



For Immediate Release

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Belmont Abbey College Attracts Top National Talent with Honors College Scholarship Weekend

Belmont, N.C. (February 6, 2026) – Belmont Abbey College is attracting some of the brightest high school seniors from across the nation, offering them an opportunity to compete for one of three full-tuition fellowships to its distinguished Honors College. Over the weekend, 48 students from 22 states will gather to demonstrate their academic excellence at the Honors College Scholarship Weekend.

The weekend will see participants engage in Socratic seminars on two influential works: Cicero's *On Friendship* and Willa Cather's "Two Friends." Designed to stimulate the attendees' critical thinking and argumentative skills, these seminars are part of the Honors College's commitment to attracting and forming students who are not only academically gifted but also curious and eager to contribute meaningfully to their communities and culture. In addition to the seminars, attendees will experience life at the college, with the option to stay with current Honors College students.

The Honors College at Belmont Abbey College is a Great Books program that offers students a four-year journey through the Western canon. Students explore classic texts from the ancient to the modern world, beginning with works from Homer and Plato and continuing through the great books of the twentieth century. This approach fosters a deep understanding of history, literature, philosophy, and culture, equipping graduates with a well-rounded, intellectual foundation.

"Our students encounter the great books of the Western canon in an environment shaped by the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and our Benedictine Heritage. Through Socratic seminars, students grapple with the perennial questions of human existence, contemplating these profound texts in the company of friends and with the guidance of dedicated teachers," said Dr. Thomas Varacalli, Dean of the Honors College. "Together, they pursue truth, not merely as an abstract concept, but as something that is lived, debated, and applied in their own lives and in service to the world around them."

The Honors College is known for its close-knit, vibrant community. Honors students play an active role in campus life, from serving as leaders in student government—three of the past five student body presidents were Honors students—to participating in over 30 student clubs. In addition, Honors students are well-represented in the arts, with many involved in theater productions and other creative endeavors.

"The caliber of students applying to Belmont Abbey College is exceptional," said Jesse Dorman, Vice Provost of Admissions. "It's clear that the Honors College's focus on the great works of the Western tradition resonates with students who are passionate about studying the Great Books and their impact on the world. We're excited to offer these opportunities to our incoming students and thrilled to welcome such talented individuals to our community."

The scholarship competition, which includes these weekend seminars, will also feature an essay and interview component. The final winners will be announced in early March or April. All scholarship weekend attendees have been accepted to Belmont Abbey's Honors College and have already received a \$9,000 scholarship.

As Belmont Abbey College continues to grow, its Honors College remains a beacon for students seeking a truly transformative educational experience. The scholarship weekend demonstrates the program's ability to draw top-tier talent and inspire the next generation of scholars, leaders, and thinkers.

For more information about the Honors College, please visit <https://belmontabbeycollege.edu/academics/honors-college/>.

About Belmont Abbey College: Founded in 1876, Belmont Abbey College is a private, Catholic baccalaureate and liberal arts institution. Our mission is to educate students in the liberal arts and sciences so that in all things God may be glorified. Guided by the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Benedictine spirit of prayer and learning, we welcome a diverse body of students and provide them with an education that will enable them to lead lives of integrity, to succeed professionally, to become responsible citizens, and to be a blessing to themselves and to others. Our beautiful and historic campus is conveniently located just 10 miles west of Charlotte, N.C., and is currently home to more than 1500 students. For more information, visit <https://belmontabbeycollege.edu/>.