



PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

November 2020

Dear Harper College Community:

As I shared with you last week, we have decided to pivot to fully remote instruction, effective Nov. 23, in response to the rapid rise of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations and a stay-at-home [advisory](#) issued by the Cook County Department of Public Health. This will help us limit the number of people on campus while we still provide essential college operations and services that are critical to supporting our students.

The college will move forward with the current spring 2021 semester plan to be primarily online with the lab portion of blended classes taking place on campus. Our priority will continue to be monitoring the data and following the guidance of public health officials. If we need to adjust our approach to the spring semester, we will communicate that decision before Winter Break.

This month, I was honored to participate in the Dallas Herring Lecture and respond to Dr. Pam Eddinger, president of Bunker Hill Community College, who delivered a powerful message entitled “Insights from the Pandemic: The Reckoning and the Hope at Our Nation’s Community Colleges.” Over these past several months, we’ve shown time and time again our ability to adapt and move forward despite our challenging environment all in the name of ensuring an equitable and just recovery from the pandemic. Our work now and in the future will ensure that we strengthen the parts of our education system that work well, while rebuilding and reimagining it to better serve our students and our communities.

It is with great sadness that I inform you of the passing of three former Harper employees—Marilyn Swanson, Ellen Nowickas, and Stephanie McLoughlin. Marilyn was a member of Harper’s founding faculty. She taught English and had previously taught at an area high school. Ellen began at Harper on February 3, 1992, where she worked as a program assistant at the Learning and Career Center. Ellen and her husband Gary retired together in 2013. Finally, Stephanie had a 16-year career at Harper College, which included her work as an Information Technology installation supervisor. We are grateful for their contributions to the college and wish their families comfort during this difficult time.

Finally, as we ready for Thanksgiving Break, I wish to extend my gratitude to all of you who have worked so passionately this year to support our students. I wish you and your families a very happy and safe Thanksgiving and leave you with this quote from novelist Alice Walker:

“Thank you’ is the best prayer that anyone could say. I say that one a lot. Thank you expresses extreme gratitude, humility, understanding.” –Alice Walker

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COVID-19 Response Team Update

Communications

- The Communications team organized Harper's fifth employee town hall since the start of the pandemic. Topics included the spring 2021 semester, our ongoing response to COVID-19, the budget and future fiscal planning, assessing our workforce needs, and wellness. The COVID-19 communications team also helped to provide input and feedback on the event, which was the highest-rated town hall to date.

Facilities Management

- Quarantined COVID Positive Areas in Buildings B, C, D, H, I, L, X, Y, and Z and had them back in service within 60 hours.

Student Success

- All August 2020 Radiologic Technology graduates have passed their board exams with a 100% pass rate.

Access and Disability Services

- Anita Rehberg and two Transition Autism Program (TAP) students presented "Our Transition Program from a Student's Perspective" at NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education's College Autism Summit. Link to the recorded presentation: <https://vimeo.com/469075477/71f86def12>.

Advising Services

- Advisors implemented a nudge to African American students on their caseloads. The nudge included collaborative efforts between Advising and Admissions Outreach. African American students who have not yet met with their advisor to develop an educational plan were texted (sent by Admissions Outreach), emailed, and called by their advisors, encouraging appointments and offering support.
- The second round of Starfish early alert surveys has been administered to faculty seeking their feedback on monitored students this fall. Through the first ten weeks of the semester, 356 unique faculty members have raised over 6,300 flags of concern, referrals to the Academic Support Centers or 'kudos' for positive encouragement. This represents an 18% increase compared to the same time frame from fall 2019. Additionally, the number of students who have received faculty feedback via Starfish has increased by 50% from last fall representing 3,816 unique students receiving encouragement and/or direction for how to connect to other campus resources to help them be successful.

Center for New Students and Women's Program

- The Center for New Students launched the spring 2021 New Student Orientation module with added content focusing on tips and strategies to be a successful online learner as well as descriptions of the updated modality definitions.
- The Women's Program conducted the first two workshops in their fall series of programming designed to support participants during this time. The Women's Program partnered with the Academic Support Center to deliver a workshop on online learning strategies and counseling services on the first workshop from the



Women's Program Personal Growth Series. The workshops are offered synchronously and recorded for asynchronous participation.

Student Involvement

- The Conference and Events Management Department have completed a project to enable students, faculty and staff to procure their ID Cards through a Cloud App that allows photo submission and card production without face-to-face contact.
- The Healthy Hawk Four Week Challenge, hosted by Campus Recreation, began this month. This challenge encourages movement throughout the day. One hundred and nine students and staff have signed up to participate in the challenge.

Enrollment Services

- The One Stop processed over 3,061 inbound contacts in October, which is slightly up from last year. We received 1,686 phone calls, 1,055 emails, and 315 live chats. We saw a substantial increase in email volume with a 178% increase from October 2019. Our growth in emails can be attributed to students submitting their financial aid paperwork electronically versus in-person. Live chat and phone also increased from last year. Live chat was up 47%, while phones increased by 28%. The One Stop conducted various call campaigns, including reminding students of payment dates and completing their financial aid requirements. We made over 500 calls and reached 44% of students last month.
- The Registrar's Office, in collaboration with IT, updated 2,205 classes for the spring 2021 semester so that students could easily identify the modality of each course (Online LIVE, Online ANYTIME or Blended/Online and On Campus). The Class Search was modified to allow for easy searching by modality as well. We also made changes to the My Schedule web part in the MyStudent portal, detailing out the different meeting times, dates and/or locations so students will be able to see exactly what is expected of them once classes start.

Interdisciplinary Programs

- Last month, Honors students Julia Kiusals, Taylor Hall, Leia Ladios, and Maliha Amir attended sessions of the 2020 Virtual Conference for the National Collegiate Honors Council. Additionally, Honors co-coordinators Alicia Tomasian and John Garcia, as well as programs specialist Tracy Rowley, attended the conference and participated in sessions around student engagement and diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Honors environment.
- As a member of the National Learning Communities Consortium (NLCC), Harper College was represented by Marianne Fontes on the planning team for the 2020 Virtual LC Summit: Embracing Adaptability in Learning Communities During Uncertain Times, organized by the NLCC, Washington Center, and the Learning Communities Association. The event, held in October, attracted over 500 attendees from all over the nation, including 10 Harper employees. Marianne Fontes and Adam Lopez held a session entitled "Abriendo Puertas: Keeping Doors Open and Fostering Community Online." The session was attended by over 200 participants.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- November kicks off the second book club pick, Robin DiAngelo's *White Fragility*, hosted by the Social Justice Leadership Certificate alumni with close to 50 members.



- The Office of DEI, Employee Wellness and Human Resources hosted two Community Pulse events to provide employees space to share how they are doing, learn resources that help them manage today's challenges and to provide Harper resources.
- The Office of DEI and Student Engagement successfully held the second Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Circle. The IDEA Circle is a monthly meeting with student leaders from traditionally marginalized student populations, to help improve campus climate.
- With 37 faculty registrations, Harper College was the team with the most faculty participation among all 28 Illinois Equity in Attainment (ILEA) colleges and universities at the 2020 ILEA Fall Summit.

Finance and Administrative Services

Facilities Management

- The scope of work for the development of the Campus Master Plan will capture the spirit and character of the college while addressing the complexities of an evolving enrollment and educational programs. The principal goal of the Master Plan is to guide the future development of the campus in a planned and orderly manner to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan, the College Mission Statement, and Vision Statement while expressing the Core Values. DLR Group will be completing the input session in November and will begin reporting out findings in January 2021.
- The scope of work for the Building X Classrooms and Building Y Office Remodeling Project will include remodeling of classrooms X228B, X228C and X228D in Building X and remodeling of the Math and Science Office in Building Y to support current and future program and departmental needs. Construction in Building X and Building Y is substantially complete.
- The scope of work for the 2020 Sidewalk Maintenance Project will include replacement of sidewalks that were damaged or have heaved over the winter. Construction is substantially complete.
- The scope of work for the 2020 Stair and Retaining Wall Maintenance Project will include replacement of exterior stairs and retaining walls that were damaged or have heaved over the winter. Construction is substantially complete.

Information Technology

- The Banner Student Information System (SIS) was upgraded with system releases in October.
- The Information Technology Security Team launched the Annual Security Awareness Campaign in October. More than 1,300 employees received the 2020 Phishing Awareness session.

Advancement, Marketing and Communications

Advancement

- In November, nearly 30 women attended the HOPE Giving Circle fall event "Tribe of Mentors: A Panel Conversation." The event featured a panel of women who shared their life experiences by answering a selection of questions from the book *Tribe of Mentors* by Tim Ferris. Mentoring is a cornerstone of the



HOPE Giving Circle scholarship program with each scholarship recipient matched with a mentor from HOPE's membership. To date, 14 students have received the HOPE scholarship and over \$180,000 has been raised by members, donors and friends of the HOPE Giving Circle.

- WHCM 88.3 FM student radio and Alumni Relations have launched Harper Talks: The Harper Alumni Podcast. The monthly podcast features Harper alumni as they share their stories, experiences and life journeys in conversation with podcast host and Harper Assistant Professor of Communication Arts Brian Shelton. Listeners will learn how education, career successes and failures, and human connection have impacted Harper Alumni along the way. The first episode featuring Scott Lietzow is available now at harpercollege.edu/alumni and on all podcast streaming services including Spotify, Apple and Android platforms. Harper Talks is a co-production of WHCM 88.3 Harper Student Radio and the Harper Alumni Program. WHCM students assist with editing and production of each episode. The original podcast theme music was composed by Harper student Aidan Cashman.
- Targeted scholarship marketing was emailed to 2,086 students for the ACE (Advancing Community Economics) Grant from Rotary International (\$140K), Rotary Club of Schaumburg/Hoffman Estates Fishing Well Scholarship (\$25K), art scholarships (\$20K) and nursing scholarships (\$22K) for the students that met the criteria of these scholarships. A virtual open house and screencast on how to apply for the ACE Grant was also made available to students.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation's annual donor appreciation reception at the opening night performance of the fall theatrical performance was not a possibility. Instead, the Foundation hosted a drive-in movie night to celebrate individuals and organizations contributing \$100 or more during the previous fiscal year. The celebration welcomed approximately 150 guests to a drive-in movie experience featuring *Ghostbusters (1984)* in parking lot 2 of the Harper College campus.

Community Relations

- This year's virtual Experience Day (previously College and Career Expo) was a success. In response to the pandemic, the planning committee decided to move the 2020 Experience Day to a month-long virtual event. Every Wednesday in October, new activities were posted on the Experience Day web page so families could learn and explore. More than 20 activities were submitted by Harper faculty and staff. All 250 supply kits were distributed to families across Harper's district. Our library partners helped promote the event and served as pick up locations so families could easily pick up their supply kits. Videos were created to allow students to experience the manufacturing and metal fabrication lab, Makerspace and chemistry lab. The videos were captioned in English and Spanish. All activity instructions were also made available in Spanish. The Experience Day [web page](#) received more than 1,300-page views throughout the month. The activity instructions and videos are still available for families, schools and youth groups to access.

Marketing Services

- As part of the spring enrollment campaign, Marketing Services produced four new television commercials on the following topics:
 - Career: <https://youtu.be/ASiBmOcB6dl>
 - Transfer: <https://youtu.be/rq0nx3BGv1c>
 - Motivation: <https://youtu.be/YvwJ6wjLMj0>
 - Affordability: <https://youtu.be/eLodiKBQBbw>



These spots will air on streaming TV (HULU, Amazon, Chromecast, Roku, etc.), YouTube, Facebook, and other social and digital platforms. Targets include: People age 18-20, Parents with Children age 18-20, Adults 25-45 with no college degree in Harper's ZIP codes.

The spring campaign also includes three oversized postcards mailed to all in-district households on November 12 and 23 and December 7.

Media Relations

- *Inside Higher Ed* published an article on the fundraising growth that some community colleges are experiencing in the wake of the pandemic. Laura Brown shared the success of Harper's emergency fund, the increase in alumni giving, the establishment of new endowed scholarships and planned gifts, and other highlights. She said, "They're (the community) recognizing that, during these turbulent times, the need is even greater." The article ran on the Illinois Community College Trustees Association listserv.
- The *Chicago Tribune* published an article on the overall decline in community college enrollment in Illinois due to the impact of COVID-19. Harper, whose enrollment decrease is among the smallest in the state, was highlighted in the article. Bob Parzy discussed how older adult and underrepresented student populations are experiencing the largest enrollment decreases.
- The *Daily Herald*, *Business Ledger* and *Patch* ran an article announcing DePaul University will offer a Master of Science in Management at Harper's University Center beginning in January.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article on Harper's Promise Program and the need to modify the program to continue its financial sustainability. The *Daily Herald Editorial Board* followed with an editorial, lauding Harper for examining the program's longevity and developing ideas to keep it going.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article celebrating David Santafe-Zambrano, winner of the 2020 Gigi Campbell Student Trustee Excellence Award, an Illinois Community College Trustees Association honor. The article ran on the ICCTA listserv.
- *Community College Daily* ran an article on how community colleges including Harper are responding to the need for contact tracers.
- *Daily Herald* columnist Burt Constable profiled Harper alum Reveca Torres, an artist who is working to spread awareness and create social justice for people with disabilities.
- *Crain's Chicago Business* highlighted banking apprenticeship program graduate Leo Mora in its "People on the Move" section.
- *Industrial Machinery Digest* ran a profile on Harper graduate Nicole Wolter, president and CEO of HM Manufacturing.
- The *Daily Herald* ran a digest on Harper holding a free Post-Election Outlook 2020 webinar on November 12.

Legislative Affairs

- The November 3 Presidential Election was called for Vice President Joe Biden (D), while incumbent Senator Dick Durbin (D) was reelected to a fifth term. Illinois voters did not pass the graduated income tax amendment, which is expected to create some severe budget challenges for the state.



- While the fall veto session has been canceled due to rising COVID-19 cases in the Springfield area and statewide, Governor Pritzker has announced plans for a meeting with the four legislative leaders to discuss the FY21 budget and the projected \$3.9 billion deficit.

Federal Election Results

6th Congressional District
Congressman Sean Casten (D)* defeated Jeanne Ives (R)

8th Congressional District
Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (D)* defeated Preston Nelson (L)

9th Congressional District
Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D)* defeated Sargis Sangari (R)

10th Congressional District
Congressman Brad Schneider (D)* defeated Valerie Mukherjee (R)

State Election Results

22nd State Senate District
Sen. Cristina Castro (D)* reelected (ran unopposed)

28th State Senate District
Sen. Laura Murphy (D)* reelected (ran unopposed)

44th State Representative District
Rep. Fred Crespo (D)* defeated Todd Zimmerman (I) (Write-in)

51st State Representative District
Chris Bos (R) v. Rep. Mary Edly-Allen* (D)
Please note: This race has not been called but Bos is in the lead.

52nd State Representative District
Martin McLaughlin (R) defeated Marci Suelzer (D)
Please note: This is the seat previously held by David McSweeney (R).

53rd State Representative District
Rep. Mark Walker (D)* was reelected (ran unopposed)

54th State Representative District
Rep. Tom Morrison (R)* defeated Maggie Trevor (D)

55th State Representative District
Rep. Mary Moylan (D)* defeated Glen Olofson (L)

56th State Representative District
Rep. Michelle Mussman (D)* defeated Scott Kegarise (R)

57th State Representative District
Rep. Jonathan Carroll (D)* reelected (ran unopposed)

59th State Representative District
Rep. Daniel Didech (D)* reelected (ran unopposed)

**Denotes incumbent.*

- The Illinois Legislature will likely hold a “lame-duck” session in early January before the 102nd General Assembly is sworn in on January 13, 2021.
- Harper College has been part of an Illinois Council of Community College Presidents’ work group to provide input and support for proposed legislation for a community college bachelor’s degree for early childhood education. Faculty member Kathleen Nikolai has been participating in this work on behalf of the college. The group hopes to have legislation ready for the Spring 2021 legislative session.

Strategic Alliances and Innovation

Grants Office

- In September, the college was awarded \$162,000 from the Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as part of the Capacity Building Developmental follow-on grant. This funding will allow Harper to continue building capacity for a full-scale occupational safety and health training program. The training developed with this grant is available to employers and workers in small businesses (250 or fewer employees) throughout the region. Training is free for participants and, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is currently being offered via synchronous video conferences.
- In October, the college was awarded a \$30,500 grant from the Illinois Green Energy Network (IGEN) to develop and implement the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners® (NABCEP®) Photovoltaic Associate credentialing program to be offered during the semester of Spring 2021. This program will be managed by Continuing Professional Education.
- The college was awarded a grant from ICCB for \$17,651 to provide technology to students in need in the Adult Education Department. Funding will help bridge the digital equity gap by increasing access to technologies for Adult Education students who have been impacted by the transition to remote learning.
- A grant award of \$15,000 was received from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to support the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Harper. This funding from the CARES Act will support ongoing efforts to assist small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Educational Foundation received a \$40,000 grant from Motorola Solutions Foundation for the Award for Excellence and Engineering Pathways scholarship programs.

Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- Results of the spring 2020 Information Literacy General Education Assessment have been compiled, analyzed, and shared. More than 370 student artifacts were assessed for accurate source citation, credible source selection, and using sources to support a topic. Overall, results indicate that students have stronger

abilities related to source citation than they do with choosing credible courses and supporting a topic. This year, the Learning Assessment Committee will use these results to develop an improvement plan focused on enhancing student information literacy skills.

- The Strategic Plan Goal Teams have been formed from more than 100 volunteers. Goal teams are beginning their work this fall with the review of current college initiatives and data related to the six goals: Core Values; Equity; Student Success; Teaching and Learning; Partnerships; and Awareness/Outreach.
- The Office of Institutional Research has been utilizing Power BI to create and provide interactive reports/dashboards to aid in the consumption of several institutional resources. The most recent additions include the Community Survey portion of the Community Scan, the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) employee climate survey, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). In addition, they have developed a comprehensive interactive report/dashboard to aid academic programs in the annual and five-year program review processes.

Workforce Solutions

- The Illinois Small Business Development Center is offering two webinars on Facebook marketing for small business owners (Facebook Marketing 101 and Facebook Marketing Advanced). The Center had 115 counseling sessions with small business owners in October.
- The country celebrated [National Apprenticeship Week](#) November 9-14, 2020, with a schedule of events across the nation. Harper College participated in Zurich NA's Graduation Summit recognizing the 14 Harper students who earned their AAS degrees in business administration-insurance in summer 2020. Graduates were sent a package that included their Harper Apprentice stole and each apprentice graduate was featured in a video clip during the ceremony.