



PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

December 2020

Dear Harper College Community:

It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of the fall semester. I know for so many of us that 2020 has been a trying and demanding year, full of difficulties and sadness brought on by the pandemic. And yet, I saw so many truly remarkable examples of hope as the Harper College community came together to support our students, our communities and each other this year. Across the college and in and out of our virtual classrooms, I witnessed our teams working with purpose and grit to ensure our students stayed on track to accomplish their academic goals.

As you know, our spring 2021 semester offerings will be online through March 14. At that point, we will offer labs that require students to be on campus to complete their work, if public health conditions improve. As the year closes, we know that we are closer to vaccines being more widely available. As our community members get vaccinated and the virus transmission wanes, we will be able to resume more on-campus activities. I appreciate your patience as we continue to follow the science and data to keep our campus community safe.

At the December Committee of the Whole meeting, I presented an update on my Presidential Priorities for this year. Notably as we continue to respond to the pandemic, we are making great strides. For distance learning, we are developing a three-year plan and establishing internal teams to coordinate its implementation, develop and implement strategies designed to achieve distance education goals, and establish a vision for the future of distance learning at Harper College. I was also pleased to report to the Board that our Strategic Plan Goal Teams have begun their work while the Strategic Planning and Accountability Committee is finalizing our targets which we will use to measure our progress.

With the spring semester just around the corner, we have launched tuition relief and scholarship options for our students to help them manage the cost of tuition during the pandemic. These efforts include our Tuition Relief Fund, the Moving Forward Scholarship, non-tuition emergency funds and basic needs support through Hawks Care, and the numerous scholarships available through the Educational Foundation.

Thank you for all of your work and tremendous resilience this year! You are truly what makes Harper a great place to learn and work. I wish all of you a safe and happy holiday with hopes that you will be able to enjoy a well-deserved Winter Break. See you in the new year!

Campus News . . .

[Covid 19 Response Team Update](#)

[Student Success](#)

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

[Finance and Administrative Services](#)

[Advancement, Marketing and](#)

[Communications](#)

[Legislative Affairs](#)

[Planning, Research and Institutional](#)

[Effectiveness](#)

[Strategic Alliances and Innovation](#)

[Workforce Solutions](#)

COVID-19 Response Team Update

- The COVID-19 Response Team has decided to suspend all on-campus lab courses for the start of the Spring 2021 semester.
- At the request of the Illinois Department of Public Health, Harper College was a COVID-19 mobile testing site on December 7. State Senator Ann Gillespie brought lunch to IDPH workers administering the testing.
- The EHS/Risk-Screening Station Team is putting together a self-screening procedure to be used by those individuals that have been given approval by their EC member to come to campus while the screening stations are not open.
- The Communications team organized Harper's sixth employee town hall since the start of the pandemic. Topics included the spring 2021 semester; metrics monitored by the COVID-19 Response Team; the new WellTrack mental health app for students; new Workforce Solutions partnerships; and DEI efforts including the executive team's commitment to equity and the college's progress toward opening a cultural center. The COVID-19 communications team helped to provide input, questions for the Q&A session, and feedback on the event.

Student Success

Access and Disability Services

- The Disability Cultural Programming event: Erasing the Distance was brought to the Harper community in collaboration with Access and Disability Services, Counseling Services, Harper Wellness, Student Involvement, and the Center for Student Veterans and Military-Connected Students. The event offered the 60 attendees an incredible opportunity to experience life through someone else's eyes, as live actors brought stories of invisible disabilities to life by portraying true accounts of individuals managing various mental health issues. The event also focused on the resources and support that is available to students at Harper and how to reach out if they need help.

Admissions

- The Admissions Outreach Team has been working closely with Marketing to adjust our traditional in-person fall and spring high school open houses. Together we planned a different way to provide prospective students and their families with the information and opportunities they would normally experience during our open house events. We are implementing *Destination Harper*, a series of engaging virtual events throughout the 2020-21 academic year. The Destination Harper landing page will be updated throughout the year with blog and video content to share with prospective students and their families. We will also strategically send out emails and direct mail to students throughout the year that will direct them to Destination Harper events and the landing page. The Destination Harper holiday card includes a detachable magnet listing Destination Harper spring events. Of note, a special highlight includes sessions with both Dr. Proctor and Dr. Janosik

- For spring semester, the Registrar's Office, in collaboration with IT, updated classes so that students can easily identify the modality of each course (Online LIVE, Online ANYTIME or Blended/Online and On Campus). With the uncertainty of what summer may look like, we will be implementing a new "Pending" status for courses in the summer schedule. The goal of this addition is to allow students to see what classes will be offered in the summer, even though the modality of the course is currently unknown. The hope is that summer transfer students from four-year institutions will see what is being offered in preparation for their summer academic planning.

Advising Services

- Collaborated with IR to enhance the Power BI Radar Report that advisors use to monitor their assigned caseload of students. A new area has been created called 'Audit & Action' that allows advisors to quickly identify certain groups of students who may need some follow-up to be sure they are progressing or who may need some extra guidance. For example, with just 'one-click', a list of students will render isolating those who are not registered for the upcoming term, have no indicators they are leaving or graduating, and do not have an upcoming advisor appointment. Other examples include being able to quickly identify students who have been flagged as not-attending at midterm and those who are on 'Good' academic standing yet recently earned an F grade and may be headed into further academic difficulty. The Case Management Guidelines outlining advisor expectations have been updated to align with this new tool.

Athletics

- Harper's very own Rachel Kandefer was named one of the American Volleyball Coaches Association's 2YC Players to Watch for NJCAA Division III. She was one of only two freshman players in the NJCAA to receive this recognition.
- Harper was represented on the NJCAA Region 4 Student Athlete Council - Darnell Coleman, a student athlete on the Harper College baseball team, was elected to represent Region 4 on the NJCAA Student Athlete Council. The council will serve as a vital connection between the NJCAA and the student-athletes it serves. It will create additional leadership opportunities for our student-athletes, and their voices will assist in the direction of our organization.

Hawks Care Resource Center and Counseling Services

- WellTrack, Harper's brand new tele-mental health app, was just launched and is already trending with good utilization indicators from students. WellTrack includes connections to crisis support and 'after hours' counseling to complement the existing Counseling Services area.

Office of International Education

- In the spring semester, the Office of International Education is sponsoring the participation of two sections of ENG 101 in virtual intercultural exchanges through the SOLIYA Connect program. The sections of ENG 101 will focus on Intercultural Dialog and Exchange with all readings and assignments designed to prepare students for an open and respectful exchange of views with students studying in the Middle East and North Africa. The virtual exchange will occur during the last half of the class and encourage active learning on the part of the students. They will discuss global and social issues, such as religion, gender, current events, social culture, media, and the environment with peers. Students will achieve not only the learning outcomes of ENG 101, but they will also gain critical 21st century skills and attitudes necessary to succeed in an interconnected and multicultural world. These intercultural skills will set them apart from their peers and serve them well in their future educational and professional pursuits.

Student Engagement

- The Student and Employee Winter Board and Brush Program, hosted by Student Involvement and Harper Wellness, was a huge success with 122 registrants including 81 students and 41 employees. The group was led through each step of the painting process to produce a variety of creative and beautiful finished products.
- The Student Government Association hosted a town hall for student clubs and organizations in November. Nine Harper student clubs and organizations were represented and the group discussed recruitment, engagement, and collaboration opportunities. Students were joined by campus leadership to further the discussion. Club leaders also provided input on the college's Master Plan during this meeting.
- The Four Week Healthy Hawk Fitness Challenge conducted in October/November had 108 participants consisting of 30 students, 70 employees and eight community members. This four-week fitness challenge included weekly participation drawings for incentive prizes, a weekly email including a leaderboard update and fitness tips from the Campus Rec Personal Trainers.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- The DEI Office led another book club reading Robin DiAngelo's *White Fragility*. They completed multiple discussions in November helping approximately 50 employees better understand white privilege and the impact of racism in America.
- The LAND ERG hosted Let's Pause Right Here: Addressing Microaggressions in the Moment with Monica Shirley, paralegal studies, Stephanie Whalen, Academy chair, and Rob Hill, inclusive instructional design specialist, as part of the Bandwidth Recovery Series.

Finance and Administrative Services

Facilities Management

- Quarantined COVID Positive Areas in Buildings D, X and Z and had them back in service within 60 hours.
- DLR Group has completed the input session for the Campus Master Plan and will begin reporting out findings in January 2021.
- The scope of work for the Building M Gymnasium Floor Replacement Project will include the demolition and replacement of the gymnasium flooring in Building M. The existing flooring has exceeded its life expectancy and requires replacement. The project is substantially complete.

Information Technology

- Information Technology launched an email Phishing awareness campaign to all Harper faculty and staff in October. As of the end of November, 79.6% of Harper employees have completed the awareness training.
- Over the Thanksgiving break, preventative maintenance was completed on the uninterruptable power supply systems in the Y203 and A105 data centers. Also, over break the telecom connections from main campus to HPC and LCC were switched to AT&T's Network On Demand (NOD) service. Switching to this service allows the Harper IT team to "right" size the connection and have more control of the cost.



Advancement, Marketing and Communications

Advancement

- The Kyoko Shida Family donated \$1,000,000 to create the Shida Family Endowed Scholarship for students who have significant financial need and have demonstrated volunteer involvement. This scholarship is open to all Harper students who meet the criteria, including students with DACA status. The scholarship will be awarded for the first time during the spring 2022 term and will cover the cost of tuition for approximately 8-10 students annually. This gift qualifies for a campus naming opportunity, which will be determined when the Shida Family can visit campus for a tour.
- The Harper Alumni Program in partnership with Harper's Job Placement Resource Center and Continuing Professional Education will host the career focused webinar for alumni: Kickstart Your Career in 2021 on January 12 from noon to 1 p.m. Alumni will learn tips for job hunting in today's virtual environment from the JPRC and get information on Harper's Continuing Professional Education program paths as a means to thinking of new careers or enhancing existing careers. Visit harpercollege.edu/alumni to learn more.
- The Foundation mailed its annual calendar year-end appeal to donors, alumni, and community members. This year's appeal represented an expanded reach by utilizing digital as well as hard copy direct mail pieces. The direct mail piece highlights the 1,482 hardworking scholarship applicants who did not receive aid and encourages gifts to empower additional awards in this difficult economic climate. The Foundation aims to raise \$35,000 through this effort.
- The semi-annual Thank-a-thon culminated on December 1. Each year, Harper students are invited to participate in an effort thanking Educational Foundation donors for their contributions. This year, 21 Promise students volunteered for the remote effort, creating over 2,091 personalized videos expressing their gratitude as well as personal email messages. The messages will be shared with donors on December 28, 2020.

Community Relations

- Community Relations is working with Promise, ACE and Fishing Well scholarship students to share season's greetings with community organizations across the district. More than 50 students volunteered to hand-write seasonal messages on cards that will be delivered to assisted living communities, hospitals and first responders throughout the community. Over 2,000 cards will be delivered. Many students shared a personal message of appreciation for the numerous people who have been working on the front lines throughout the pandemic. The cards feature artwork by Chloe Suarez, Harper Alumna, 2018.
- In December, Community Relations participated in the GOA Drive-Through Donation Event to support the Elk Grove Village Food Pantry. GOA members donated personal hygiene items to help support families throughout the Elk Grove Village Community.

Marketing Services

- PASO Holiday Card (PASO Project Achievement – Surpassing Obstacles or Proyecto de Apoyo Superando Obstaculos) helps maintain consistent communication with 1,100+ Latinx families with a student who has previously engaged with Harper during this important holiday season.



Media Relations

- The *Chicago Tribune* ran an article about the Barrington Breakfast Rotary hosting a fundraiser to support Harper's Student Emergency Fund, which supports students who are facing financial challenges.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* ran an article on Harper's commitment to establishing and expanding tuition relief programs, scholarships and support aimed at removing financial barriers during the pandemic.
- *CASE (Council for the Advancement and Support of Education)* ran an article on how community college leaders have reorganized and adapted amid the pandemic. It featured insight from Laura Brown and Mike Barzacchini, who highlighted initiatives including how employees have been cross-trained to help other areas of the college.
- *WBBM 780 Newsradio* aired a segment on Harper, in partnership with Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital and the Illinois Department of Public Health, serving as a free mobile COVID-19 testing site on December 7. The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* also ran short articles promoting the public service.
- *Northern Public Radio* aired a segment featuring Walter Trentadu, who has taught astronomy and Community Education classes at Harper, about this month's appearance of the "Christmas Star," or the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn.
- English Professor Brian Cremins was interviewed by *The Comics Alternative* podcast in an episode about topics including his book, *Captain Marvel and the Art of Nostalgia*.
- Director of Marketing Services Mike Barzacchini was interviewed for the *Brand Land* podcast in an episode about how the best small businesses have strong branding and use strategic listening and consistent storytelling to build brand trust.

Legislative Affairs

- State and federal legislators were sent information about Harper's numerous tuition relief and support programs for students to help spread the word about these important programs for our community members. Notably state Senators Laura Murphy and Ann Gillespie shared this information with their constituents through their social media channels.

Strategic Alliances and Innovation

Grants Office

- In December, Harper College's Office of International Education received a \$2,000 subaward from the University of Illinois Center for Global Studies. This funding is from the U.S. Department of Education's Title VI National Resource Center Grant in Global Studies and will allow Harper to focus on critical less commonly taught languages (LCTL) and area studies development.
- The college received a \$50,000 grant from Prologis and Jobs for the Future for the Prologis Rapid Skilling Project. Harper will work in collaboration with JFF Labs to recruit and enroll 800 learners into the Prologis Warehousing and Distribution training program.

Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- Students who were enrolled in the spring of 2020 and did not re-enroll in the fall of 2020 were surveyed in October 2020. A total of 207 students responded to the three-question survey. The survey asked students to share why they decided to not re-enroll in the fall, if spring 2020 met their expectations, and if they would like assistance re-enrolling at Harper. More than 60 students indicated they would like assistance to re-enroll at Harper and are being contacted by Harper staff to provide this support.
- The Office of Institutional Research created a Power BI report to facilitate tracking of the Operational Plan enrollment goals. In addition, several Power BI reports have been deployed to help the campus community better understand the new student profile. The three primary interactive reports are: Current Admissions, which shows application counts and conversion rates for the current active semesters compared to the prior year at the same point in time; Degree Seeking Pipeline, which shows where degree-seeking applicants are in the onboarding process versus the same point in time the prior year; and the Placement Dashboard, which looks at new student developmental placement levels and their success outcomes.
- Implementation of the Strategic Plan continues, and all goal teams have held initial meetings. Additionally, the Strategic Planning and Accountability Committee has worked diligently to develop metrics for the strategic goal targets. Beginning in January 2021, the goal teams will focus their work on achieving the target metrics.

Workforce Solutions

- Martha Karavitis, in conjunction with Community Education Career Training, developed a series of “Career Express” workshops that provide rapid learning in a given-subject area with the goal to serve as a pathway into CPE and/or credit academic programs. Workshops may also be appropriate for Harper alumni who completed coursework in Harper College academic programs.
- Community Education staff members Scott Cashman, Kevin Hahn and Darby Lanpher were presenters at the Learning Resources Network (LERN) 2020 Conference. LERN is the world’s largest association in continuing education and lifelong learning. This was the first virtual conference for LERN and over 1,500 people logged into a session during the three-day conference. Scott Cashman spoke on Teaching Live Online and Social Media Success Stories. Kevin Hahn spoke on Virtual and Summer Camps for 2021. Darby Lanpher spoke on Generating Administrative Support. Combined, our staff members spoke to 1,583 people who logged into their sessions. Additionally, Scott Cashman was named as the co-chair of LERN’s Community College Council along with Brenda Marshall of the Community College of Baltimore County.
- Harper Business Solutions built on existing business relationships securing \$6,400 in new contract training. The businesses include American Academy of Dermatology, Elk Grove Village Science & Quality Department, and the Arlington Heights Senior Center.
- Harper College is launching our first apprenticeship program in nursing with JourneyCare, the employer partner, and our first cohort of six students who will begin their prerequisites for the nursing degree in spring 2021.