



**HILBERT COLLEGE**

A CATHOLIC FRANCISCAN COLLEGE FOR ALL

# HILBERT 2025 UPDATE

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*October 2023*





**In 2019, through the leadership of the President's Council and the Board of Trustees, the Hilbert College community expressed its 2025 vision with this Statement of Strategic Intent:**

*Our intent is to grow enrollment while deepening our Franciscan and Catholic college mission, strengthening our financial position, optimizing our current intellectual and physical assets, and fulfilling our potential as a vital liberal arts institution in Western New York.*

**We will focus our energies on these areas:**

- Enhancing our Franciscan Mission and Identity
- Growing Enrollment
- Strengthening Academic Performance and the Student Experience
- Strengthening Financial Position

This is our current scorecard on "what we said" and "what we did."

**GOAL #1: Enhancing our Franciscan Mission & Identity**

**WHAT WE SAID:**

We will enhance our Catholic, Franciscan identity by deepening our engagement with our values and heritage. Our understanding of the dignity and worth of every human being inspires us to serve and develop all members of our community, and to give special welcome and support to those among us who experience marginalization and injustice.

**WHAT WE DID:**

- Established robust Franciscan mission-centered hiring and training programs for all employees.
- Established an Implicit Bias Training program.
- Created equity in benefits programs for all employees.
- Blue 101, the first-year seminar course, was revised to better emphasize Franciscan mission and civility.
- Implemented a biennial student cultural climate survey.
- Continued to grow our Franciscan Day of Caring, a campus wide service day for all Hilbert community members to serve the mission of over two dozen community partners.
- Supported faculty and staff participation in the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities' annual symposium.
- Improved scholarship programs to meet the needs of the region's neediest students.
- Established a Franciscan Sisters of Saint Joseph (FSSJ) Mission and Heritage exhibit in Bogel Hall.
- Renovated the Grotto for prayer, reflection, and instruction.
- Celebrated the 125th Anniversary of the FSSJ.
- Created a system of campus governance that emphasized Catholic social teachings.

**GOAL #2: Growing Enrollment**

**WHAT WE SAID:**

We will diversify and develop our enrollment to strengthen the college's financial position. In addition to increasing applications for traditional enrollment, we will improve the experience of our prospective students, including application and recruitment processes, communication, services, and visits. We will seek new populations of students, expanding Hilbert's impact to include online and international student programs, increased graduate programs, and a more robust athletics strategy.

**WHAT WE DID:**

- Grew enrollment by more than 30%, reaching a ten-year high of 1,000 students in 2023.
- Launched Hilbert College Global with great success, with more than 20% of all students now studying online.
- Increased our NCAA program to 18 sports, doubling the number of students athletes.
- Increased our international and out-of-state recruitment efforts, reaching all-time high residential student enrollments.
- Reached record highs in new student enrollments in 2022 and 2023.
- Launched new branding program in 2022.
- Launching a new website in 2024.
- Expanded the dual enrollment program, tripling enrollment and reaching an all-time high participation rate of 39 Western New York high schools.
- Partnered with Vietnamese agencies to provide scholarships to Vietnamese nuns.
- Partnered with the Say Yes program, a longstanding initiative in the Buffalo Public Schools focused on student success and access to higher education.
- Created the most diverse student body in the College's history.

### **GOAL #3: Strengthen Academic Performance & the Student Experience**

#### **WHAT WE SAID:**

We will strengthen Hilbert's academic performance and the student experience, resulting in greater student success and retention. A student's education is dependent on an inclusive living and learning environment, which we will support by increasing the diversity of our staff, faculty, and students, and enhancing our resources for our students. Expanding academic opportunities and educational experiences will help us to be identified as a higher education hub for the Southtowns.

#### **WHAT WE DID:**

- Developed new Biology, Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counseling, Advocacy and Social Justice, Cybersecurity, and Intelligence and Data Analysis degree programs.
- Strengthened the Hilbert Blueprint educational experience.
- Established the Learning Commons where all academic support services were integrated and enhanced.
- Expanded wellness services through local health provider partners.
- Increased Campus Safety staff and programming.
- Provided increased professional development opportunities for all employees through EAB, a national research provider.
- Through multiple Mother Cabrini Health Foundation grants, established the Franciscan Advocacy & Resource Center.
- Developed 24 new international study abroad opportunities.
- Created Student Onboarding, Advising, and Registering (SOAR) events to support new students with the transition to Hilbert.
- Increased work study positions for students to better engage with our college community.
- Upgraded security systems across the campus and in our technology systems.
- Improved physical and electronic signage across the campus.
- Built firepit and outdoor kitchen facilities for students to gather.
- Provided student and employees with multiple volunteer service and retreat opportunities.

### **GOAL #4: Strengthen Financial Position**

#### **WHAT WE SAID:**

We will focus on philanthropic growth and efficiency, as well as investment in our campus assets, to strengthen, grow, and sustain the college. We will build and grow a strong Annual Fund program and seek appropriate private, corporate, and public foundation and government funding. We will develop and improve our technology infrastructure to meet the needs of today's students.

#### **WHAT WE DID:**

- Tripled annual fundraising results, bringing in nearly 35 foundation grants.
- Doubled alumni giving and participation.
- Secured Liberty Partnership and Higher Education Opportunity grants through New York State.
- Increased revenue by more than 50%.
- Balanced the annual operating budget.
- Invested in technology and facilities.
- Through the support of Franciscan Services, created a two-college consortium with Valley College (WV and OH) that provided immediate efficiency with shared services, and long-term synergies with online programs.
- Built a robust Conference & Events program that brought many Western New Yorkers to campus throughout the year.