



HILLSDALE STUDENTS WRITE 4K THANK-YOU CARDS IN STARK CONTRAST TO YALE'S 'TRANSGIVING' - THE CENTER SQUARE

Posted on December 9, 2024 by Tate Miller | The Center Square



Photo: Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan (*Therese Boudreaux | The Center Square*)

While some schools across the nation hosted meagerly-attended “Transgivings” around Thanksgiving time, students at Hillsdale College wrote over 4,000 thank-you cards on the school’s annual “Day of Thanks.”

Throughout the day on Nov. 21, participating Hillsdale students wrote the thousands of grateful notes to “donors, family members, professors, friends, and others who have supported them throughout their lives and in their college careers,” a school news release [stated](#).

Located in Michigan, Hillsdale has an undergraduate [enrollment](#) of a little over 1,500 students.

The idea for Day of Thanks came from Hillsdale’s students, who “came up with it as part of a student leadership group project,” vice president for student affairs Diane Philip told The Center Square.

“Their goal was to get everyone thinking about gratitude, especially toward the donors who help make so much possible,” Philip said. “But it’s not limited to donors – students can write to anyone they want.”

Day of Thanks is “led by the student activities team,” Philip said.

“The students planned everything themselves,” while Hillsdale “pitches in by providing things like stationery and stamps,” Philip said. A Thanksgiving feast is held the next day, headed by student activities, according to Philip.

“Overall, the Day of Thanks is not just about the food or the cards – it’s about creating a culture that values gratitude and one’s neighbors,” Philip said. “It’s one of those times when you can really feel the sense of community on campus.”

While students at Hillsdale focused on thankfulness, Yale, Oakland University, and Northern Michigan University each hosted an event called “Transgiving,” around the Thanksgiving season.

“Celebrate trans joy, resilience, and community!” Yale’s LGBTQ Center [posted](#) on its Instagram page concerning the Transgiving held on Nov. 18. The post received 28 likes at a school that’s undergraduate [enrollment](#) was nearly 7,000 in 2023.

The event was hosted by Beyond the Binary and the Gender Resources Committee, according to the post.

Additionally, the Transgiving at Yale was a part of the LGBTQ Center’s Trans Awareness week, according to the Center’s [Instagram](#).

Oakland University’s Transgiving was “A Community Potluck” held on Nov. 26 that was intended to “provide a trans-affirming and sober family-holiday-style autumn meal to OU students,” according to an event [description](#).

Oakland University is a “public doctoral institution” located in Rochester, Michigan, as stated on the school’s [website](#).

The Transgiving was “open to all OU students, designed for those who would especially benefit from gathering with chosen family.”

Oakland’s Gender and Sexuality Center advertised the [event](#) on its Instagram in a post that garnered 11 likes.

Five registered for Northern Michigan University’s Nov. 21 Transgiving, where attendees were encouraged to bring stuffed animals for “snacks, crafts, and a movie,” according to an event [description](#).

NMU’s Transgiving was hosted by the [student group](#) Queers and Allies.

When reached for comment, NMU spokesman Derek Hall said his “university spokesperson role does not extend to clubs and organizations,” and forwarded The Center Square’s media inquiry to the student leaders of the club sponsoring Transgiving.

Neither Yale nor Oakland responded to The Center Square’s request for comment.

Hillsdale’s news release on Day of Thanks stated that “ninety-nine percent of undergraduate students at Hillsdale College receive some form of financial aid, with the average financial aid package coming out to more than \$25,000 per year.”

Scholarships often come from donors, according to the news release. This fact has something to do with Day of Thanks, as Hillsdale’s executive director of alumni relations Colleen McGinness explained to The Center Square.

“The financial story at Hillsdale is unlike any in higher education,” McGinness said. “Because of its independence from federal and state funding, Hillsdale College relies on private support from thousands of generous individuals who want to support its mission and students.”

“Every single student benefits significantly from the generosity of others, but many do not have the chance to meet their donors,” McGinness said.

“Day of Thanks encourages students to consider what this partnership means and how it impacts them,” McGinness said. “It has become an established tradition on campus that students look forward to every year.”

Hillsdale associate dean of men Jeff Rogers told The Center Square: “This is how a Christian College displays thankfulness.”

“It’s not just Thanksgiving, Thanksliving!” Rogers said.

Hillsdale College’s Student Activities Board, 1844 Society, and Alumni Office hosted the Day of Thanks, according to the school’s news release.