



## PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

May 2021

Dear Harper College Community:

The month of May marks both traditional and new milestones for Harper College. First, congratulations to our 2021 graduates, including our inaugural Promise Program cohort, who started their journey six years ago when they signed up as freshmen in high school. Now, they are reaping the benefits of dedicating themselves to this rigorous program and celebrating their achievements. I salute them as well as our Board of Trustees for creating and sustaining this signature program for our community. We will celebrate all of our graduates on May 22 with a virtual commencement ceremony followed by an in-person event on campus with an opportunity to take photos with me and their families at the Pavilion.

Hybrid events like these will be more common as the state progresses from its Bridge phase (May 14) to Phase 5 (June 11) of the Restore Illinois plan. We continue our phased return to campus on May 24 as we bring back more student services to campus as well as additional programming and activities. I am grateful to our students, employees and community members for their patience and understanding as we navigate these complicated decisions. Much like spring 2020 when the virus was growing exponentially, we are now experiencing the rapid exponential decay of COVID-19 and that means a quicker than expected relaxing of standards that we have grown used to over the past year. Many were shocked by the CDC's recent announcement that fully vaccinated people no longer had to wear a mask indoors (in most cases). For the time being, Harper College will maintain our policy on requiring masks to be worn indoors and outside when you can't socially distance. As we have from the beginning, we will follow the science, plan using guidance from our county, state and federal public health officials and prioritize the health and safety of our students and employees.

### Campus News . . .

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After President Biden's address to Congress last month, our country has been discussing the merits of free community college. I was honored to join the [John Williams show on WGN Radio](#) to share my thoughts on the long-term benefits of debt-free higher education to our country, the tremendous benefits of community colleges, and how Harper College is providing affordable, accessible and quality education and training to our district. As mentioned above, Harper has long been a leader in providing a pathway to tuition earned via the Promise Program. I look forward to participating in future conversations with our elected officials about the best way to provide higher education to our communities while minimizing the associated cost and debt.

In April, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and her economic development team along with Karin Norrington-Reaves, CEO of the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, toured our labs and visited with faculty and students to learn more about Harper's advanced manufacturing program. This meeting is another example of our strong commitment to economic development through partnerships and the importance of relationship building in our community. While the focus of our discussion was collaborative opportunities around workforce training and academic programming, we also were able to build on previous conversations about hosting a mass vaccination clinic on campus. On Monday, the Cook County Department of Public Health and Health and

Human Services teams were on campus for a site visit related to the COVID-19 vaccination clinic, which we hope to announce later this month.

Finally, several notes of congratulations. We concluded our first year of the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan with a year-end celebration of the work that has been done thus far. The members of our Strategic Plan Goal Teams reported out on their progress and cheered one another for their hard work completed in this virtual environment. I am proud of the teams and appreciate the leadership of the goal team leaders and their Executive Cabinet advisors. Also, kudos to President Emeritus Dr. Ken Ender, who was recognized by the American Association of Community Colleges with its AACC 2021 Leadership Award for his contributions to the community college field—a well-deserved honor.

### COVID-19 Response Team (CRT) Update

- CRT approved the soft opening of the Early Childhood Lab School on July 6 for the extended preschool program with 15 children, and on August 23 for the preschool program with 30 children (15 per class).
- CRT approved the reopening of the Makerspace and Entrepreneurship Center from July 12 - August 9.
- CRT approved in and out of state domestic travel for college business purposes, which will be paid for according to Harper's policies and procedures.
- CRT approved the Nursing Drive-In Pinning Ceremony on May 29 at 11am for both RN and LPN students in parking lot 4 (drive in event with a live WebEx video).

### Student Success

#### *Student Development*

- Advising Services:
  - In April, Harper College joined with Prairie State College, College of DuPage, McHenry County College, Elgin Community College, Oakton Community College and Triton College to host a virtual Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Transfer Fair.
- Starfish and Student Success Trends and Data:
  - Faculty and advisors have been busy leveraging the Starfish student success system to connect with students and with each other regarding student performance. Overall, through faculty responding to early alert surveys as well as by leveraging Starfish outside of survey periods, 2,329 unique students have received a flag of concern, a referral to a support service or a kudo during the first six weeks of spring semester. This is an 11% increase as compared to the same period last spring. *Source: Starfish System Extract*
- Access & Disability Services:
  - In April, the ADS Success Club invited Chief Lawson and Professor Brad Grossman of the law enforcement program to its club meeting where they discussed tips for successful communication with police officers and emergency medical personnel.

## Student Engagement

- Student Bystander Intervention 101 Training occurred in April. Students, including Student Government Association members, learned about bystander intervention, engaged in discussions regarding how to safely intervene in various situations and were provided with practical intervention strategies. Twenty-five students were in attendance.
- Students were provided the opportunity to sign-up for Self-Care Survival Kits. The Harper College Library, Harper Wellness, Counseling Services, and Advising provided over 120 kits which included materials and resources to help assist students in preparation for finals week.
- Graduation Board Painting Party – One hundred and fifty graduating students registered and received a graduation-themed board painting kit. These students were invited to a painting party where they received a welcome from President Proctor and words of wisdom from Provost Janosik before being guided through the painting process.

## Enrollment Services

- The One Stop processed 4,943 inbound contacts in April, which is up 23.1% from last year. We received 2,672 phone calls, 1,758 emails, 511 live chats, and two social media posts. We saw a substantial increase in phone volume with a 100% increase from April 2020. The One Stop conducted various call campaigns, including reminding students of payment dates, application data verification, and completing their financial aid requirements. We made over 1,600 calls and reached 30% of students last month.
- The national average of FAFSA completion is down approximately 9%, yet the Harper College FAFSA completion remains flat from last year to this year. The number of students that have completed the financial process and verification paperwork had increased by 13.4%. The number of those eligible for State/Federal Grants has increased by 60.3%. This is directly correlated to MAP grants that have increased by 71.8% as of the May comparison.

May 4, 2021 vs May 4, 2020 vs May 4, 2019	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020
Number of FAFSAs	7,751	7,746	7,674
Number of Students with Packaging Requirements Complete	4215	3718	3362
Number of Students Packaged with State/Federal Grants	1827	1140	1234

## Career and Technical Programs

- The Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Program received several commercial HVAC systems in March. The equipment was donated by Jim LaBeck, Advisory Committee member representing BASE Solutions. The \$6,825.43 equipment will be used to replace outdated commercial systems for student training.
- Second-year Fashion Design student Yesenia Guzman's designs were featured in two international pageants this year. Yesenia is an accomplished design student who takes a lot of pride in her creative textiles and eco-friendly approach to fashion. Her first piece was selected by Miss Grand USA Abena Akuaba for Miss Grand International competition in Thailand. She won the Title of Miss Grand International 2020.
- The Honorable Timothy C. Evans Scholarship will be awarded at the Annual Northwest Suburban Bar Association (NWSBA) meeting to be held on May 20. Newland & Newland, LLP will match



the NWSBA scholarship awarded to the Harper student and invites any member or member firm to match that award in the amount of \$1,550. Carol Carlson-Nofsinger selected Mia J. O'Malley for the \$1,550 Honorable Timothy C. Evans Scholarship for Paralegal Studies funded by the NWSBA. Chaltu Spray was selected for the \$1,550 Honorable Timothy C. Evans Scholarship for Paralegal Studies funded by Newland & Newland, LLP.

### *Health Careers Division*

- © 2021 BestValueSchools.com, a Red Ventures Company, just listed the Practical Nursing Certificate program at William Rainey Harper College as the top program in the state of Illinois. Best Value Schools publishes independent, evidence-based rankings to compare thousands of schools, degrees, and programs around the country. The top ranking of the Harper LPN program is based on the quality of the program and the projected return on investment for the students who complete the program. Harper is listed on their "Best LPN Programs in Illinois" page at <https://www.bestvalueschools.org/lpn-programs-in-illinois/>. Best Value Schools stated they strive to create the best resources for students who are looking to further their education.

### *Office of International Education*

- During the pandemic year, the Office of International Education has been actively seeking innovative opportunities for our students to engage with the world. While our students have not been able to explore the world through education abroad, the world has come to Harper classrooms through technology. This past semester alone, over 200 students have been engaged in global online learning through people-to-people dialog. They have interacted with peers in over 15 countries on four different continents through technology-enabled people-to-people dialog. Another 300+ students have benefited from synchronous and asynchronous educational materials provided through our partners in Costa Rica. All aspects of the programs are intentionally integrated into the learning outcomes and curriculum of the courses. A selection of student comments suggests the depth of the impact these courses have had:
  - "[The program] exceeded my expectations and is providing me with a multicultural learning experience. I value this, especially as a college student in the pandemic, because the option to study abroad, travel with a class, or simply go on vacation are not options at the moment." (EDU Africa BIO student)
  - "One of my biggest takeaways . . . is how important it is to 'agree to disagree'. This mentality allows for the discussion of 'sensitive' topics such as politics, religion, and culture while respecting other peers and their opinions." (SOLIYA Connect: ENG 101 student)
  - "The project provided me with a solid foundation on not just how to work collaboratively with people of different backgrounds, it also taught me that we really are all the same regardless of where we come from and what language we may speak." (IREX Global Solutions: Business Club student)
  - "[These interactions] allow students to engage in a cross-cultural experience that is informative, transformative, and enlightening." (EDU Africa Geography student)

### *Interdisciplinary Studies*

- Last month, four Harper Phi Theta Kappa students, Alyssa Hammer, Damaris Mathenge, Geneva Royel, and Anastasiya Tskhtay, were honored in a virtual ceremony celebrating the All-Illinois Academic Team.

- Ten Harper students attended the International Phi Theta Kappa conference and were able to participate and see our chapter, Phi Phi, celebrated as a Five Star Chapter.
- On March 16th, Phi Theta Kappa Spring Induction was live-streamed. Student Leia Ladios was featured as a speaker. So far, the chapter has welcomed 226 new inductees this semester.
- In April, Harper hosted the Great Books Symposium with guests from several local colleges. Harper Honors student Claudia Massopust shared a paper on Toni Morrison's *BeLoved* and Harper Honors student Amanda Mirczuk responded to multiple papers.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Dr. Claudia Mercado and SAFE ERG members presented on Successful LGBTQ ERGs at the California Community College LGBTQ+ Summit in April.
- In April, the Office of DEI hosted a celebration of the past year's accomplishments ranging from Diverse Faculty Fellows, the work of ERGs, the Social Justice Leadership Cohort and many presentations from faculty and staff.
- The Office of DEI, Student Engagement, Student Wellness, Student Development and Employee Relations held two simultaneous events for students and employees during the announcement of the Derek Chauvin verdict to provide support and space for our community.

### *DREAM:*

- Hosted mentoring celebration on Friday, April 16 (10th and 11th Cohort), via WebEx

### *LAND:*

- Hosted the third session of the DEI Identity Discussion Series on May 5, 2021. We discussed the book "The Acorn People" by Ron Jones.

### *SAFE*

- The SAFE ERG partnered with the Kenneth Young Center to provide an informational article about the use of pronouns for the college community. The article was in the May 6 issue of InsideHarper.

## Finance and Administrative Services

### *Facilities Management*

- COVID-19 accommodations for departments returning May 24 were completed by May 7. Classroom COVID-19 accommodation for summer session in Buildings, H, L, X, Y and Z were completed by May 14.
- The scope of work for the Center for Multicultural learning project will include the remodeling of room D281 at Building D into a community room, lounge, kitchenette, conference room, work area and other support spaces. Construction continues and remains on schedule to be completed in July 2021.

### *Information Technology*

- Selected and ordered the technology required to convert 31 standard conference rooms to "WebEx" enabled conference rooms

### *Human Resources*

- One-hundred and thirty Harper employees were recognized for their affiliation and service milestones in April via a virtual recognition event. Employees with five to 40 years of affiliation or service were honored for their contributions. In addition, the college's spring and summer retirees and those employees who completed an academic degree or professional certification in 2020 were recognized.

## **Advancement, Marketing and Communications**

### *Advancement*

- The Realizing Dreams Virtual Celebration was attended by 95 scholarship donors and scholarship recipients. Danica Lopez, the inaugural 2020-2021 Nancy and John Robb Scholarship recipient and the Advancing Community Economics (ACE) Grant from Rotary International recipient, spoke about receiving scholarship support. Rafael Malpica, Foundation Board Member and Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital Scholarship donor, spoke about partnering and donating to Harper College. Then, Foundation staff hosted small break-out sessions between scholarship donors and scholarship recipients. Many students expressed through tears their gratitude for how much the scholarship support helped, especially this year with the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Spring Thank-a-thon was conducted from April 1-May 1 and included 12 Promise Scholar volunteers. These students wrote handwritten messages to Harper College Educational Foundation donors. Their 79 volunteer hours resulted in 1,171 personalized messages. Students expressed gratitude for the contribution donors made to their education and acknowledged the vital role philanthropy played in their success at Harper. Thank-a-thon messages are scheduled to be mailed to donors in May. The Thank-a-thon is a semi-annual effort connecting student volunteers with the donors who impacted their lives.

### *Community Relations*

- This past month, Community Relations worked with Promise, ACE and Fishing Well scholarship students to send messages of thanks and support to our education partners. Students from the scholarship programs filled out as many as 50 cards to earn community service hours. Eighty students volunteered for the project, totaling more than 3,000 cards. Packets of cards were sent to 133 public schools and district offices in conjunction with teacher appreciation week.
- In May, Community Relations participated in the Barrington Giving Day spring resource fair. The Barrington Giving Day organization provides necessities to children and their families within District 220. The spring event is new this year in response to the growing need due to the pandemic. Families received food, clothing, shoes and personal hygiene items as well as information on community and education resources available.

### *Marketing Services*



- Launched [Convocation](#) and [Graduation](#) websites with student profiles and message walls.
  - Virtual Convocation will be held Thursday, May 20, 7 p.m.
  - Virtual Graduation will be held Saturday, May 22, 11 a.m.
- Supported the [Realizing Dreams message](#) wall.
- Launched 2021-2022 [College Catalog website](#).

#### Media Relations

- Dr. Proctor joined *WGN Radio* host John Williams for an 18-minute segment to discuss the great education that Harper offers and President Biden's plan to make all community college education free.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article on Harper beginning to distribute \$7.5 million in CRRSAA funds to students, as well as the college's commitment to directly provide at least half of its total federal pandemic relief funds to students.
- *Community College Daily* and the *Daily Herald* ran an article about Dr. Ken Ender, president emeritus, being selected a recipient of the American Association of Community Colleges' 2021 Leadership Award.
- The *Daily Herald* ran a digest about Harper's on-campus free COVID-19 testing through the SHIELD Illinois program.
- *Patch* ran an article about Harper receiving more than \$1 million from the Illinois Capital Development Board as part of the governor's Rebuild Illinois program for HVAC system improvements.
- *Politico* and *Good Day Chicago* mentioned Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle's visit to tour Harper's manufacturing facilities.
- Following her lauded appearance presenting the Best Documentary Feature award at the Oscars, entertainment news website *MEAWW* ran a profile on actress Marlee Matlin that mentions her beginnings as a law enforcement student at Harper.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article promoting Dr. Proctor's appearance speaking at Barrington's White House about the state of the college and higher education.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article promoting Harper's OSHA safety training classes for individuals and small businesses.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about the village of Palatine signing an intergovernmental agreement with Harper (still pending the college's approval) to provide police coverage overnight should a call for service require the response of a sworn officer; Harper's community service officers will continue to respond to all other overnight calls. The *Journal and Topics* also ran an article.
- *Intelligent.com* ranked Harper among its top 50 Best Accounting Certificate Degree Programs for 2021.
- Several media outlets ran a PRNewswire release about the Chicago Apprentice Network's announcement it has surpassed 1,000 apprenticeships in the Chicago area since its creation in 2017. The release featured

Harper's partnership with Zurich and said the Schaumburg-based company has hired over 118 apprentices since 2016.

## Legislative Affairs

- The college received notification from Congressman Brad Schneider's office that Rep. Schneider would be submitting for approximately \$1.1 million in funding for a sidewalk project along Wolf Road that will have a positive impact on Harper College's Prospect Heights Learning and Career Center.
- Dr. Avis Proctor, along with City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor Juan Salgado and Lake Land College president Dr. Josh Bullock, participated in negotiation sessions with Illinois Senate President Don Harmon, Senator Cristina Pacione-Zayas and Illinois university presidents as part of our continued efforts to advance legislation for a community college bachelor's degree in early childhood education.
- The Harper College Board of Trustees authored a letter of opposition to HB3145, proposed legislation that would change the process for electing community college trustees from the current at-large system to a ward system of trustee districts. The letter was sent to members of the college's state Senate delegation and outlined concerns that the bill erodes local control, is applied only to community college districts with population of 300,000 or more and incentivizes focus on single wards rather than the community college district as a whole.
- The Governor's proposed plan to address loan repayment as part of the state's FY22 budget took a hit as the US Treasury Department issued interim rules to prevent state and local governments from using funding from the American Rescue Plan to pay off debt. State officials had planned to use the funding to pay off the \$3.6 billion borrowed from the Federal Reserve last year. No word yet on how lawmakers and the Governor plan to address the loan repayment.

## Strategic Alliances and Innovation

### *Grants Office*

- Institutional funds from HEERF 1 (CARES Act) were reallocated to students and added to the funding provided via HEERF 2 (CRRSAA). Students qualifying via exceptional need criteria were given \$800 in emergency funding. The application for additional emergency funding for students was developed, as was the rubric for assessing how much funding students would receive based on their identified needs.

## Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered this spring with a representative sample of more than 1,500 students responding. The CCSSE results provide Harper with data on student perceptions about their experiences at Harper College, both in the classroom and related to services and activities outside of the classroom. Harper uses these data to improve student engagement and provide optimal opportunities for positive student experiences at the College. The results from this administration will be received mid-summer.
- The annual Outcomes Assessment Report for the 2019-2020 cycle has been published. This report summarizes the assessment work of faculty and staff, highlighting the use of assessment results to



improve student learning and department effectiveness. General education assessment information is also included in the report.

- Final status on the 2020 Institutional Effectiveness Measure (IEM) targets has been published and are located on the Harper College webpage. Overall, the college achieved 17 of 25 long-term targets and met or exceeded the stretch targets related to student persistence and employee diversity.

## Workforce Solutions

- The Illinois SBDC at Harper College has launched a series of virtual meet ups for small business owners. The Hospitality Meet Up, Consulting Meet Up, and Start Up Meet Up run once per month with 50-70 participants total. Meet ups are a forum where small business owners get questions answered, share successes, and learn from their peers.

### *Promise*

- 140 Promise Scholars from the inaugural cohort have applied for graduation this academic year.
  - 134 will receive an associate degree
  - 6 will receive a certificate
- The average GPA of these graduates is a 3.61.
- These 140 students alone have completed over 14,000 hours of community service over the past six years.
- 115 students who were a part of the original cohort of Promise Scholars but lost eligibility during their time at Harper; these students still persisted to degree completion within two years of starting at Harper.

## In Memoriam

- Gail Hoban, retiree, passed away on April 11, 2021. Gail worked in the Math and Science Division from 2002 until she retired in 2012. A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, October 23, 2021, at the Davenport Funeral Home in Barrington:  
<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/chicagotribune/name/gail-hoban-obituary?pid=198330976>.
- Debbie Hajek, retiree, passed away on May 2, 2021. Debbie began working at Harper in 1998 in Continuing Education. Through the years, she worked as a registration assistant, wellness and sports assistant, and dual credit coordinator. Debbie retired from her most recent position as an administrative assistant in Career and Technical Programs in July 2019. Debbie's life will be celebrated at a later date (this summer). Information will be updated on [Debbie's Memories site](#) along with pictures and memories from her life.
- Our thoughts and condolences go out to the families and friends of Gail and Debbie.