



PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

February 2024

Dear Harper College Community:

The beginning of our Spring semester marks a busy travel time for community college leaders as we convene to highlight issues important to helping our students SOAR. From the AACC Workforce Development Institute and the National Legislative Summit to Achieving the Dream and the Community Colleges for International Development annual conferences, these gatherings of community college advocates help bring much needed attention to affordability, basic needs, DEI, international education, Pell, and other critically important matters. You cannot discount the power of a chorus of voices speaking in unison for our students and the importance of community colleges to achieving the educational dreams and economic mobility of our communities and for advancing our nation's global competitiveness.

Turning attention back to home, I am so proud to announce that Harper's new official three-year graduation rate for the fall 2020 cohort of first-time, full-time, credential-seeking students is confirmed at 46% (45.6%), surpassing the previous highest rate from the fall 2019 cohort by nearly two percentage points. Notably, the increase in the graduation rate is comparable to the fall 2020 cohort's improvement in meeting the Path for Success, the five first-semester and first-year momentum points influencing graduation rates, which rose from 27% for the fall 2019 cohort to 29%. Our laser-focused attention on closing equity gaps and removing barriers contributes to results like these and accelerates our students SOARING to SUCCESS!

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In celebrating Black History Month, our Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion held the 2nd Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration with approximately 180 attendees. The highlight of this event was the awarding of the inaugural Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Excellence in Service Award, which was presented to Darlett Bernard, Sodexo catering supervisor. Darlett captures the essence of our Core Values and is a beloved member of the Harper College community. It was a joy to see her receive a standing ovation in the presence of her family and friends in the Wojcik Amphitheater. Additionally, Dr. Shanté Holley, professor of liberal arts, served as our keynote speaker and delivered a compelling speech about cultivating excellence at Harper and beyond.

Last, but not least, each year I have the honor of learning more about how our third-year faculty teach with rigor and inclusivity, collaborate across the college, and use innovation to cultivate engaging learning opportunities for our students as they pursue tenure status. The award of tenure and the opportunity to pursue research and scholarship on sabbatical are major professional milestones in a faculty member's career and strengthens the educational backbone of our institution. The Board of Trustees will take action on recommendations for tenure and sabbaticals at this month's meeting. We remain committed to attracting and retaining talented and diverse faculty who demonstrate student-centered teaching philosophies, value collaboration, and proactively engage in reflections on their teaching practices both for continued growth in their disciplines and for greater student success outcomes.

Academic Updates

By the Numbers

- Advising Services
 - Advising Services Cumulative Outreach – Fall 2023 Semester
 - Advising Services (CNSO/Women’s Program and Advising Services/OMD) served students with the following:
 - 9,470 Student Appointments Conducted
 - 35,458 Received and supported Student Phone Calls
- Counseling Services
 - Thirty-three appointments were held in January.
- Hawks Care
 - Students accessed the pantry 69 times. The Career Closet was accessed four times. Eighty-eight student meetings were held with the manager or resource specialist.
- Enrollment Services
 - Spring 2024 International Student enrollment is at a record high for Harper College with 161 currently enrolled.

Spring 2024 International Student Enrollment					
Country of Citizenship					
Country	Qty.	Country	Qty.	Country	Qty.
Albania	2	Hong Kong	4	Poland	2
Argentina	2	Hungary	1	Russia	7
Australia	2	India	31	South Korea	8
Belarus	3	Indonesia	3	Sweden	1
Belize	1	Italy	1	Taiwan	2
Benin	1	Japan	1	Thailand	1
Brazil	6	Jordan	1	Togo	1
Bulgaria	2	Kenya	1	Turkey	7
Cameroon	1	Kyrgyzstan	3	Turkmenistan	8
Canada	1	Mexico	2	Uganda	1
China	6	Mongolia	9	Ukraine	2
Colombia	1	Nepal	3	United Kingdom	3
Costa Rica	1	Nigeria	3	Venezuela	2
Czech Republic	1	Pakistan	10	Vietnam	4
Ecuador	1	Peru	1	Zambia	2
Guatemala	1	Philippines	4	Total	161

Events

- Career and Technical Services
 - Graphic Arts Design and Technology Department
 - December 2023, they hosted a Great Lakes Graphics Association (GLGA) Holiday Mixer for industry partners in Illinois. Over 90 participants from local businesses and industry were in attendance, as well as Harper instructors, Illinois university partners and local high school partner schools.
 - Late fall 2023, they hosted a Print Expo for over 125 local high school students and 25 industry partners. The students listened to a keynote speaker, participated in a Q&A session with a panel of GRA students and graduates, engaged in a scavenger hunt, made buttons and t-shirts.
 - December 2023, they hosted a Photography Showcase with over 20 pieces of photographic work displayed. Over 72 were submitted for this showcase.
 - The Kids Care evening program for children of the Learning and Career Center (LCC) students kicked-off the spring semester with CCSD21-led professional development and now counts 33 children enrolled in enrichment activities onsite while their parents are in class.
- Student Engagement
 - Pool Party: Over 50 students started the semester with a splash at Pool Party Palooza, hosted by Student Engagement, Harper Wellness, and the Department of Campus Recreation. Students in attendance were treated to pizza by Harper's Title IX team, participated in a cannonball contest, and played Sharks and Minnows. Student Engagement's social media video (Instagram Reels) recapping the event hit an amazing 9,641 plays by users.
 - Family Movie Night: At the end of January, Student Engagement, with the assistance of the Events Management Team, hosted Free Family Movie Night featuring Disney's *Wish* to a sold-out audience of 443 guests.
 - Club Expo: Forty-five clubs and organizations were set up at tables in Avanté for Student Engagement's annual Club Expo last month. This event highlights student clubs and organizations for students new and returning to Harper. Approximately 300 students connected with their peers and discussed becoming involved in a club or organization.
- Counseling Services
 - We are excited to announce two groups that will be starting in February to increase student support: a support group for anxiety and stress and a two-part career workshop.
- Harper Wellness
 - Harper Wellness launched free nutrition consultations with assistance from the Harper College Center for Nutrition Counseling (CNC). Over 61 faculty, staff, students, and community members have registered for the free spring 2024 nutrition consultations.
- Athletics
 - Harper Wrestling hosted an annual Kids Wrestling Tournament in January. There were over 500 visitors to the Harper Fieldhouse, with more than 250 young wrestlers ages five to fourteen participating.
- Women's Program
 - The Women's Program hosted a pre-movie dinner gathering for student participants and their family members in collaboration with Student Engagement for Free Movie Night in January. The event provided a space for students and their families to engage with each other and the Women's Program advisors.

Highlights

- Division/Program Highlights
 - Health Careers
 - The 5th Interprofessional Education (IPE) Immersion Day was held last month and attended by 145 students coming from eight health career programs. The students



attended a presentation together, “Is Imposter Syndrome Really That Bad? Reframing Imposter Syndrome into ‘Competent Humility’” led by Dr. Diana McNeill from Duke University School of Medicine. The speaker was followed by a panel of eight recent alumni who shared their advice on making the transition from student to health care professional.

- Athletics
 - Our Men’s and Women’s Cross-Country programs were recognized as Scholar TEAM(s) of the Year and Lilly Alberts was the Women’s Scholar of the Year! See [announcement](#).
- *Employee Highlights*
 - Athletics
 - The National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education (NCORE) has tapped Director of Athletics Sherese Parker to serve on the National Advisory Board - Athletics in the Academy, starting at NCORE 2024 and going to NCORE 2027.

Supporting the Strategic Plan

- Advising Services
 - Harper Advancing Retention through Connected Advising (ARC) Program in Advising Services
 - Results of the fall 2023 launch of the ARC Program to support reducing equity gaps for students of color showed the following:
 - Completion of Program Requirements: 68% of students successfully completed programmatic requirements to earn a \$250 stipend for the spring 2024 semester. This exceeds our targeted goal by 28%.
 - Persistence Rate: 84% of students persisted and registered for six plus credit hours in the spring 2024 semester. This rate exceeds our targeted goal by 44%.
 - Credit Momentum: 100% of all students enrolled and completed at least six plus credit hours in the fall 2023 semester. This rate exceeds our targeted goal by 60%.
 - Developmental Education Compliance: For students enrolled in English and/or math in the fall 2023 semester, 62.5% passed their course with a C or better. This rate exceeds our targeted goal by 22.5%.
 - The ARC Program will continue for the spring 2024 semester and has now been approved to include the support of ARC Faculty Mentors that will promote success in the classroom. We currently have 10 Faculty Mentors who identify as persons of color who will start the mentoring journey for our current continuing cohort.

Advancement

- As of February 9, the Foundation has awarded \$1,964,330 in scholarships to 995 students for the 2023-2024 academic year. The Educational Foundation Scholarship Application for 2024-2025 will open on March 1, 2024. The priority deadline for returning students is April 8 and for new students June 24.
- On March 6-7, Harper Alumni Relations in partnership with Student Engagement and the Job Placement Resource Center will host Career Connections with Harper Alumni. The program, which is open to all Harper students, features alumni speakers from a variety of careers and backgrounds in panel discussions and offers professional development opportunities such as a Professional Leadership Dinner with Harper College Alumni.



- The Foundation will recognize and thank donors who have included the Harper College Educational Foundation in their estate plans with a special Harper Heritage Society dinner on Saturday, March 9, 2024. Donors will attend dinner at Harper alumnus-owned Chicago Prime Italian and then attend a performance of the Harper Ensemble Theatre Company spring play, "Crimes of the Heart." President Dr. Avis Proctor, Director Kevin Long, and Pulitzer Prize winning playwright Beth Henley will also attend the dinner.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Dr. Tamara Johnson was selected to receive a Baldrige Foundation Award for Leadership Excellence in the education sector. The award recognizes leaders who provide exceptionally outstanding support to Baldrige and the foundation's mission. She will publicly receive the award in April at the annual luncheon. Congratulations, Dr. Johnson!
- Our congratulations are extended to Esmeralda Guerrero-Lopez for being invited to serve on the NCORE (National Conference on Race and Ethnicity) National Advisory Council's Student Participation and Leadership Committee! This is a three-year appointment where Esmeralda will share her expertise and gain experience from colleagues around the country.
- The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion completed the Hate Has No Home at Harper campaign designed to help community members understand free speech and hate speech. This campaign includes promotional posters, a webpage, and a short video. We extend our gratitude to Dr. Shanté Holly, professor, English Department, who developed the Hate Has no Home at Harper slogan, Dr. Brittany Barber who managed the project, and our colleagues from Communications and Marketing Services and the Dean of Students Mary Kay Harton for their significant contributions. We also want to acknowledge our student volunteers that are featured in the video.

External Affairs

Communications

- The Communications team pitched, secured placement and/or helped facilitate 14 articles that appeared in local and national media publications. In total, 92% of Harper media mentions were positive or neutral in tone. Among the highlights are:
 - The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* published articles about Associate Professor Rebecca Scott discussing her play-based learning approaches and recent teaching award from the American Philosophical Association.
 - *Community College Daily* and the *Daily Herald* ran an editorial from Monika Gadek-Stephan, senior director of the Education and Work Center, about how her immigration experience influences how she helps students.
 - The American Association of Community Colleges' *21st Century Center* and *Journal & Topics* newspapers published articles about the Innovation Accelerator and Business and Industry Leadership Team (BILT) Councils.
 - The White House's Briefing Room, *Mirage News* and other outlets highlighted Dr. Proctor's participation in a White House meeting with community college leaders.



- *Journal & Topics* newspapers, the *Daily Herald* and *Patch* published articles honoring Darlett Bernard, catering supervisor for Sodexo Campus Services at Harper, as the first recipient of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Excellence in Service Award at the college's MLK celebration.
- *Regent Weekly* (the official newsletter of Rockford University), the *Daily Herald* and *Patch* published articles highlighting the partnership between Harper and Rockford University that makes it easier for students to transfer and receive a bachelor's degree in cybersecurity.
- ABC 7 Chicago and the *Daily Herald* reported that longtime Harper student Bernie Bluestein will officially receive his Congressional Gold Medal at a March ceremony in Washington, D.C.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* published pieces about Harper's Sonography programs seeking volunteers for free ultrasounds.
- *Community College Daily* highlighted the new roles for Heather Zoldak, chief advancement officer, and Jeff Julian, chief of staff and vice president of external affairs.
- *Patch* reported on Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi's panel at Harper about skills-based hiring practices.
- The *Daily Herald* previewed the Music Department's Spring Festival.

Legislative Affairs

- Dr. Proctor, Chair Bill Kelley, Trustee Herb Johnson, Student Trustee Kei Smith and Chief of Staff and VP of External Affairs Jeff Julian attended the National Legislative Summit (NLS) in Washington, D.C., advocating for higher education priorities with other community college leaders from across the country.

During the NLS, the Harper delegation met with Congressman Mike Quigly (D-5) and Congresswoman Delia Ramirez (D-3), as well as with the staffs of Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth and Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky. Harper's delegation advocated for numerous issues including increasing the Pell grant, making it tax free and making it available for short-term workforce programs; supporting funding for the Strengthening Community College training grants; and simplifying SNAP benefit access for community college students.

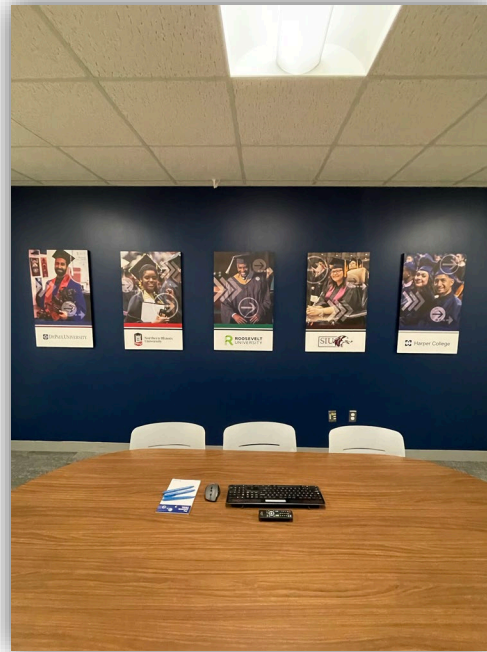
In addition to visiting the White House for a listening session with senior members of the Biden Administration, Dr. Proctor introduced Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-8) as part of the Community College Congressional Forum. Finally, the Harper team visited with Dr. Celia Merzbacher, the executive director of the Quantum Economic Development Consortium (QED-C) to discuss partnership opportunities.

Marketing Services

- University Center Highlights
 - Marketing Services and University Center (UC) teams continue to partner closely to increase brand awareness, encourage attendance at monthly information sessions, and generate UC enrollment leads. The marketing mix includes several direct mail pieces per year, multiple digital campaigns, outdoor advertising, email campaigns, and campus-based branding efforts.
 - Most recently, Marketing Services installed University Center-themed artwork in the UC office, highlighting student success and affirming the UC's partnerships with DePaul University, Northern Illinois University, Roosevelt University, and Southern Illinois University. Active marketing campaigns in January and February include digital advertising to promote monthly information sessions alternating with digital



advertising to increase brand awareness. Advertising can be found on social media, Spotify, Google display advertising, and Google keyword search. Additional direct mail, digital advertising, email campaigns, campus signage, and other advertising options are on deck for spring.



Finance and Administrative Services

Facilities Management

- The 2021 Campus Master Plan has identified the need to replace the Business and Social Sciences Buildings (Buildings I and J) with new and improved classrooms, laboratories, and offices to provide additional facilities for new and expanded programs. The Schematic Design Phase has been completed and presented to the Board for approval in January 2024. It was presented to the Board in February 2024 for budget reconciliation approval.

Risk Management

- Insurance was obtained for the new aviation maintenance program allowing instruction to begin at Schaumburg Airport.

Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- Harper's Achieving the Dream coaches, Dr. Lenore Rodicio and Dr. Mary Spilde, visited the campus on February 13 and 14. Drs. Rodicio and Spilde met with a variety of groups including the Executive Cabinet, President's Learning Council, and several Strategic Plan Goal Teams. The coaches provided guidance on moving the college's racial equity agenda forward, initiative evaluation, and efforts to improve student success while closing equity gaps.
- The Outcomes Assessment Office and the Learning Assessment Committee are working with faculty to conduct assessments of two general education outcomes this spring, Communication and Quantitative Reasoning. Courses that address the Communication outcome and have a substantial percentage of

students with 45+ credit hours were randomly selected for this assessment. A follow-up assessment of the quantitative reasoning outcome will examine improvements made since the previous full-scale assessment. Results of these assessments will be compiled in summer 2024.

Strategic Alliances and Innovation

Grants Office

- Dr. Susanne Brock is serving as the grant writer for a proposal for the Quantum Bloch grant solicitation by the US Economic Development Administration. This is an ambitious collaborative initiative with City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) as the lead organization and Harper College as co-lead, with significant commitment and support from partnering colleges, universities, industry, and Bloch members aimed at transforming the quantum workforce through education and training. This project will establish four Quantum Workforce Education and Training Network (QuNetwork) Centers, including one at City Colleges, one at Harper, one in Wisconsin, and one in Indiana, leveraging existing infrastructure and offering programs and services tailored to their local communities, ecosystems, and emerging quantum workforce demands.

Workforce Solutions

- Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Harper College Success Story
 - Welding inspector Eric Emery came to the Illinois SBDC at Harper College with an idea. Drawing from his welding experience and educational background in electronics, Eric wanted to create a device that fits in a welder's safety helmet to circulate fresh, cool air to the user's facial area. The Illinois SBDC at Harper worked with Eric to create a business plan, financial projections, a robust website, a sales and marketing strategy, prospect list, and a healthy dose of encouragement.

When asked if Eric would recommend the SBDC at Harper he replied, "Yes, I highly recommend the services of the Illinois SBDC at Harper College. I've been fortunate to work with several knowledgeable, helpful advisors from the SBDC at Harper College. Not only have they helped me with my original questions, they're guiding me into different avenues of thought. The advisors at Harper have helped tremendously with my understanding of business and focusing on what direction to follow. It's these giving people who help entrepreneurs like me keep going. Without all the help I've received, I don't know where I would be - it really is a blessing." Additional info can be found at coolheadllc.com.

- Members of the Community Education Team, Dr. Scott Cashman, Darby Lanpher, and Keil Cross from Marketing Services have been named by the Learning Resources Network (LERN) staff as members of the fifty "Top 2024 Practitioners" for the field of continuing education programming. Each was cited for running an excellent program at Harper, having demonstrated advanced, innovative, practical, how-to strategies, techniques and tips which have also been shared at LERN's annual international conference. Having three members included among the 50 from across the United States and Canada earning the designation is an important recognition of the Community Education program that works diligently to offer the Harper College district the learning and training opportunities that they need and want.
- Harper Business Solutions (HBS) has been conducting a DEI training program for the Township of Schaumburg over the past few months. Their Administrator Melissa Williams has recently written, "Our first phase of work has been completed and the staff have appreciated the experience. Many have said that in the best way possible the DEI work being done is easier than anticipated. While the content is challenging, the work of the team has been to make it understandable and approachable, and the



township staff are responding. What the team does well is take the daunting and make it bite size, with a central component always being data. They help the staff see the small things that, when added together, make the big impact. One of the most impactful discussions that staff repeatedly refer back to the notion that DEI is, at its core, a framework toward making room for the whole person." A second phase of training is upcoming, and this program is now being offered by HBS to other towns in our district.