



## ERENI DELIS: THE JOURNEY FROM HILLSDALE TO UCLA

Sometimes, the best way to convey the impact of a place like Hillsdale is through the stories of the people who spent four years learning, living, and growing toward adulthood in its classrooms and hallways.

Recently, the Foundation was fortunate to connect with Ereni Delis, who graduated from Hillsdale in 2022 and is now a student at UCLA. Read on to learn more about Ereni's time at HHS and how her experiences here shaped her and prepared her for college.

**Which two Houses were you part of during your Hillsdale years?**

I began my time at Hillsdale in Florence House and for the last two years, I was part of Timbuktu House.

**How did being part of Hillsdale's Small Learning Community (SLC) model positively impact you?**

Growing up, I attended a private K-8 school, and while it was a wonderful experience, Hillsdale High School was exactly the right place for me to expand my horizons. The first day of freshman year in my Florence House advisory class, it became clear to me that every student was placed on a level playing field. The learning track one was on, was deemphasized in favor of a collaborative environment where growing and learning was the key focus. This positively impacted me because I gained valuable insight  
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about how much we learn from our peers - not just from an intellectual perspective but about life itself.

### **How did Hillsdale prepare you for what you've accomplished so far?**

The HHS teachers and administration have established a culture where enthusiasm for curiosity and ideas is palpable. They believe in each student's ability, and I can confidently say that it was their belief in me that drove a greater belief in myself. I learned about the importance of inquiry and confidence and also about how grit contributes to success. The skills I gained throughout my time at HHS have helped me in my new chapter as a student at UCLA as well as with internships and networking.

### **Do you have a story about a teacher you would like to share?**

When I was a sophomore, I became interested in psychology and neuroscience. Specifically, I was intrigued with how the quarantine lockdown impacted adolescent behavior during a time when socialization with peers was effectively eliminated. I approached my then-AP Statistics teacher, [Mr. McCall](#), about my idea to conduct a study and write a research paper. He went above and beyond to mentor me and to help me make my vision a reality. From guiding me on how to properly conduct a survey, to teaching me distribution methods and statistical analysis techniques to connecting me with our principal, Mr. Gilbert, who generously became the official advisor for my research, Mr. McCall was always in my corner.

The fruits of this effort culminated in a research paper I wrote during my senior year, and I am now published in a scientific journal! It was the kindness and investment of Mr. McCall and his initial "yes" when I asked for his help with an idea that made all the difference.

### **What would you say to someone who is considering making a gift to the Foundation?**

As Tara Westover said in one of my favorite books, [Educated](#), "An education is not so much about making a living as making a person."

The investment in this philosophy of "making a person" is something I felt throughout my four years at Hillsdale. Your donation to the Foundation allows future generations of Hillsdale students to continue to reap these same benefits.

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Having just completed my first paid internship at the Stanford Linear Accelerator National Laboratory, I am grateful to be able to make my first donation to the HHS Foundation. I hope you will join me.

### What are your plans for the future?

I am currently a second-year student at UCLA majoring in Mechanical Engineering. Outside of the classroom, I am involved on campus as a member of the UCLA Concert Choir and Formula 1 race car team. In the future, I hope to pursue a graduate degree in Mechanical Engineering or a degree that intersects technical realms with business studies.

Do you have a story to share about Hillsdale High School? If so, please reach out to Katherine Goodman, Executive Director, at [execdirector@hillsdalehsfoundation.org](mailto:execdirector@hillsdalehsfoundation.org).



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