and Sawyer Moss garnered First Team All-State in soccer while Eric Lisznyai was honorable mention. Joel Calvert and Andrew Alvarez were All-State in cross-country. Peter Sullivan took home All-State recognition in boys' basketball. Sullivan in two events, Alvarez, Chris Potts, and Thomas Dinkleman earned All-State in track and field. The boys' cross-country and track teams were named Academic All-State. Senior Eric Lisznyai was also named one of two male MHSAA Scholar Athlete Award winners in Class D, and Peter Sullivan was named the Wendy's Heisman Male Athlete of the Year in the state of Michigan.

The Academy year ended with farewell honors to the school's art teacher, Mr. Matthew "Woody" Woudenberg and the long-time seventh grade teacher, Mrs. Mary Wolfram. Mr. Woudenberg announced after six years of service that he intends to pursue a monastic vocation with a

Benedictine monastery in Chicago. Mrs. Wolfram announced her retirement from teaching after 11 years at Hillsdale Academy with the hope of pursuing other leadership interests and opportunities. Plaques in honor of both teachers will be placed in the classrooms they used so well for over 17 years of combined service.

Hillsdale Academy continued its work as a model for schools across the nation. Several private schools looked to the *Reference Guides* for use in the founding of their institutions. The American Academy in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, won the Salvatori Award for Teaching Excellence. In addition to these efforts, Mr. Phil Kilgore, director of the Hillsdale College Charter School Initiative, worked with Hillsdale Academy to help establish charter schools in New Mexico, Texas, and Georgia. This work was combined with the training of teaching apprentices via the Liberal Arts Teaching Apprenticeship directed by Dr. Jon Fennell of the Teacher Education Department at Hillsdale College. These apprentices are now highly recruited by excellent schools across the nation.