

President's Report

May 2018

It's graduation week! Wow, the year has flown by; it was a busy and productive year. On Saturday, we celebrate the 50th commencement in William Rainey Harper College's history. We look forward to David Coleman's keynote address and unveiling the 50th time capsule that will be on display from the stage, and then placed in the David K. Hill Family Library for the next 50 years. It would be quite an experience to view its unveiling in 2068 and marvel at the extraordinary changes that occurred at the College in that 2018-2068 time period.

This spring has brought enormous success to Harper College. Without a doubt, the recent HLC re-accreditation report recognized the excellence of the College. All criteria for re-accreditation were met and not a single recommendation offered. We are so pleased with the outcome and thank the entire campus for their efforts. There is always room to improve, but we start from a positive position and move forward from there.

We were also gratified with our recent report from our Achieving the Dream (AtD) coaches regarding our student success agenda. In the correspondence section of the Board packet is a copy of the letter from our AtD coaches. We are making documented progress in our student success outcomes. Our hard work to build a student support infrastructure is paying off. The work the AtD coaches recognized is the result of several College teams: the five strategic goal teams, the Title III teams, the Frontier Set team, the Enrollment Task Force, the First Year Experience team and our Advising Team. All of this work is coming together to build a powerful support infrastructure for our students. We should see improvements in equitable outcomes among our student body in learning, completion, and labor market results. When we think about student success, the cornerstones embody these tenants: equity, learning, completion and labor market outcomes.

We have enjoyed many honorific occasions as we approach graduation, most notably Convocation, student leadership awards at the Celebration of Excellence, and the recent Phi Theta Kappa induction. We also celebrated our ninth Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship recipient; the most sought after and prized scholarship in the community college sector. All of this is more evidence of the excellence of this institution.

Graduation signifies the end of many things, including the term of our Student Trustee. We wish Student Trustee Niki Savakas good-bye and thank her for her service to the Board. We also welcome newly elected Student Trustee Lavleen Mal, who will begin his service at the May Board meeting.

Below are notable events and accomplishments since my last report.

Student Success

- Harper College recognized students at the annual Honors Convocation. More than 100 students were recognized for membership in honors organizations, excellence in their discipline, and earning 4.0 GPAs. Mili Tomar was honored with the Jack Kent Cooke scholarship, and Kevin Long received the Outstanding Faculty Award.
- Softball Players Kim Labahn and Abbey Sloan received First Team All-Region and All-Tournament honors. Jessica Kearns and Sydney Heinrich received Second Team All-Region honors. Labahn and Sloan were also named to the All-Conference Team.
- At the 4th Annual Tate & Lyle Cupcake competition, Harper College student Emily Reddy won first place and Harper student Ed Dolik won second. The winning cakes were Paris-themed, chocolate and caramel filled cupcakes, topped with an amaretto ganache. In addition to prize money, both students received a 5-quart Kitchen Aid mixer.
- One Million Degrees (OMD) hosted the “It’s Who You Know” Speed Networking Event at The Garlands of Barrington. There were 29 OMD Scholars in attendance, and 28 OMD Coaches and volunteers at the event.
- One Million Degrees will have 21 scholars graduating in May of 2018.
- The Center for Student Involvement hosted the annual Celebration of Excellence ceremony, honoring students and registered student organizations for outstanding leadership and co-curricular achievements at Harper College. Celebration of Excellence recognizes the students’ commitment to creating an engaging and fulfilling student experience that is aligned with Harper College’s values and mission.
- Hundreds of area high school students attended the annual Latino Summit, an event that promotes the value of higher education. The students, most of them high school seniors, heard from a panel of professionals and Harper representatives about the importance of education and how to incorporate their cultural identity into their personal and professional lives.
- Nearly 600 prospective students and their guests attended the annual High School Open House event. The event is designed to provide high school students and their families an overview of the College in addition to having the opportunity to ask questions about financial aid and scholarships, tour the campus, meet with faculty and program coordinators, and learn more about all of the support services available.
- The number of students visiting the Academic Advising and Counseling Center is on the rise. Through week 14 of the spring semester, the total number of student appointments and walk-ins has increased 8.3% in comparison to week 14 in 2017.
- On April 20, the Graphic Arts Program hosted the Boost, an event for high school students. More than 150 juniors and seniors attended half-hour Graphic Arts classroom sessions that illustrated what our classes are like.
- Advisors and counselors completed an eight-hour training on mental health first aid, designed to prepare individuals to identify, understand and respond to signs of addictions and mental illnesses. Mental health first aiders learn a single five-step strategy that includes assessing risk, respectfully listening to and supporting the individual in crisis, and identifying appropriate professional help and other supports.

Facilities Management

- Parking Lot 1 Reconstruction – The scope of work includes the reconstruction of parking lot 1 to address settlement issues, storm water management requirements, and vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow improvements. The construction phase of this project is scheduled to start May 21, 2018 and be complete by August 17, 2018.
- 2018 Summer Improvement Projects – The scope of work will include Building B entrance improvements, Building C classroom upgrades, Building P exterior stair replacement, Building P exterior envelope improvements, and Building Z faculty offices. The work is scheduled to start May 21, 2018 and be complete in September 2018.
- Building B Tunnel Project – The scope of work includes a shallow tunnel from Building B to Building U, steam lines to Building M, and communications cabling from Buildings M and U to Buildings A and Y. The tunnel and steam line work is complete. The communications cabling work continues and is scheduled to be complete by the end of May 2018.
- Building H Building Energy Systems Technology (BEST) Lab – Classrooms H166, H184 and H186 will be converted into the new BEST Lab for the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Technology program. Installation of the equipment is complete and the control work continues with completion scheduled by the end of May 2018.
- Building B Boiler Room Project – The scope of work for the Building B Boiler Room project includes the replacement of two boiler burners, chemical treatment piping, water softener, deaerator and accompanying piping. Boiler 1 and the deaerator are scheduled to be complete by May 14, 2018. Boiler 2 and the remaining work are scheduled to be complete by May 31, 2018.
- Storm Damage – On May 2, a series of thunderstorms resulted in the west side of campus losing electrical power for approximately one hour. In addition, the torrential rain caused flooding damage in Buildings S and D. The flooding damage in Building S was significant, damaging the carpet and some walls, and resulted in moving staff from six offices to the conference room. Facilities responded, put in new carpet, replaced some drywall and painted. Building S staff returned to their offices on May 9. The flooding damage in Building D affected two rooms, which also had water damage from a malfunctioning air handler unit. Staff were temporarily moved and work continues in this area.

Information Technology

- The Student Systems and Network teams worked together to improve the student experience by implementing single sign-on for Focus2, the career exploration tool. Students no longer have to enter log-on credentials to access Focus2 via the Student Portal.
- The Student Government Association held a special election for an open Student Trustee position. The Student System team created and configured the student election survey in Banner for students to vote for the candidate.
- After December 2018, Banner 8, the current version of the Banner Student Information System, will no longer be supported by Ellucian. The Student System team has been working with various functional user teams and IT teams to systematically move from Banner 8 to Banner 9 modules. During the month of April, the team configured and implemented Banner 9 administrative forms in

production, re-configured the Banner Workflow to work with Banner 9 administrative forms, and provided training and assistance to functional users to adopt the Banner 9 forms.

- The Civitas Inspire for the Advisors Project is now “live” with production data from the Banner System. Single sign-on for Civitas Illume products and Inspire for Advisors has been implemented.
- The project for implementing “targeted announcements” in the Student Portal has been completed. Targeted announcements is the ability to communicate with specific students on individualized topics. This function has been desired for a while, as this was not possible with the previous version of the portal.
- The application layer of the EBS Financial System has been migrated to a new operating system.

Human Resources

- The Human Resources office recently hosted a team of eleven administrators and staff from Elgin Community College (ECC) to discuss the College’s experience with implementing the PageUp People applicant tracking system, which ECC recently purchased. Harper College was the first community college in the United States to purchase and implement the PageUp People applicant tracking system in 2016.

Advancement

- The 30th Annual Harper College Educational Foundation Golf Open will be held on Monday, June 11. The event will take place at the prestigious Inverness Golf Club. Proceeds raise funds for student scholarships and emerging programs at Harper College. We are proud to announce Jim Cornelison, National Anthem Singer for the Chicago Blackhawks, as this year’s celebrity golfer.

Sponsorship opportunities are still available. This event is expected to sell out. To register for golf, dinner or sponsorship, please share any questions with Kristyn Meyer at 847.925.6468.

- The Stand Up and Be Counted program recognizes Harper College alumni in the workplace and celebrates employers throughout the community who have hired Harper College alumni as employees. On Friday, May 4, the Foundation hosted a special Stand Up and Be Counted celebration to recognize Harper employees who are alumni for the role they have played in the College’s success. More than 40 Harper employees attended this special recognition breakfast.



Communications

Student Communication

- On April 18, the College hosted TEDxHarperCollege, which welcomed nearly 250 attendees over three sessions and celebrated the College’s Proud Past and Strong Future. Featured speakers presented on topics ranging from overcoming adversity, to future-focused careers using improvisation, to racism and data analytics. Speakers included four students, seven staff/faculty members, one alumna and one community member. The recorded TEDx talks will be available in the TEDx Library and on Harper’s YouTube channel in the coming weeks.

Internal Communication

- In the April 12 issue of InsideHarper, we shared the story of Deborah Damko, a student who started at Harper in 1975, but had not finished – at least not until recently.
- Prompted by the passing of her mother, Deborah reassessed her life and embarked on a transformational journey that culminated with the completion of her associate degree and losing more than 120 lbs. Deborah originally believed she would have to start over at Harper, but she was thrilled to learn from Erin Loughlin, a Fast Track counselor, that she was only three classes shy of earning an associate degree in general studies. [Continue reading...](#)



Laura Damko (left) and Deborah (right), together they lost 250 lbs.

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- The Outcomes Assessment office hosted a meeting of The Assessment Group (TAG), a network of Illinois community college assessment professionals, on April 23, 2018. The attendees discussed co-curricular assessment and other assessment topics related to their campuses.
- The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered to approximately 950 students. CCSSE is conducted every three years to solicit feedback from one of its primary stakeholders – students. The information collected will be used by academic units and student services to provide optimal opportunities for positive student experiences at the College.
- The Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), the online companion survey to CCSSE was administered to faculty. The survey elicits information from faculty about their teaching practices, the ways they spend their professional time, and their perceptions of student engagement and educational experiences. The overall response rate was excellent at 39%, with 55% of full-time faculty responding.

Workforce Solutions

- HRRC Screening Solutions, Inc., one of Harper's Small Business Development Center clients and graduates of Harper College, has been accepted into the prestigious Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program in Chicago. The program is a 100-hour mini-MBA-style training developed by Babson College that focuses on management, marketing, and finance.
- The Job Placement Resource Center will hold a “lunch and learn” workshop for Harper graduates. This workshop will discuss how graduates can be prepared for their first professional job search.

- Representatives from Rend Lake Community College traveled to Harper on April 19, 2018, for a 2-day visit to meet with the Office of Apprenticeship staff to learn how Harper manages its RA programs and how Harper became a RA program sponsor.
- Dr. Rebecca Lake and Melissa MacGregor attended the 3rd annual American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) grant meeting April 23, 2018. Forty-six AAI grantees met from across the country to share best practices and information regarding these grants. Dr. Lake presented how Harper College is expanding its Registered Apprenticeship programs to better serve area companies and their apprentices.
- Dr. Rebecca Lake and Melissa MacGregor attended the AACC annual meeting April 27, 2018. Each presented on apprenticeships. There was a great deal of interest in Harper's programs.
- Dr. Rebecca Lake presented on a DOL Office of Apprenticeship webinar May 2, 2018, on "Community Colleges and Cyber Security Apprenticeship Programs."
- Representatives from Roane State College in Harriman, Tennessee, called May 3, 2018 to discuss how Harper is managing its RA programs. Dr. Pamper will be coming to Harper on May 17, 2018, to have further discussions.
- Seven representatives from Crawford & Company came for a two-day visit on May 3, 2018 to discuss ways to join Harper's Registered Apprenticeship Insurance program.
- On Monday, May 14, Harper graduates its fifth cohort from the Career Skills Institute. The ceremony was presided over by Dr. Ender. The Career Skills Institute is a two-year program that provides vocational training for students with mild cognitive disabilities. The program assesses and strengthens basic employability skills and helps students develop a realistic career plan.

Community and Legislative Relations

- Over the past month, Harper has participated in two STEAM/STEM nights with our school partners. On April 17, Brian Hamm conducted a coding activity on the Harper Mobile Unit at Sanborn Elementary in Palatine. The STEM event included families from multiple District 15 schools.



- On April 26, Harper participated in Tarkington Elementary School's first ever STEAM night. Karen Dailey, Julie Ellefson-Kuehn and the Harper Chemistry Club conducted chemistry activities for the students inside the building while Brian Hamm conducted a coding activity in the Harper Mobile Unit. The interactions with our faculty, staff and students is the first time many of these families are being introduced to Harper and how exciting college can be.
- On April 25, Amie Granger attended the monthly United Palatine Steering Committee meeting. United Palatine Coalition is a Cradle to Career Collective Impact initiative made up of public and private sector community actors, small businesses, nonprofit organizations and residents looking to solve intractable social problems to better the Palatine community. Granger represents Harper on the Steering Committee and the Engagement Committee.
- Harper representatives have attended numerous Community Relations events including the Schaumburg Business Association Good Morning Schaumburg, Palatine Chamber Women in Business Forum Fashion Show, Schaumburg Business Association Women in Business luncheon and the Palatine Chamber of Commerce Community Forum. Representatives from the Foundation, Media Relations, Community Relations and Apprenticeships hosted information tables and presented on current Harper initiatives.

Legislative Affairs

- The Illinois General Assembly is set to adjourn for the summer at the end of the month, and a bipartisan budget agreement for fiscal year 2019 does not appear to be imminent. Committees in both the House and the Senate are reviewing agency level budget requests and needs for the current and upcoming fiscal years. Lawmakers also continue to debate the governor's proposal to shift pension costs to local school districts, community colleges and universities over a four-year rollout period, but no bill has been introduced. There have been reports that the possibility of a stop-gap budget has not been ruled out as part of the larger budget discussion.
- In addition, efforts to advance legislation allowing certain community colleges to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree have come to a standstill. Following a recent hearing in the Senate Higher Education Committee, the Illinois Council of Community College Presidents said the headwinds created by the recent budget stalemate and state of affairs within the higher education system are simply too much to overcome at this point. The group has pivoted to a more small-scale proposal that would establish a pilot program at Lewis and Clark Community College.

Media Relations

- The *Daily Herald* covered Harper's recent rededication and naming ceremony for the newly renovated David K. Hill Family Library. The article, which includes several photos and a [video](#), highlighted the impressive building's transformation into a space that encourages collaboration and content creation. It also recognized the significant contributions by Trustee Diane Hill and her late husband, former Trustee David Hill, to the College. "I think this place really is not only the intersection of campus, but it brings together (David's) passion for learning, collaborating and engaging in the community," Diane Hill said at the ceremony, also attended by her son, David III. The *Daily Herald* editorial page's weekly soapbox column included a congratulatory message to Harper and Diane Hill on the library opening.
- *Community College Daily* ran an article about a panel of leaders including Dr. Maria Coons, Vice President Institutional Planning and Strategic Alliances, testifying before a Congressional

appropriations subcommittee on career and technical education and apprenticeships. The *Daily Herald* also ran a digest item on Coons' testimony.

- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about Michelé Smith, Associate Provost and Vice President of Workforce Solutions, and Brian Knetl, Associate Provost, being named Aspen Presidential Fellows. The program aims to cultivate the next generation of community college presidents. *Community College Daily* also ran an article about the program and included a list of 2018-2019 Fellows.
- The *Hechinger Report* ran an article, "Are apprenticeships the new on-ramp to good jobs?" as part of its Map to the Middle Class series. The article featured Harper's partnership with Zurich North America to launch an apprenticeship in general insurance. It highlighted how many companies are finding that four-year degrees aren't necessarily the best proxy for meaningful job skills and experience.
- The *Daily Herald's* Suburban Tax Watchdog column explored how community college tuition and fees have risen while enrollment is dropping. The column focused on seven Chicago-area community colleges including Harper.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about Harper hospitality management students winning a cupcake competition against Elgin Community College.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about student Milli Tomar being awarded the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship.
- The *Daily Herald*, *Palatine Patch* and *chicagotribune.com* ran a digest previewing a community forum in Palatine featuring area governments including Harper providing updates on initiatives, projects and other news.
- The *Daily Herald* ran a digest item on Harper's new police chief, Claude Casaletto.
- *Auto Dealer Today* magazine ran an article about a new partnership between Harper and Chicago-area auto dealers to launch a sales and retail management apprenticeship.
- *Crain's*, *Illinois Review* and *Illinois AgConnection* ran articles about Governor Rauner leading a trade mission to Germany and Poland in an effort to spark foreign investment in the Illinois economy. The team of business, community and education leaders making the trip included Dr. Ender.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article previewing the Harper Ensemble Theatre Company's production of "Language of Angels."
- The *Northwest Herald* ran an article on Harper student athlete Bree Bogucki competing in the Illinois Special Olympics and her stint co-emceeing the Inspire Greatness Gala in Chicago.
- The *Daily Herald* sports section ran an article about the Harper softball team preparing for the regional tournament.

President's Priorities Update

1. First Year Seminar and Education Plan

- Courses are being scheduled to accommodate more than 1,200 students this coming fall semester. A recommendation to require students to enroll in a first-year program is working through the shared governance process.

2. Advocates for Students

- Case Management Advising Model Update: The transition has begun to reassign students from counselors to academic advisors. Going forward, counseling faculty will see students mostly by referral for academic, career and personal counseling. Academic advisors will continue to case manage students and proactively monitor their progress toward completing educational goals.
- The search for five new academic advisors is underway with an expected start date of July 1.

3. Buildings F, M and Canning Center

- **Building F Renovations** – The renovations have been completed.
- **Building M Renovations and Addition** – The interior build-out of the Northwest Community Hospital continues. The concrete slab for the elevated track is complete; the contractor is currently working on the finishes for the elevated track slab, ceilings, doors, interior windows, lighting and HVAC controls throughout the building.
- **Canning Center** – The State of Illinois has approved the appropriation of the funding for the Canning Center project. The Capital Development Board (CDB) staff has requested authorization to proceed with an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) that would allow the College to proceed with the review of the plans and budget prior to the funds being released. This IGA is required by the CDB to proceed with the project.

4. Promise Program Funding

- \$10,741,711.07 with 650 unique donors (repeat donors are not included).

In closing, I wish to thank the Board for approving my involvement in the Governor's recent European trade mission. I was delighted to represent the State of Illinois and the community college sector. Along the way, I was honored to meet many Polish and German executives, as well as government, education and economic development leaders. We made several significant contacts that should lead to training opportunities supporting German-owned companies in the northwest suburbs. We also have opportunities for student and faculty exchanges, and apprenticeship partnerships. As events unfold, we will share them with the Board.

I also wish to thank the Board for nominating me for ICCTA's Gary Davis Ethical Leadership Award. I will receive the award in early June at the ICCTA annual meeting in Springfield. A community college president's leadership is, in part, a reflection of the Board. It is an honor to lead this college and I understand that the efforts and support of many have contributed to our successes. In that vein, I share this award with all of you.

Thank you,

Ken