



PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

February 2021

To the Harper College Community:

Celebrating Black History Month is one of many opportunities to recognize the accomplishments and contributions made by African-Americans throughout American history. In particular, I recently learned about our former trustee, Molly Norwood, who served as the first black chair of the Harper College Board of Trustees. In a [1992 Chicago Tribune article](#), she implored that “we must look beyond our own community with a more global viewpoint,” as she described Harper’s opportunity to ensure that our underrepresented students and community members had a seat at the table. In many ways, we are carrying on her desire in the work we are doing today in diversity, equity and inclusion for everyone at Harper College and our surrounding communities.

Regarding COVID-19, I am cautiously optimistic by the progress being made by our country, state and region to bring it under control. Through vaccination and continued mitigation efforts like wearing at least one mask and physical distancing, our numbers have trended in the right direction these past few weeks allowing for more relaxed restrictions. With this in mind, we have worked closely with our partner, Palatine Park District, to phase a reopening of our pool for limited swim practices. Additionally, we are hoping to be able to offer more opportunities for our student-athletes and the general community in the Foglia Health and Recreation Center. As I’ve emphasized from the onset of the pandemic, health and safety continue to be our top priorities as we consider the prospect of more on-campus activities.

This month, Dr. Jacqueline Korpics (attending physician, COVID-19 lead and pediatrician from the Cook County Department of Public Health - CCDPH) will be our special guest at the February Town Hall meeting. She will provide an in-depth overview of CCDPH’s vaccine rollout and answer questions posed by college employees prior to and during the Town Hall.

As a member of the Illinois Council of Community College Presidents, I was pleased to support a letter to Governor Pritzker advocating for higher education faculty and staff to be moved into the 1B Tier for COVID-19 vaccinations in Illinois. Returning to campus and in-person activities poses similar risks to our employees as our K-12 colleagues. I remain hopeful that the Governor will fulfill our request. On another note, I am grateful for the Governor’s support on the Canning Center and our hospitality center. At its February meeting, the Capital Development Board moved our project along and selected an architecture firm. Once their negotiations are complete, the design process can begin on this long-awaited and anticipated building project!

Recognizing the public health and economic challenges our community is facing, I am pleased to share with you that we are recommending that the Board approve no tuition increase for the FY22 academic year, the second year in a row of keeping tuition flat, along with several suspended or decreased fees. This includes suspending differential tuition in our health careers programs, which we hope will help remove barriers to the accessibility and completion of degrees and certificates for our current and future essential health care workers.

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Finally, I attended the Virtual Community College National Legislative Summit with Trustees Johnson, Kelley, and Stack and Student Trustee Hildebrand. While I missed the collective energy of thousands of community college supporters walking the halls of Congress, we still made the most of our opportunity to advocate for our priorities, including additional emergency relief for community colleges in addition to what is proposed in President Biden's American Rescue Plan. I was encouraged by the positive interactions with our elected officials, who demonstrated in-depth knowledge of the role community colleges play in helping educate and retrain our communities to get our economy back on track.

COVID-19 Response Team (CRT) Update

- The COVID-19 Student Self-Report form has been reviewed by legal counsel and there are no concerns with moving forward. Dr. MaryAnn Janosik will share the form and change to protocol with faculty and a communication will be sent to students.
- Harper is working with the Palatine Park District to do a phased reopening of the pool while also working internally to bring back athletics as appropriate. Building M reopened February 8 for the swim team only (for lane training). On February 22, the pool will open for community members who want to use the pool for laps using a reservation system. After March 15, Harper will review bringing athletics back as appropriate based on guidance for a low-risk transition.
- The Communications team updated the COVID-19 advisory and monitoring webpages to make certain information and resources more prominent and accessible; this work was the result of collaborating with various departments. The team also organized the virtual President's Address meetings, which highlighted the college's continued COVID-19 response and other college initiatives.

Student Success

Student Development

- Advisors served 1,455 students via email, phone and video appointments between January 4 and January 22 as compared to serving 913 during the same time period last spring. The offices of Advising Services and New Students/Orientation also fielded 5,547 calls as compared to 2,776 last year. (*Source: SARS Appointment Scheduling System*).
- Students completing the New Student Orientation for the fully online fall 2020 and spring 2021 onboarding program indicated that approximately 94% agreed with the statement, "I understand how my first semester courses are important to my educational plan." In addition, approximately 87% agreed with the statement, "I think I am more likely to do well and complete my courses in the coming semester after attending Orientation." (*Source: New Student Orientation Survey*)
- Counseling Services and Hawks Care launched video appointments at the beginning of the spring 2021 semester allowing students to opt for "face-to-face" service. With the late fall introduction of Well Track, additional efforts to encourage student use will include targeted outreach email and enhancing existing web-content with a student-friendly FAQ.
- Dr. Vicki Atkinson and Dr. Megan Dallianis presented at the Chief Academic Officers, Presidents and Chief Student Service Officers annual meeting in January to share the successful outcomes of the "Harper



Launch” bridge program to support low income and underrepresented students. Additional Launch programs are being offered thanks to the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funding.

- 76% of Summer Launch participants successfully completed the course with a grade of C or better.
- 100% of Summer Launch participants who placed developmental for math or English enrolled in their developmental coursework in the fall 2020 semester.
- 75% of respondents indicated Agreed or Strongly Agreed with the statement, “As a result of Summer Launch, I feel like I am part of the Harper Community and have a sense of belonging.”
(Source: *College Operational Plan*)

Student Engagement

- In response to changes in our nation surrounding the election, transition of power, and the ongoing pandemic, Student Engagement began hosting weekly *Student Community Pulse Sessions* each Thursday at 1 p.m. beginning January 21. The sessions are open to all students and are meant to provide a safe space to drop in, make connections, and discuss anything students would like from the Harper community to external challenges. This non-agenda event is student driven and resources are provided as necessary.
- In January, Student Involvement streamed a pre-recorded video recognizing Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The video brought together staff, faculty and students to share what Martin Luther King Jr. Day means to them and their dream for Harper College. You can view the video here:
<https://livestream.com/harpercollege/mlk>.

Enrollment Services

- The One Stop processed more than 5,700 inbound contacts in January. They received 3,452 phone calls, 1,659 emails, and 591 live chats, which are increases respectively of 26.5%, 80.7%, and 59.3% over last year. The One Stop also conducted call campaigns, including reminding students of payment dates, financial aid requirements, and returning technology loan items. More than 2,600 calls were made, reaching 34.6% of students during the month of January.

Career and Technical Programs

- Base Solutions, Chicagoland’s exclusive distributor of quality YORK products, donated over \$19,500 worth of equipment to our HVAC program. This donation was made possible through the efforts of Mr. Jim LaBeck, store manager of the Elgin location. Mr. LaBeck is also a member of the HVAC Advisory Committee. We sincerely appreciate Base Solutions and Mr. LaBeck for their support of our program and their commitment to student success.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- The Black Veteran Experience was held in February and featured a discussion with the Honorable Jesse White, U.S. Army veteran and Illinois Secretary of State, and the Honorable William (Bill) Hooks, U.S. Marine Corps veteran and Cook County criminal court judge, as they discussed their experiences and achievements, both while enlisted, and after.
- The college hosted *A Conversation with Amari: from College Student to Engineer* in February. In this virtual session, Amari shared how she navigated college to earn her current role at Ford Motor Company. Through her involvement in the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Delta Sigma Theta Sorority



Inc., and the Young Women Professional League, she is able to create opportunities and act as an agent of change in her community.

- *The Impact of Intersection With Whitney Hill* will be held on February 24 at 1pm. Whitney Hill is a woman of color who will share her story and background as well as touch on the topic of diversity and intersectionality - how one aspect of your identity will play on the others and how they all compound to make an individual with personal, lived experiences that are unique from others.

Finance and Administrative Services

Facilities Management

- The scope of work for the Building M Gymnasium Door Modifications will include modifications to the existing gymnasium doors, frames, and concrete stoops as necessary to comply with the Illinois Accessibility Code. The project is substantially complete.
- The scope of work for the Avanté Flooring Replacement Project will include the installation of new resilient flooring in the main concourse along Buildings Y and Z. The project is substantially complete.
- Harper College has been awarded \$1,100 as an initial incentive for participation in ComEd's and Nicor's Strategic Energy Management (SEM) program. The incentive was awarded for prioritizing energy efficiency initiatives throughout FY21 and implementing quick strike energy savings, including fine-tuning BAS scheduling, and automating the servicing of HVAC equipment.

Information Technology

- Oracle Cloud Fusion went live in production on January 4. This was an 18-month effort that involved staff members from Human Resources, Finance, and IT. As expected, the team continues to work through post-go-live issues.
- The Service Desk uses a "LiveHelp Now" as a chat tool. This tool allows the Service Desk to communicate via chat to students, faculty, and staff. In January, LiveHelp Now announced that the Harper Service Desk made the LiveHelp Now Challenge list of the top companies providing exceptional service. LiveHelp Now uses 50 different criteria to create 12 metrics. They measure 10,000 companies against these metrics. The Harper College Service Desk received an "exceptional" rating in January.

Human Resources

- The Human Resources office implemented a new HR/Payroll system and conducted more than 30 user training sessions on this new system.

Advancement, Marketing and Communications

Advancement

- Fifteen new scholarships have been established with the Foundation since July 2020. These scholarships will support a variety of students from first-generation in college, undocumented and DACA students, students with food insecurity, and students in career and technical programs, nursing/health careers, education, and the Career Skills Institute.



- The Harper Professional Advisors Speaker Series is hosting a two-part Retirement Planning Webinar on the emotional, social and financial aspects of a healthy retirement plan. Harper retiree Bruce Bohrer, Harper Distinguished Alumna Brenda Knox, and Russ Farnher will present on February 23 and March 2 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- The HOPE Giving Circle, Harper's women's affinity program, held its winter social event, a virtual paint and sip night, in January. More than 50 women joined to learn about the mission of the HOPE Giving Circle and hear updates on the 2020-21 scholarship recipients. Participants also had the opportunity to paint an original piece of artwork led by an instructor. Since its inception, the HOPE Giving Circle has raised over \$200,000 in support of female students pursuing their education at Harper and beyond. HOPE offers scholarships, mentoring and development opportunities for the student recipients.
- Donor-sponsored scholarship recipients are sharing the love this Valentine's Day. Scholarship recipients were asked to write notes to their scholarship donors, thanking them for their support. Over 35% of scholarship recipients have responded to the request by writing Valentine's Day notes to their donors.

Community Relations

- The Food and Coat Drive sponsored by the Rotary Club of Elk Grove Village was a success. Twenty-five Promise students volunteered at the drop-off locations. The students unloaded, sorted and organized donations so they could be delivered to six organizations in Elk Grove Village. Promise students even brought their own donations to support the event.
- Community Relations recently joined the Community Character Coalition (CCC) of Elk Grove Village. The organization brings together non-profit and community organizations throughout the Elk Grove Village community including the Elk Grove Village Library and Community Consolidated School District 59. CCC hosts events throughout the year to engage and support the needs of the community. Harper's first event will be the Carnival of Exceptional Character (virtual) in March. The event will include educational and interactive activities for families and students of all ages.

Marketing Services

- Recent updates to the institutional website designed to improve access, user experience, search, and content quality include:
 - Launched new layout for homepage lead story that works better on mobile and improves accessibility
 - Launched Frequently Asked Questions feature on the home page, addressing common search queries submitted by users
 - Launched "New & Updated" feature under "Trending" menu on home page
 - Launched new interactive district map, in collaboration with the GIS program and Registrar's office: <https://www.harpercollege.edu/registrar/registrar/residency.php>
 - Launched new Bookstore page: <https://www.harpercollege.edu/bookstore/index.php>
 - Launched new gallery in collaboration with Art Department: "reprocess" by Julie Weber

<https://www.harpercollege.edu/academics/arts/art/exhibitions/weber/index.php>

- Launched accessibility initiative to review 1,200 PDFs on the site and optimize them for screen readers. Often text in PDFs is read out of order or may not be detected at all, and many images do not have an alternative description set, which prevents those using screen readers from accessing content.

Media Relations

- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about John Lawson being sworn in as Harper's new police chief. It noted past accomplishments, priorities and highlighted how Chief Lawson is a Harper College graduate.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article on Harper's plans to reopen a multicultural center on campus, which will be a gathering spot, serve as a space for educational workshops, and help provide a sense of belonging for many students and employees of various backgrounds and identities.
- *Journal and Topics* ran an article on the upcoming trustees' election, providing brief bios and statements by the three incumbents and one challenger as to why each of the candidates is running.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article on how student Katie Ruiz, as aspiring psychiatrist, has persevered throughout the pandemic with the help of a Finish Line grant and other support from Harper.
- A *Daily Herald* article on Black History Month events included Harper's partnership with the University of Chicago to host speakers Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White and Judge William Hooks, both veterans, on February 11 and "The Impact of Intersection With Whitney Hill" on February 24.
- The website *365Barrington.com* ran an article covering the highlights of the village of Barrington's Town Warming event and noted Dr. Proctor's participation in a panel discussion about the vision for the post-pandemic world.

Legislative Affairs

- Dr. Proctor, Chair Pat Stack, Vice Chair Bill Kelley, Trustee Herb Johnson, Student Trustee Dylan Hildebrand and Jeff Julian, chief of staff, attended the Virtual Community College Legislative Summit 2021 and met with Harper's federal elected officials in February. The college delegation advocated for national and local priorities including additional federal aid for higher education in subsequent relief bills, a community college job training program similar to the TAACCCT grants, as well as student-focused priorities such as increasing Pell Grant awards and making them available for short-term certificate programs. Additionally, they advocated for a permanent legislative solution to support undocumented and DACA students.

The college held meetings with Representative Sean Casten and Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi, as well as meeting with legislative staff members from the offices of Representatives Jan Schakowksy and Brad Schneider as well as Senators Tammy Duckworth and Dick Durbin.

- At its February Board meeting, the Capital Development Board (CDB) approved the selection of a firm for the Canning Center Project. CDB staff will begin contract negotiations; once those are completed, the design process for the Canning Center will officially start.

Strategic Alliances and Innovation

Grants Office

- In February, the Educational Foundation received a grant for \$2,500 from the Bruce J Heim Foundation, a family foundation in Metairie, Louisiana. This grant provides funds for an additional scholarship from the David K. Hill Memorial Scholarship, which recognizes a student's exceptional academic achievement and commitment to community service.

Board of Trustees Support

- A joint meeting between the North Suburban and West Suburban ICCTA regions is being hosted by Harper's Board of Trustees on February 22. This meeting will include nine community colleges and is being led by Trustees Bill Kelley and Herb Johnson. The topics for the meeting include: diversity, equity and inclusion, enrollment challenges due to the pandemic, and what the Biden Administration may do to help advance the mission of community colleges.

Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- The Office of Institutional Research continues to support campus operations with two Power BI reports designed to facilitate the work of the academic divisions. The Department Analysis Dashboard compares the data of departments to their divisions and Harper overall across multiple dimensions such as course success, fill and cancellation rates, persistence, and credentials earned. The primary purpose of the Department Analysis Dashboard is to provide the information needed for the five-year program review process and the annual department-based assessment. The Scheduling Analysis Dashboard facilitates a deeper dive at the department level to examine and compare past course offerings and monitor current course offerings to aid in making scheduling decisions.
- The Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Division is launching a Data Literacy Badge. The badge is a self-paced, online course which prepares and supports employees who are—or would like to be—utilizing institutional dashboards and reports. Participants will learn about critical components of data literacy, the ethical use of data, and best practices for using data to support problem-solving and decision-making. Participants receive an introduction to the most common institutional data resources used at Harper and engage in a project where insights from one or more data sources are used to solve a problem.

Workforce Solutions

- The Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Harper College received many positive comments from the January 2021 end-of-year survey. Here are a few:
 - "The staff at Harper's SBDC is by far the most helpful and accessible in the system. I spoke with five different advisers over the course of eight months (multiple times) and they were all tremendously helpful. Online webinars were fantastic too! I heard about the SBDC from a TV show." Naomi Abrams, Silly Goose Promotions, Inc.
 - "The SBDC staff at Harper College are excellent at their jobs and have been for many years. They have contributed to the success of my business." Karen Kelly, ITEX - A Membership Trading Community

- "I appreciate all the support from Harper's SBDC in terms of coaching and access to resources. Thank you very much for helping me grow my business!" Daniellah Salario, Assisting Hands Home Care
- Issa Boulos, coordinator of community music and arts, co-edited a book, *Music in Arabia, Perspective on Heritage, Mobility, and Nation*, published by Indiana University Press and soon to be released. He co-authored a chapter in the volume, which is about the legacy of former slaves in Qatar, their music, community, rituals, integration, and identity.
- Community Education student Mike Lucansky has been named 'Best in Class' in our Project Management Certificate classes in 2020. Students in the Project Management Certificate program come from 10 different states and there were 159 students over the course of the year who completed the Project Management Certificate. Talking about the program Mike said, "My biggest takeaway from the courses was the (virtual) engaging interaction between learners from all over the country and from a wide variety of industries." The ability to offer Harper's Community Education courses nationwide is made possible via a long-term partnership with the Learning Resources Network's (LERN) UGotClass program of online classes. LERN serves a wide variety of institutions offering continuing education classes, including state universities, four-year colleges, colleges within universities, private colleges, community colleges, technical colleges, public schools, recreation departments and associations.

Promise

- Registration for the Promise Scholarship for the high school class of 2024 is now complete, with 6,212 students (93% of total class) signing up. While the total class population and number of students signing up for Promise has slightly declined by about 100 students in each group, the percentage of sign-ups mirrors previous cohorts.