THE PHILANTHROPIC
MAGAZINE OF
HARPER COLLEGE

CATALYST

SPRING 2021

There is no exercise better for the heart than *reaching* down and *lifting people* up."

- John Holmes

FROM THE DESK OF RICHARD HOHOL HARPER COLLEGE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION BOARD PRESIDENT

As we launch into 2021, the Harper College Educational Foundation board and staff are full of hope and enthusiasm, renewing our commitment to growing our donor scholarships by launching the INSPIRE Campaign, coming July 2021.

This is a scholarship campaign to expand access to higher education and ignite the student experiences that lead to success, strengthen connections to our communities, and engage our robust alumni network to build life-changing connections supporting Harper College students.

Through INSPIRE, the Foundation will raise funds to provide access to a college education by expanding student scholarship opportunities for all Harper College students. The INSPIRE campaign will engage donors and secure investments



from individuals, businesses and alumni that will minimize financial barriers to a Harper College education, expanding student access, ultimately transforming lives and enriching the community.

Finally, I want to extend my deep appreciation to our donors this past year. Your generosity helped lift our students during these turbulent times. You recognized that our students are our future. Thank you for your financial support, and I hope you will continue to join us in our future endeavors.

Thank you,

Richard Hohol

25: Average age of Harper student

13,477: Number of students taking credit classes (fall 2019)

80% of students work while attending Harper College (about 30% work more than 30 hours a week)

55% of Harper students who self-identified as first generation

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

1,600+: students applying for a Foundation scholarship

98% of Foundation scholarships awarded

\$2.3 million:

Total awarded by the Foundation in scholarships, grants and awards

1,054: number of students receiving a scholarship, grant or award

by the **NUMBERS**(2019–2020)



Harper alumna's dedication to helping others continues

When Susan, a Harper alumna, became a single mother to three young boys in 1977, she enrolled in the Harper College registered nursing program. For Susan, nursing was not only a means of supporting herself and her family; it was a springboard to making friends and earning respect all over the world. When Susan passed away, many of her friends and family (10 people, to date) have given more than \$20,000 to create an endowed scholarship named Susan's Scholarship in her honor.

Looking back on her life, it was a pivotal moment when Susan enrolled in Harper's nursing program. Her friends and family found creating an endowed scholarship with the Harper College Educational Foundation the perfect fit for honoring the lifechanging difference Susan's Harper College education had on her life.

When creating a named endowed scholarship, the donors work with Foundation staff to create the criteria for selecting recipients. Friends and family decided to award the scholarship each year to a single parent pursuing a nursing degree at Harper College. Donor Michael Price commented that "Susan is a wonderful role model for the students. She was a terrific single mother. She raised three boys that are all successful."

Since the scholarship is endowed, a recipient will receive the scholarship every year. Endowed scholarships exist in perpetuity and often grow in size. The donations used to create the endowment are invested, and the principal is never spent; only the interest earned from the donations is used to fund the scholarship.

When Susan passed away, many of her friends and family (10 people, to date) have given more than \$20,000 to create an endowed scholarship.

Susan's Scholarship is one example of how many people can come together to make a significant gift for Harper students. Crowd-funding has become very popular on social media. Recently, the Harper College Educational Foundation launched its own online crowd-funding platform for donors. If you are interested in more information on giving to scholarships, please email foundation@harpercollege.edu.

A classic drive-in brings donors and students safely together

On Friday, October 30, the Foundation welcomed approximately 150 donors to the Annual Donor Appreciation event to thank them for their generosity and support in the last year. This event is usually held during opening night of the Harper Ensemble Theatre's fall performance, but with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation got creative with a safe and festive way to thank donors this year with a drive-in movie experience featuring Ghostbusters (1984).

Harper College Promise students volunteered at the socially distanced, outdoor event and helped greet guests and hand out movie snacks and drinks.

The event featured messages of gratitude from Harper College President, Dr. Avis Proctor, and Harper College Educational Foundation Board of Directors President, Rich Hohol, who shared with the donors,

"Thanks to you, the Harper College Educational Foundation awarded \$2.3 million in scholarships, grants, and awards — an all-time record. That's a huge number, but what does it really mean? It means that you supported 1,054 students last year. Beyond funding these students' educations, you've given them something even more powerful. You showed them you believed in their dreams. You invested in their futures."

The Foundation will host another Drive-In Movie Night in the Spring 2021.

Top: Promise Students assisted with parking, donors and guests enjoyed the drive-in at Harper College. Bottom: Thank you to the dedicated Promise Scholarship recipients who volunteered at the event.









FROM THE DESK OF LAURA J. BROWN

As we gear up for another exciting academic year inching our way to another graduation season, I am reminded of how challenging this past year has been, dealing with many unexpected events throughout the world.

The coronavirus crisis has impacted everyone, including our Harper community. These unprecedented times called for actions never seen before. Last March (2020), our students, faculty and staff members transitioned to remote learning, teaching, and working, and campus buildings had limited access. This decision was made for the safety of our community.

As difficult as this time has been, it's also been a time of togetherness and gratitude. I have seen our communities come together like never before. The stories of support and kindness are inspirational, and I am proud of everyone's efforts on behalf of our students. In this issue of Catalyst, you will read about some of those stories.



Throughout this publication, you will also learn about the many dedicated supporters of Harper College and how these individuals make an incredible impact on our students and their futures. We have highlighted new scholarships and endowments and shared the moving and interesting stories behind them.

Thank you to each and every one of you for your continued interest in and unwavering support of Harper College. Your generosity empowers Harper to continue its mission of providing a high-quality education for our students who take what they have learned and make a difference in their communities

Laura J. Brown

Chief Advancement Officer

Harper College Educational Foundation

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. Select event invitations, the quarterly Alumni e-news and the Foundation e-newsletter are shared via email. We are now offering the opportunity to receive the Catalyst magazine, tax receipts and gift solicitations electronically via email.

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

harpercollege.edu/foundation or use this QR code.



HOPE Giving Circle

Recipients' Update

HOPE ALUMNA CELEBRATES GRADUATION AND JOINS THE WORKFORCE

HOPE alumna recipient **Rachel Kereszturi** (2017-2018) graduated from the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana in December 2020

with a bachelor's degree in Actuarial Science.



2020-2021 HOPE SCHOLAR ACCEPTED TO NASA PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Nicole Weber was accepted and participated in the NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars program earlier this semester. The National Community College Aerospace Scholars, or NCAS, program is an educational experience for community college students interested in exploring careers in science,



technology, engineering and mathematics. As part of the program, Nicole participated in a five-week online workshop consisting of discussions, live video chats with NASA experts and various mission design challenges. Nicole also was given the opportunity

"I am thrilled to join Aon. My internship gave me so many unique opportunities. Because of that, I knew I wanted to be a part of Aon following graduation. I want to thank all of the HOPE Giving Circle members for supporting me throughout my whole college experience."

- Rachel Kereszturi

HOPE at a glance

to apply to spend four days at a NASA center, getting an inside look at NASA missions and science, networking with NASA scientists and engineers, and developing a presentation to showcase their work to a panel of judges.

"The HOPE scholarship has allowed me to work less at my job and pursue these incredible opportunities such as the NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars program, and for that, I am forever grateful."

- Nicole Weber

SPONSORS









Linda J. Lang





THE HOPE GIVING CIRCLE AT HARPER COLLEGE

The HOPE Giving Circle has continued its mission of providing scholarships, mentoring, and networking opportunities to females pursuing their degrees at Harper College and beyond. During the 2020-2021 academic year, HOPE marked \$140,000 in scholarships awarded to date and since the program launched in 2016. Recipients can utilize the \$10,000 scholarship while at Harper College or their four-year transfer institution. Learn more about the HOPE Giving Circle by visiting harpercollege.edu/hope.

HOPE Progress 2016 vs 2021

(HOPE Launch)

(Cumulative)

17 members

32 members

28 donors 74 donors

\$20,000

\$200,000

raised

scholarship

scholarships (14 total since inception)

\$10,000 awarded \$140.000 awarded

Harper Scholarship Recipients Send Holiday Cheer

n December, more than 50 Harper College Educational Foundation scholarship recipients shared messages of holiday cheer with the greater Harper community. Recipients of the ACE Grant Scholarship, Fishing Well Scholarship and Promise Scholarship wrote personalized messages in almost 2,000 holiday cards.

These cards, designed by Harper College alumna, Chloe Suarez, were sent to 32 police and fire departments, 15 assisted living facilities, Clearbrook, Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital and The Barn senior center, all located in the Harper College district.

Fire Chief Drew Smith from the Prospect Heights Fire Protection District shared the following note of thanks with Amie Granger, Harper's community relations manager, who coordinated the project.

"I just received your envelope containing about two dozen cards from Harper's Promise, ACE and Fishing Well Scholarship programs. Many seemed to express genuine sentiments and it was enjoyable to read their comments. Please thank them for sharing these. As a Harper alum myself, I am a proponent of the value a community college degree or certificate brings with it."

As a Harper alum myself, I am a proponent of the value a community college degree or certificate brings with it.

> - Drew Smith, Fire Chief Prospect Heights Fire Protection District



"Campus" by Chloe Suarez Harper College Alumna, 2018

Harper Talks podcast **highlights Harper alumni** and their stories



arper alum and 2020 Outstanding Recent Alumnus honoree **Scott Lietzow** didn't know where his path

would take him, but one very important stop along the way was Harper College.

Scott told his story of being a Marine, then enrolling at Harper, working in politics and now at Allstate



in a conversation with Assistant Professor of Communication Arts Brian Shelton for the inaugural episode of the new podcast series, Harper Talks: The Harper Alumni Podcast.

The monthly podcast, now with several episodes available, is coproduced by the Harper Alumni Program and WHCM 88.3 Harper Student Radio. During the podcast, Harper alumni are invited to share their stories, experiences and life journeys with host Shelton. The episodes focus on how key factors such as education, career successes and failures, and human connection have impacted each alum along the way.

Under the supervision of Shelton, their faculty advisor, Harper Radio students have a hand in producing and editing monthly episodes.

Listen and subscribe to Harper Talks: The Harper Alumni Podcast on all podcast platforms, including Apple and Spotify, and the Harper Alumni website, harpercollege.edu/alumni.

Questions or know an alum who might fit the bill to be featured? Email alumni@harpercollege.edu. Episode 2

It was truly a calling. I decided that even though I still had a job, I was going to leave that job behind and head down the path of becoming a hospice nurse."

Ann Portmann on her decision to leave a 20+ year accounting career to pursue a degree at Harper and become a hospice nurse

Episode $oldsymbol{3}$

What it all boils down to is you need a job that makes you happy. And if you're not happy with what you're doing, don't be afraid to step out and change it up a little bit."

Joe McEnery on his advice for students trying to figure out future career options



Donor **Generosity Inspires** New . Scholarships

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

Access for All Scholarship — Open to students who do not qualify for federal financial aid and have financial need. Established by former Harper employee, Ann Kimberly.

ACE II Grant - For students 24 or older who live or work in the Harper district and are pursuing a career program certificate or Associates of Applied Science degree in a career program. Established by the Rotary Club of Schaumburg/Hoffman Estates through a Rotary International Grant.

Barrington Breakfast Rotary Club Scholarship - The Barrington Breakfast Rotary Club established a new scholarship to support students enrolled in career programs (preferably those in health career and first responder programs) and to support students in the Career Skills Institute.

Beyer-Chung Family Endowed Scholarship - Open to firstgeneration college students who are immigrants or children of first-generation immigrants to the United States. Established by former Harper College Educational Foundation Board member, Young Chung.

Cockrell Sibling Endowment — For students who are facing food insecurities. Established by Matt Cockrell, Carol Pankros and Liz Wilmes, who are following in the footsteps of their parents, Betty and Matt Cockrell who created an endowed scholarship in 1997.

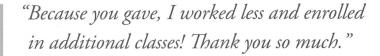


Dr. Avis Proctor Presidential Endowed Scholarship - For firstgeneration college students who have financial need. Established by Harper College President, Dr. Avis Proctor.

Fitzgerald Family Endowed Scholarship - Open to students who have financial need and meet one of the following criteria: first-generation college student, from an underserved community, immigrant, the child of a first-generation immigrant, or have a disability. Candidates must demonstrate persistence and determination. Established by Denise, Gerald and daughters Celine and Shannon Fitzgerald.

Latina Empowerment Scholarship — students of Hispanic heritage who are not eligible for federal financial aid and are in a serviceoriented program of study. Established by multiple donors in honor of the retirement of Harper employee, Juanita Bassler.

Mary E. Swain Memorial Scholarship for Fine Arts — Established in memory of Mary Swain, a gifted artist who taught ceramics for many years. This scholarship supports students enrolled in fine arts programs and have financial need.



- Darren Buchanan, student



Mary Gretchen Vancura Scholarship for Nursing Students — For nursing students with financial need. This scholarship was created by retired Harper Nursing Faculty, Mary Gretchen Vancura.

Michael and Laura Nejman Endowed Scholarship - For nursing students who are involved in the Harper Student Nurses Association. Established by Harper retiree and Distinguished Alumnus, Michael Nejman and Harper Alumna, Laura Nejman.

Nancy and John Robb Scholarship — For first-generation students with financial need and are a part of one of the following programs, EB211, Dollars for Scholars or Promise. Established by Harper College Trustee Nancy Robb and John Robb.

Ruth M. Lange Memorial Scholarship — For students who are studying education, preferably early childhood education. Established by Harper employee, Thom Lange, in memory of his mother.

Ruth Patterson Endowed Scholarship — For students with financial need in select STEM, Math and Science or Health Career Programs. Established by Harper College alumna, Ruth Patterson.

Shida Family Endowed Scholarship - For students with high financial need and community service. Established by Koyoko Shida.

The Harper College Educational Foundation awards more than 200 scholarship funds annually. To learn more about creating a scholarship that will inspire Harper students to achieve their goals, please contact the Foundation at 847.925.6319 or foundation@harpercollege.edu.

Promise Update



What are your future plans?

Currently, I am studying Biology at Harper. My future goals are to transfer to a college and to get a Bachelor of Science degree and then apply to a veterinary school where I am hoping to get a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree.

What have you liked best about Harper so far?

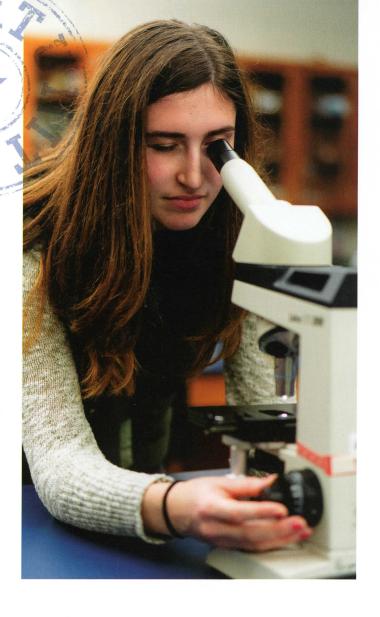
How easy it is to connect and to communicate with other students and teachers, even while learning remotely. Everyone at Harper is very nice, and it's great that I can talk to other students about transferring and their goals.

What does the Promise Program mean to you?

The Promise Program means a lot to me. It allowed me to be with my family for another two years, and I have seen everyone grow up while I've been here. My parents have four kids with four different educational goals, so this program was a blessing for them financially. And even without the Promise Program, I still would have attended Harper because I have been given such a great education from all of my teachers.

How did the Promise program help you in your personal life?

The Promise Program allowed me to stay focused on my education as well as my job. I also met three other friends that were involved



"One of my favorite moments at
Harper was during my first semester.
I was walking in the courtyard by
Building I, and the sun was shining.
I remember how beautiful the flowers
were, and the water feature was on,
and I remember thinking, This is it.
This is my college."

in the program. We text each other every day, and we have been friends since our first semester at Harper. It was nice to have them when we had to transfer to remote learning.



Jen Bean discovered Harper's paver wall in 2019. She accompanied her friend, a Harper educator of 20 years—Maria Knuth—to Maria's son's Harper graduation. Jen took note of the paver wall and the graduates' families taking photos in front of it. She filed away the memory, thinking about how much Maria deserved to be honored alongside the other devoted members of the Harper community on the wall.

When Maria was promoted to full professor, Jen collaborated with her friends **Denise**, **Sheri**, and **Chris** to celebrate Maria's accomplishment. Jen shares, "We wanted to commemorate Maria's courage and commitment to her family, her students, and the community...Both of her sons graduated from Harper, and she worked incredibly hard to earn her professorship this year." Maria's

dedication to her students is well-known throughout the Harper community. With the campus being closed, however, the surprise gift remained a mystery longer than planned.

Last fall, Jen and her friends teamed up to surprise Maria. With a bit of support from the Foundation, Maria found herself at the paver wall believing that she would be interviewed regarding a student scholarship. When she arrived, she discovered her friends' tribute displayed on the paver wall and was greeted with an intimate surprise party in her honor.

If you know someone you would like to honor with a Paver for Promise, please contact Kristyn Meyer at kmeyer@harpercollege.edu or 847.925.6468.

Honor a Memory, Family, Friends or Loved One

Looking for a special gift for a soon-to-be Harper graduate, alumnus, family member or friend who has a connection to Harper? Honor them with a paver. Pavers can be displayed at two locations on the campus — the Pavers for Promise wall is located near the graduation pavilion at the Duchossois Family Educational Center and the Athletic Affinity Pavers

will be displayed at the new home of the Harper Hawks: the Foglia Foundation Health and Recreation Center.

Please visit: harpercollege.edu/foundation/pavers for more information.

The Assurance Caring Together Scholarship by Colleen Minarik, Vice President, Marketing, Assurance

Assurance has been headquartered in the northwest suburbs since 1961, placing Harper squarely in our backyard since its founding just six years later. We deeply value the relationships we've built with people and other businesses within our shared community, and our scholarship fund allows "My h us to foster even deeper relationships with both those groups. Assurance employees and their families have raised more than \$20,000 through our scholarship fund to benefit working students in just three years. That's an investment in the community where our employees live and work and one of which we're so proud to

be a part.

The scholarship was named after Assurance's philanthropy arm, Assurance Caring Together (ACT).

ACT is an employee-driven initiative to help our company manage and facilitate our various charity efforts, from financial donations

to paid-time-off for our employees to volunteer. Our mission is to inspire hope in the communities where we live and work, to improve the quality of people's lives.

"My hope is that
you are able to experience
the love and appreciation
students like me feel because
of opportunities like this."

Nahu Montesinos, 2019-2020 The Assurance Caring Together

Scholarship Recipient

Assurance employees are passionate about helping others in our community and excited to provide educational opportunities for students in our community for many years to come.

The cost of education has grown exponentially in the past 10 years.

We hope the recipients will gain a bit of financial relief so they can spend more time studying and less working.

The Assurance Caring Together Scholarship supports students who live or work in the Harper district and have financial need.



Planned Giving: Sharing your generous intentions today secures a strong future for Harper students

During the past year, Mary Gretchen Vancura has had a lot of time to think about the challenges nurses have been facing during the COVID-19 pandemic. "The COVID news coverage illustrates critical roles nurses play every day," she said.

Thanks to her generosity through a scholarship and planned gift, Mary Gretchen is ensuring that Harper nursing students will get the financial support they need to complete their studies and meet our community's needs.

Mary Gretchen has deep ties to Harper. After earning a bachelor's degree in nursing with a specialty in pediatric nursing from the University of Illinois-Chicago and teaching there for two years, she realized she was on the right path and attended the University of Florida to pursue a graduate degree. She applied for a faculty position at Harper in 1971 and worked as a nursing faculty member until her retirement in 1996.

"Harper was only a few years old when I interviewed, and I remember thinking that Harper had a commitment to excellence coming out of the gate, which appealed to me," she said.

Last August, Mary Gretchen contacted the Harper College Educational Foundation about including a gift in her estate plan. After a meeting with her financial advisor, she determined that she could still provide for family and friends and donate to support Harper nursing students. She made Harper College a contingent beneficiary of her IRA, creating a nursing scholarship and a fund to support nursing faculty and program development.

An active retiree who spent 13 years traveling across the United States in a motor home, Mary Gretchen jokes that Harper will not be receiving her planned gifts for many years. But she believes that few programs are as demanding as nursing and didn't want

"I can't imagine the community without Harper—the interaction of the college and community is amazing and provides such value"

> - Mary Gretchen Vancura, Harper Heritage Society Member



to delay supporting students. In fall 2020, she created the Mary Gretchen Vancura Nursing Scholarship, which will be awarded in spring 2021.

Mary Gretchen was inspired to create these gifts because of the value and excellence she believes Harper provides. "I can't imagine the community without Harper -the interaction of the college and community is amazing and provides such value."

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.

THANK YOU TO OUR BUSINESS CHAMPIONS

The Harper College Educational Foundation is grateful for the sponsorship support of our 2020-2021 Business Champions.

To learn more, email Kristyn Meyer at kmeyer@harpercollege.edu.

\$10,000+



Robbins Schwartz

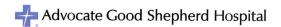


\$7,500+

\$5,000+



\$2,500+















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\$1,000 +

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Financial Elements, Inc.

First American Bank

Heartland Bank and Trust

K&M Printing Co., Inc.

Leopardo Companies Inc.

Markel Corporation

Power Construction Company, LLC

Sponsors secured as of January 31, 2021.

Harper College Educational Foundation Joins AmazonSmile

You can support the Harper College Educational Foundation by doing your regular Amazon shopping at smile.amazon.com.

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Harper College students every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com. The bonus is that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to the Harper College Educational Foundation.

To set-up your account, visit smile.amazon.com and sign in with your Amazon.com credentials. The first time you go to AmazonSmile, you can choose the organization you want to support. Search for "William Rainey Harper College Educational Foundation."



When you select the Harper College Educational Foundation as your charity while shopping at AmazonSmile, Amazon will donate .5% of the eligible purchases to the Harper College Educational Foundation.

Amazon will donate .5% of eligible purchases to the Harper College **Educational Foundation**

NEW EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS

FI COME

We warmly welcome Mac Glinn and Melanie Witt to our Board of Directors.



MacAdam "Mac" Glinn is the General Manager of Mortenson's aviation business, overseeing projects with airport authorities, air carriers and specialty aviation companies across the U.S. Collaborating with the leadership of Mortenson's other operating groups across the country, he is focused on recruiting, retaining

and developing key aviation talent and expanding Mortenson's presence in the aviation market.

Mac earned his B.A. in English literature from Kenyon College and a J.D. from Florida International University's College of Law. He is a 2013 recipient of the Torch Award for the Florida International University College of Law, the highest honor bestowed on an alumnus.

Mac lives in Glencoe with his wife, Denise, and their daughters, Kennedy and Harper.



Melanie Witt has been a wellknown estate planning and business succession attorney for more than 20 years. She represents corporate fiduciaries and individuals in estate planning, philanthropic planning, and trusts and estates. Melanie has extensive experience advising entrepreneurs on business

succession planning and estate structuring.

Melanie earned her B.A., with high honors, from the University of Michigan and her J.D. from the University of Notre Dame Law School. She was also awarded a Master of Law in Taxation from the DePaul University College of Law. Melanie was named one of the 10 Best Estate Planning Attorneys in Illinois by the American Institute of Legal Counsel and by Attorney and Practice Magazine.

Melanie lives in Inverness with her husband, David Earnest. She has five children and two stepchildren.



Golf Open

Monday, June 7, 2021

Inverness Golf Club 102 N. Roselle Road Inverness, IL 60067

For questions, reservations and sponsorship information, please contact Kristyn Meyer at 847.925.6468 or kmeyer@harpercollege.edu.

SPRING 2021

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(Retired) Professor Emerita Speech and Theatre Department Harper College

* Deceased



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Mark Your Calendar for Harper HEART Day

At Harper College, we are proud of our history. Every person who works, learns, and visits our campus leaves a mark. The community is at the core of our mission, and Harper is leading the way for community colleges nationwide because of you. We also know that you are the heart of where we are headed.

The Harper College Educational Foundation invites you to celebrate the inaugural Harper HEART (Helping Everyone Access Resources Together) Day on April 8–9. For 36 hours, Harper HEART Day unifies our community around the power of education. Whether you are a current Harper College student, an alum, an employee, a retiree, or one of our community members, there are ways you can get involved. Watch your inbox for information about this special day as well as a socially distanced drive-in movie event to celebrate your generosity.



Your passion for educational access and opportunity made Harper a leader. With your help, we can build a brighter future for the next generation of Harper students. Keep an eye on your inbox with information about how you can be a part of the Harper HEART Day celebration.