THE PHILANTHROPIC
MAGAZINE OF
HARPER COLLEGE

CATALYST



FROM THE DESK OF LAURA J. BROWN HARPER COLLEGE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER



The messages we are inundated with daily seem to be full of heartache and suffering. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, one thing has truly stood out amid all the negative: community.

We have seen the word 'community' gain a whole new meaning. People from across our communities are connecting in new and impactful ways.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives and has deeply impacted our community. It has shown us how vulnerable we all are and has reminded us of our roots as a community college. Today, we are more dedicated than ever to our mission and its focus on equitable student success. We are committed to creating a college where every student belongs and can thrive. United as a college and community, we are working to shift the paradigm from focusing on helping students become more college-ready to making our college more student-ready. We believe that everyone has strengths and abilities and the capacity to learn, grow and be successful. While talent is universal, opportunity is not.

The door to opportunity is now open for thousands of current and future students.

The Educational Foundation is launching a scholarship campaign in January - Inspire. With donors' support, The Inspire Scholarship Campaign will ensure that Harper College will continue to be there for our community, no matter what the future holds.

Our donors have remained faithful in their commitment to building a brighter future for this college through troubling times. While your selfless contributions may not make the headlines as easily as stories of setbacks and strife, your legacy will live on in the generations of students who learn to be leaders right here in the Harper Community. Thanks for all you do and for leading by example.

Warm Regards.

24: Average age of Harper student

12,199: Number of students taking credit classes (fall 2020)

56% of students work while attending Harper College (46% of students ages 25 and older work full-time)

51% of Harper students who self-identified as first generation

\$4,005: average annual cost of tuition for a full-time student

\$2.7 million:

Total awarded in 2020-2021 by the Foundation in scholarships, grants and awards

1,005: number of students receiving a scholarship, grant or award

225: total Foundation scholarship funds

18: new Scholarship Funds created by donors in 2020 - 2021

by the **NUMBERS**

Harper College receives transformational gift from philanthropist Mackenzie Scott

66

This historic gift is confirmation of Harper's visionary leadership and the dedication of its faculty and staff to help students transform their lives. We also need to thank our community for their continued support and engagement over the years. This gift validates to the community that Harper is a valuable resource, and its laser focus on student success is being noticed and recognized nationally.

Pat Stack, Harper College Board Chair

"

This summer, Harper College was the recipient of an \$18 million gift from philanthropist, activist and author **MacKenzie Scott**, who in 2019 pledged to give a majority of her wealth to charitable causes and address some of society's most pressing problems.

President Avis Proctor said the unrestricted gift, which is the largest in the college's 54-year history, will go far to advance Harper's equity agenda and help the college reimagine how it serves students and the community in a post-pandemic environment.

"This is a truly transformational gift and an affirmation that the innovative work we do is having an impact on the region," Dr. Proctor said. "After an extraordinarily challenging time, this brings us a renewed hope and energy as we continue to remove barriers and elevate meaningful opportunities."

In June, Scott announced she was donating a total of more than \$2.7 billion in gifts to 286 "high-impact organizations." Scott's strategy to identify high-impact organizations did not entail a competitive grant submission or request for proposal process. Rather, Harper was among more than 30 colleges and universities selected through a rigorous research and analysis process. "Higher education is

a proven pathway to opportunity, so we looked for two and fouryear institutions successfully educating students who come from communities that have been chronically underserved," Scott wrote.

Harper will allocate the gift to initiatives that will make the greatest impact, including efforts to reduce equity gaps, advance academic innovation and increase student access through scholarships and basic needs support. The college will also explore providing tuition relief for those hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Harper's four-year strategic plan will help serve as a blueprint.

A portion of the MacKenzie Scott funds will immediately impact the next two years for 1,000 students. The funds will provide full tuition, books, and fees scholarships for students with financial barriers, first-generation and underrepresented groups.

"On behalf of the Harper College community, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to MacKenzie Scott for this extremely generous gift and for recognizing the role we play in advancing the social mobility of our students and improving the economic vitality of our community," Dr. Proctor said. "Generations to come will benefit."



INSPIRE Scholarship Campaign

Scholarships are powerful; they change lives for the better. Scholarships can directly affect the caliber of the student body and the quality of the academic experience. Every exceptional student attending Harper College should have the opportunity to attend and reach their full potential without financial burden or worrying about needing to juggle between school and work.

Scholarship support and financial resources will always be necessary for our current and future students.

Last year, the Foundation awarded scholarships, awards and program funds to more than 1,000 Harper students. These students were inspired to continue their education, meet goals and plan for bright futures thanks to the support of donors. With donors' support, we will continue to build a better tomorrow, which is why the Foundation is launching the Inspire Scholarship Campaign in early 2022.

Every gift to the Inspire Scholarship Campaign offers more opportunities to educate students, make discoveries, provide graduates with quality training to care for patients and serve the public. There are so many ways to support Harper College-and even more possibilities to create a better future for our college and our world.

The focus of the Inspire Scholarship Campaign will be endowed scholarships, planned gifts and transfer scholarships. Gifts added to existing scholarships will support even more students. Every gift to the Harper College Educational Foundation Inspire Scholarship Campaign empowers future generations of changemakers and fuels solutions to one of our community's most pressing problems affordable quality education.

In the upcoming months, we will be sharing more information about the Inspire Scholarship Campaign and how you can get involved. Every gift makes a difference. Together, we will build a better tomorrow.





Harper College announced it was a recipient of an \$18 million gift from philanthropist, activist and author MacKenzie Scott, who in 2019 pledged to give a majority of her wealth to charitable causes and address some of society's most pressing problems.

MacKenzie Scott stated, "Higher education is a proven pathway to opportunity, so we looked for two- and four-year institutions successfully educating students who come from communities that have been chronically underserved."

Scott, who has given millions in support of higher education and marginalized people, said she chose Harper College because of its dedication to equity. We are thrilled and delighted by this most generous gift and will use it to further the College's mission and focus on equity and inclusion.

The unrestricted donation will be apportioned to the areas that will make the greatest impact at Harper College and in the community, including providing 1,000 students need-based full-tuition

scholarships for two years, the Igniting Paths to Success Scholarship, and creating new innovative programs.

As a volunteer leader in the foundation, receiving this gift confirms Harper's past visionary leadership and dedication to helping students transform their lives. This gift validates to the community that Harper is a valuable resource, and its laser focus on student success is being noticed and recognized nationally.

We feature many successful scholarship recipients and alumni throughout this issue, demonstrating how Harper propelled them to accomplish and fulfill their dreams. It is our hope that these stories of success inspire our supporters and show how important your generosity is. We would not be Harper College without our community behind us.

Warm regards,

Rich IP. Hohal

Let us know your communication preferences

While we still rely on postal mail to communicate with our donors, alumni and friends, the Foundation is increasing the number of electronic publications that we can share with our donors, friends and alumni. We now offer the opportunity to receive the Catalyst magazine, tax receipts and gift solicitations electronically via email.

If you would like to change your mail preferences or share or update your email to receive electronic communications from the

Foundation, please visit harpercollege.edu/foundation or use the QR code below.





Harper retirees award scholarship

In celebration of their legacy at Harper and their deep understanding of its students, the Harper College Educational Foundation looked to Harper retirees to select this year's recipient of the **Amersham Endowment Scholarship**. On September 15, Harper retirees volunteered their time by reviewing scholarship applications and collaborating to make the difficult choice among several highly qualified applicants.

Each year the scholarship is awarded to a Harper student demonstrating excellence in academics, extracurriculars and community service. Out of 222 qualified applicants, the volunteer reviewers read applications for five finalists. Ultimately, the \$2,235 scholarship was awarded to Kelly Jackson, a second-year Harper student studying nursing.

Upcoming Scholarship Review events are being planned for Harper alumni and employees. To learn more about getting involved with the Harper College Educational Foundation, contact Kristyn Meyer at kmeyer@harpercollege.edu or visit the harpercollege.edu/foundation/events for an up-to-date listing of Foundation activities.

New Educational Foundation Board Members

We welcome Deirdre Manna, Joe Martin and Anthony Way to our Board of Directors.



Deirdre Manna is Senior Vice President and Head of Zurich North America Government and Industry Affairs. Deirdre has more than 20 years of

varied experience developing and advancing state and federal public policy initiatives that impact the insurance industry. Deirdre is a former state insurance regulator, having served as acting Director of the Illinois Division of Insurance. She also served as Assistant Vice President of the American Insurance Association and a government relations professional for a prominent national law firm. Deirdre was named among the insurance industry's Elite Women of 2017 by Insurance Business of America.



Joe Martin is a Senior Vice President at Captive Resources, Inc., where he has worked for more than 26 years. He has a Bachelor of Arts in finance from Northern

Illinois University. Joe is a firm believer in the power of education and the great value of the local community college experience. He and his wife Debra are both natives of the northwest suburbs of Chicago and have seen firsthand the benefits of Harper College to the surrounding communities. In his spare time, Joe enjoys golfing, swimming and other sports, as well as spending time with his family and friends.



Anthony Way is a
Senior Vice President
and Practice Leader
at Assurance, a Marsh
& McLennan Agency
LLC company, who
oversees Public
Entity and Education,

Manufacturing and Faith-Based industries. Prior to becoming senior vice president, practice leaser, Anthony was an account executive at Assurance. Before joining Assurance, he was an account executive at a large insurance brokerage firm, where he gained experience in nonprofit, public entity, manufacturing and food processing. Anthony started his insurance career as a claims representative. He also earned his property and casualty and life and health producers licenses as well as his Associate in Risk Management (ARM) designation.



(incoming Fall 2021 class)

new Promise

43% first-generation students

Promise Update

The Fall 2021 semester welcomed the third class of Promise scholars to Harper College. During the past three years, more than 1,412 students have started Harper College as Promise Scholars. Donations for the Promise scholarship were first accepted in 2014, with donors investing in students who worked hard and gave back to their community.



School Districts

64% District 211

District 214 31%

District 220 5%



Gender

Male

51%

Female

49%

Top Three Area of Studies

- Engineering/Math/Computer Science
- Business/Entrepreneurship/IT
- Health Science

Donor generosity inspires new scholarships

The Harper College Educational Foundation thanks the donors of these new scholarships for their generosity, support and for inspiring Harper students to realize their dreams.

Elizabeth R. McKay Endowed Scholarship for ELA and

HSE Students: Created by Harper College Retiree and former Dean of Academic Enrichment/Language Services, Dr. Elizabeth McKay. This scholarship supports students enrolled in Harper's English Language Acquisition (ELA) program or High School Equivalency (HSE) courses or students who have completed their ELA or HSE coursework and are now enrolling in college credit classes at Harper.

Lisa and Joseph Lynn Scholarship for Adult Students: Lisa and Joseph Lynn are Harper alumni. Lisa was an adult when she attended Harper and wants to help other adult students. Their scholarship will support working adult students who have a financial need with a preference for those who have started their education but have taken one to two semesters off.

Norris D. Smith Scholarship for Underrepresented Student:

Norris Smith is a CPA and local business owner who established this scholarship to support African American students working toward an associate degree in accounting or software development. Mr. Smith plans to incorporate co-op opportunities for the recipients of his scholarship at his accounting firm.

The Harper Educational Foundation manages more than 225 scholarship funds that support Harper students. To learn more about creating a scholarship and inspiring students to achieve their educational and career goals, please contact Heather Zoldak at hzoldak@harpercollege.edu or 847.925.6319.

HOPE Giving Circle

Recipient Profiles



MALIHA AMIR

"Getting the HOPE Scholarship not only gives me the chance to pursue my education but fulfill the dreams of those in my family who worked hard to change my life."

Maliha Amir is working toward her Associate in Engineering Science. She is an Engineering Pathways student and maintains a 3.79 GPA. She is a firstgeneration college student; her father emigrated from Pakistan to pursue opportunities for his family in the US. Her interest in engineering started at a very young age. Maliha recalls disassembling and reassembling furniture her grandfather, a furniture maker, had put together to see how things worked. She plans to focus on electrical or mechanical engineering.



MARION BENSING

"The HOPE scholarship will allow me to spend extra hours focusing on my studies and graduating with my career goal in mind rather than having to pick up extra shifts to minimize costs."

Marion Bensing is working toward her Associate in Science in environmental biology with the ultimate goal of going to medical school and becoming a pediatrician. Her dream to become a pediatrician is inspired by her childhood health diagnosis that greatly impacted her vision. She credits the treatment she received from her pediatrician as the catalyst for pursuing this goal. She maintains a 4.0 GPA. At Harper College, Marion is a member of the honors program and the Scientific Journal Club.



SAMANTHA ERNST

"I want to use computer science to help people. This scholarship will help pay for my education and provide a wonderful opportunity."

Samantha Ernst is working toward her Associate in Engineering Science at Harper, focusing on computer science. Samantha decided on this path after her dad, who was a Network Engineer at US Cellular, introduced her to MIT's scratch, a blockbased visual programming language, at age 11. She is an Engineering Pathways student at Harper. Samantha plans to transfer to U of I after graduation from Harper. She maintains a 4.0 GPA and is part of the Harper Promise program.



MINHALL JAMALI

"The HOPE Scholarship will help me complete this dream without having the stress of money and trying to maintain grades while working, a struggle I face every day."

Minhall Jamali is working toward her Associate in Arts with a focus on economics. She hopes to double major in economics and math at a four-year institution and dreams of pursuing a career as a public policy advisor with the government. Minhall is inspired to continue to the highest levels of education by her mother, who grew up in a small Pakistani village with few educational opportunities for women. Later in her career, Minhall hopes to earn her Ph.D. in economics and become a professor.

HOPE at a glance

The HOPE Giving Circle brings together influential women in the community with a common goal of supporting women pursuing higher education at Harper College and empowering them to reach their full potential through scholarship support, mentoring and leadership development opportunities. The program provides financial support and on-going mentoring for female Harper College students who are completing their final year at Harper and continuing on to a four-year college or university to pursue a bachelor's degree. Each HOPE Scholarship award is valued at \$10,000. 100% of donations to the HOPE Giving Circle are tax deductible. Visit harpercollege.edu/hope to learn more.

HOPE Progress 2016 vs 2021

(HOPE Launch)

28 donors 93 donors

\$20,000 raised \$224,000

raised

scholarship

18 scholarships (four awarded for 2021-2022 academic year)

\$10,000 awarded

\$180,000 awarded

SPONSORS:





Linda J. Lang





Harper College honors Distinguished Alumni

Five outstanding alumni were honored at Harper College's annual **Distinguished Alumni Awards event on October 26**. Honorees included four recipients of the Distinguished Alumni Award and one recipient of the Outstanding Recent Alumni Award. The exceptional alumni were recognized for the contributions and impact made in their careers and community. Read full bios and learn more about the Distinguished Alumni Awards program at **harpercollege.edu/alumni**.

Distinguished Alumni 2021

ERIK HORVAT

MANAGING DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF REAL ESTATE, AMERICAS OLAYAN AMERICA







Outstanding Recent Alumni 2021

ROBERTO LOPEZ SENIOR ASSOCIATE, TECHNICAL PROJECTS ELEVATE ENERGY



Alumni and friends hit the range to support Harper students

The Harper College Educational Foundation and Harper Alumni Department partnered to host the Alumni and Friends Social at TopGolf on September 29. Thanks to our generous sponsors—Combined Roofing Services and RESTORE—the event brought together quests in support of Harper College students and programs.

"Perfect timing for a great event where alumni enjoyed a night of practicing golf skills while having fun socializing with each other," said Kim Butler, Chair of the Harper Alumni Committee and 2016 Harper graduate. For more information about upcoming events and sponsorship opportunities, visit harpercollege.edu/foundation or join the Harper Alumni community at alumni.harpercollege.edu.



Harper Talks Alumni Podcast

celebrates one-year anniversary and wins gold

This fall marked the one-year anniversary of the Harper Talks Alumni Podcast. The podcast invites Harper alumni to share their stories, experiences, and life journeys in conversation with host and Assistant Professor of Communication Arts Brian Shelton. Each episode shares how education, career successes and failures, and human connection have impacted them along the way. In October, the podcast was a Gold award recipient from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations District Three 2021 Medallion Awards. Tune in by visiting harpercollege.edu/alumni or searching "Harper Talks" on all streaming platforms.





Harper @Work

Connecting Business and Community

The Harper College Educational Foundation and the Harper Alumni program continue to build and grow programs to support the business community. Our Harper@Work programs offer many opportunities for the business community to get involved with Harper, increase their level of support and engage all levels of their workforce with Harper students and alumni. Harper students benefit from these connections as they expand their knowledge of career opportunities and build their local network while preparing to join the local workforce.

NEW – Corporate Mentoring Program: Kicking off in the spring of 2022, this program connects local businesses and Harper students through limited-term mentoring opportunities. Open to all in-district companies and their employees. Watch for more information in early 2022 about this unique program to support Harper students.

Alumni Recognition Program (formerly Stand Up and Be Counted): Recognizes Harper College alumni in the workplace and celebrates employers in the community who have hired Harper College alumni as employees. Previous honorees include Northrop Grumman, Zurich North America, Wintrust Banks, Weber Stephens, Northwest Community Healthcare, Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital and AMITA Health.

Business Champions: Sponsorship support of Harper events means more funding available for Harper students. Business Champions are recognized on various platforms, including web, print and electronic communication, reaching more than 30,000 alumni and donors throughout the year.

Angel Grants: Sponsored by private donations, Angel Grants provide funds (up to \$15,000) to expanding businesses and seed money for start-ups. Applicants must be Illinois Small Business Development Center at Harper College clients or enrolled in Harper College's Entrepreneurial Program.

Business Services: Harper offers comprehensive workforce development support to businesses, including customized training, apprenticeships and internships; in-district tuition for anyone working in the district (no matter where their home residence is) and free safety training.

To get your company involved with Harper@Work programs, please call Kristyn Meyer at 847.925.6468.

Thank you to our Business Champions

The Harper College Educational Foundation for the sponsorship support of our 2021 Business Champions. To learn more, email Kristyn Meyer at kmeyer@harpercollege.edu. Sponsors secured as of September 1, 2021.

\$10,000+



Robbins Schwartz

\$7,500+



LEGATARCHITECTS



\$5,000+



































\$1.000+

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Planned Giving

Build a bright future for future generations while building your legacy.

With a planned gift, you can create a scholarship or support a program that is meaningful to you. The Harper Heritage Society was established to honor those who have included Harper College in their estate plans or who have created some other type of planned gift, such as a charitable gift annuity. Planned gifts can be of any value and help students and the college for generations to come.

Harper students rely on gifts from donors to make their educational journeys become a reality. By establishing a planned gift with the William Rainey Harper College Educational Foundation, donors can ensure that future Harper students will experience that same support in reaching their goals.

Planned gifts can be made by including the William Rainey Harper College Educational Foundation in a will or trust or making the Foundation a beneficiary of an IRA or life insurance policy. Gifts can support an existing fund, the college's highest priorities or be used to create a new scholarship or program fund upon receipt of the gift.

Planned giving donors are recognized as members of the Harper Heritage Society. Members are recognized publicly for their special support and are invited to all Foundation events and a special reception with Harper leadership and students each year.

Have you already included Harper College in your estate plans? Do you want to learn more about how to do so? Please contact Heather Zoldak, CFRE, at hzoldak@harpercollege.edu or 847.925.6319.

Harper for the holidays

If you are shopping for the holidays this season, consider donating to the Harper College Education Foundation as this year's gift. Below are a few gift suggestions for this holiday season.

Purchase a paver: Leave your mark on the Harper College campus by purchasing a paver. Personalize an inscription and give back to the community at the same time. Proceeds fund student scholarships and programs. 4"x8" pavers are \$150, 8"x8" pavers are \$300.

Make a gift in honor of someone: What do you get for the person who has everything? The gift of changing a life! The Foundation has more than 225 different scholarships and funds. Select the one that best reflects your recipient's passions and donate in their honor.

Establish a scholarship: Starting a scholarship at Harper College is more affordable than you think. What better way to honor your loved one than to create a scholarship in their name? The honoree

participates in developing the scholarship criteria to ensure that they award a student who is a perfect match for their passions. The honoree will even have the chance to meet their scholarship recipient at our annual Realizing Dreams brunch.

Shop online: The Foundation is a proud member of AmazonSmile. Shop through AmazonSmile.com the same way you would through Amazon.com and select William Rainey Harper College Educational Foundation as your charity. 0.05% of your purchases will support Harper students without any additional charge to you.

Donor Recognition

(for donations received July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

We are grateful for the generosity of our donors whose investments to Harper College help students realize their dreams, support innovative educational programs and inspire a stronger community.

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Catalyst Exhibits

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This scholarship helped me to continue and encouraged me to follow my dream and set an example for my teenage daughter. I'm grateful and blessed for this amazing opportunity.

Maria P.

CDW

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Because of my scholarship, I could register for next semester and a summer course as well. The pandemic has affected me greatly. I can not thank you enough for your helping hand; because of you I am one step closer to my dream career.

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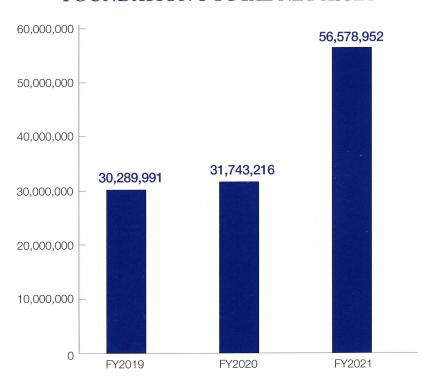
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Save the Date: February 23-24

Harper HEART Day is our very own day of giving during which our community Helps Everyone Access Resources Together. During this 36 hours celebrating Harper College's special relationship with the community, we will work together to honor the inspirational power of education in changing lives. The Foundation has ways to get involved as a volunteer, a donor, or a business. For more information about how you can be a part of this year's Harper HEART Day and help inspire students to achieve their goals, contact Kristyn Meyer at kmeyer@harpercollege.edu.

Shopping for the holidays? To learn more about making a donation as a holiday gift, view our list of gift-giving ideas on page 14.