



## PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

September 2021

Dear Harper College Community:

This month, our attention has been squarely focused on meeting the requirements of Governor Pritzker's Executive Order on a vaccination or weekly testing mandate, which was issued August 26 with a September 5 deadline before being extended to September 19. Hats off to the college team charged with procuring a technological solution, developing procedures, executing communication plans and other related work so that the college complies with this mandate.

As I reflect on the approximately 18 months that we have been managing through the pandemic, I am moved by the tremendous efforts of our faculty and staff to serve our students in the classroom as well as through the course of our daily operations while being called upon to respond and push through the sometimes overwhelming additional work needed for us to respond to COVID-19. I am proud of our college community and grateful for your tireless efforts.

We look forward to our 13<sup>th</sup> annual Assessment Conference and Share Fair on Friday, September 24. I'm glad we are focused on improving engagement and equitable learning online and pleased that faculty will be sharing their experiences about online instruction and student learning.

It is hard to believe that just a few short months ago we received a transformational gift of \$18 million from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, which we have committed to advance our equity agenda in support of our students. Thus far, we have committed \$9 million, with an additional \$3 million committed by our Board of Trustees, to fund the Igniting Pathways to Success scholarship with preference given to historically underrepresented students aligned to MacKenzie Scott's passion for meeting the needs of those "chronically underserved." I am pleased to report that as of August 30 more than 1000 applications have been received and over 700 scholarships have been awarded. We have also solicited ideas from our employees for ways to use the Scott funds to benefit our students as well as begun the work of creating a Community Innovation Fund so we can partner with community organizations in our district to amplify the effect of this gift so we can fulfill Scott's desire. In her words, "Generosity is generative. Sharing makes more."

This month, members of the college community have been participating in the President's Learning Academy, formerly known as the Harper Leadership Institute. The goal of the President's Learning Academy is to provide a year-long opportunity for faculty and staff to meet with community college executives, learn about the AACC Leadership Competencies and gain practical experience for future leadership opportunities within and beyond Harper. I am grateful to fellow presidents who gave of their time to invest in our employees' professional growth.

### **Campus News . . .**

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Finally, September 15-October 15 is National Hispanic Heritage Month when we honor the contributions and achievements of our Latinx Americans. Harper College is committed to serving our growing Hispanic population, celebrating their contributions, and becoming an institution that can truly serve our Latinx students and community members through accessible, affordable, equitable and high-quality education.

### COVID-19 Response Team Update

- The following progress has been made toward implementation of the Governor's Vaccination or Testing mandate:
  - Harper has secured Cleared4 as its technology platform and has begun implementation.
  - SHIELD IL testing hours have been extended (Monday and Wednesday noon-4 p.m. and Thursday 9-11 a.m.). The location has moved to the PAC Lobby.
  - Exploring additional testing: SHIELD IL self-collection option and Binax tests.
  - Vaccines are available for free at Northwest Community Healthcare on campus.

### Student Success

#### *Enrollment Services*

- The One Stop processed 11,543 inbound contacts in August, which is up 60.6% from last year. We received 6,595 phone calls, 2,866 emails, 1,138 in-person visits and 944 live chats. We saw a significant increase in phone and emails from August of last year. Phones were up by 82.6%, while email saw a rise of 21.2% year-over-year. Due to the substantial increase in volume for August, OSFA and registrar's office staff provided additional assistance processing email inquiries. The One Stop conducted call campaigns, including reminding students of payment dates and registering for certificates programs. We made over 500 calls and reached 38.2% of students last month.
- In total Admissions Outreach worked with and completed 3,650 application reviews with fall 2021 degree-seeking applicants; 3,294 of those application reviews were completed virtually. From May 24 through September 8, we met in-person with students and completed 356 degree-seeking application reviews during that time. We also worked with 502 students with certificate/student at-large applications and met in-person with 32 certificate-seeking students.

#### *Interdisciplinary Programs*

- The Honors Program is making a return to campus this semester, along with many of Harper's students. The program offered 15 Honors courses this fall, with an 86% fill rate across the sections. Of the Honors courses that do not have an in-person component, all but two have a live virtual component so students are interacting with each other and their instructor live. (The two courses that do not have the live component are both classes that work well in the asynchronous format.) The Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa are planning the following off-campus experiences this fall:
  - A trip to the Oriental Institute, a museum on the University of Chicago's campus
  - A day of service for Habitat for Humanity
  - Forest Restoration for the Cook Country Forest Preserve
  - A trip to Feed My Starving Children
  - PTK Illinois Leadership Institute, which will be primarily online this year.

## Student Development

- Advising Services
  - The week of September 6, academic advisors participated in a calling campaign to all new-to-Harper, case managed students enrolled in fall 2021. These calls serve as an opportunity for advisors to introduce themselves and ensure that their new students have the tools needed to be successful in their first semester. Additionally, advisors encourage students to book appointments to discuss future course planning and to address any questions or concerns that they can support the student with. A total of 2,488 calls will be made.
- Center for New Students and Orientation
  - 2,401 students participated in the fall 2021 New Student Orientation program resulting in a conversion rate of 84.9% for new, degree-seeking students, compared to last year's similar conversion rate of 84.6%. *Source: New Student Flow Pipeline report.*
  - In order to build virtual connections between new students prior to their first semester and familiarize students with Blackboard functionality, the Center for New Students hosted an ongoing discussion board meet and greet in the new student Blackboard shell. The activity garnered 498 posts from 237 total participants.

## Student Engagement

- Student Engagement hosted Welcome Week August 23 – August 27 with a variety of events and activities to engage students with Harper College throughout the week. The week included:
  - Information tables were set up throughout campus to welcome students to campus, assist students in wayfinding, share information and connect students to campus resources, and to provide Harper College giveaways. Tables were staffed in the daytime and evening to support students during high traffic times.
  - Welcome Wagons transported students around campus, provided students with the opportunity to win Harper College giveaways and Starbucks gift cards, and answer student questions during the daytime and evening all week.
  - Over 300 students tie-dyed Harper College t-shirts. Additionally, Student Engagement staff tie dyed 46 t-shirts for students who were not able to attend or not comfortable attending an in-person, outdoor event. These shirts were dyed and then mailed to students' home addresses.
  - WHCM Radio held a live broadcast in the Harper Quad and gave away \$300 in gift cards to students in-person or students who called in to the live stream.
  - Student Engagement hosted an outdoor movie at the Ender Pavilion featuring Disney's *Cruella*. Approximately 350 individuals were in attendance and the event featured concessions by Sodexo, lawn games, and a visit from Cruella!
  - The Harper College Mascot was spotted around campus throughout the first week taking pictures with students at our first ever Balloon Wall.

- A total of 107 volunteer opportunities were fulfilled by Harper College employees. Additionally, the Campus Set Up Crew, Roads and Grounds, and Harper College Police Department were instrumental in supporting the overall success of Welcome Week.
- In August, 631 Harper students activated their Health and Recreation Center memberships.

### *Career and Technical*

- The new Manufacturing Machining Lab is fully operational in H149. This was the last unused space left to be completed from the H building renovation that started almost a decade ago! The space will be used by both apprentices and regular students in the first three precision machining courses. The new lab has the workbench space and layout recommended by NIMS, the industry standard for training and skill validation, for certifications in these classes and allows for multiple sections to run at the same time by using both (main and new) labs.
- Amy Chott, a Graphic Arts student, is on the “How do you recruit and retain young talent” panel at the Label Congress hosted in Chicago this year. Amy is also a supplemental instructor for our program and this semester she is one of our lab aides too.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

- Now in its fourth year, the Social Justice Leadership Certificate program, a year-long professional development experience aimed at building social justice leadership among employees, held its annual Social Justice Retreat this month. The day-long event was kicked off with a spirited welcome from Dr. Avis Proctor who delivered an encouraging message for the new cohort and stressed the importance of their work to the mission of the college. The new Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Dr. Tamara Johnson, who is also a co-facilitator of the program, led the cohort in a vigorous discussion of racism and oppression in higher education. Dr. Maria Coons, Vice President of Strategic Alliances and Innovation and Board Liaison, introduced the cohort to the organizational structure of the College and discussed the importance of the shared governance system in bringing about transformational change on campus. Additional presentations included the Equity and Student Success Strategic Goal team leaders on how the cohort might support their objectives and by the Institutional Research team on the importance of data in social justice. The balance of the fall curriculum will include an experiential workshop on social justice theory and action and the importance of self-care. In December, the cohort will present their project proposals to the Social Justice Leadership Advisory Council for review.
- This year’s Diversity Symposium will be a virtual event, taking place over three days with the theme of mental health awareness. The topics cover four categories: employee mental health, student mental health, socioeconomic inequities with mental health and media and its impact on mental health. In addition, we will have guests that share their personal stories of their battle with mental illness. We encourage you and your colleagues to join us for an impactful week as we try to break down the stigma of mental health and to be mindful of the daily struggle that so many people are living with.
- DREAM has initiated its 12<sup>th</sup> Mentor/Mentee Program class. Listed below are the new pairs:
  - Michael Bentley and Tiffany Jones
  - Malathy Chandrasekar and Margritte Rovani
  - Bethanie-Michelle Statler and Kiana Hughes
- DREAM Mentees and former Faculty Fellows have been hired as full-time faculty
  - Bethanie-Michelle Statler – Biology
  - Ranjani Murali – English

- Dr. Tamara Johnson was invited to serve as the keynote speaker for the Moraine Valley Equity Academy on September 17, based on her significant experience with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Dr. Johnson’s presentation was titled, “DEI in Practice.”
- This academic year, Communications will send campus-wide acknowledgements for selected cultural heritage months and commemorative days (e.g., Latinx Heritage Month, Pride Month, MLK Day, etc.). In consultation with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Employee Resource Groups, a list of months and days has been solidified. These acknowledgements serve to both educate the Harper community and celebrate a range of identities.

## Finance and Administrative Services

### *Facilities Management*

- The Scope of work for the Culinary Lab Project will include minor renovations and select equipment replacement at the Culinary Lab in Building A to support current program needs. Construction is substantially complete. Equipment installation is delayed through December 30 due to equipment availability.
- The scope of work for the Cultural Center Project will include the remodeling of room D281 at Building D into a community room, lounge, kitchenette, conference room, work area and other support spaces. Construction is substantially complete. The installation of the graphics is scheduled to be completed shortly. The furniture installation for the support spaces is completed. The remaining furniture is delayed until late September.
- The scope of work for the Box Office Relocation Project will include the relocation of the Box Office from Building J to Building R. Construction is substantially complete. The Box Office will remain in Building J until the COVID testing is completed in Building R.
- The scope of work for the Hall of Fame Project includes the construction of display cases and wall graphics in the lower-level corridor of Building M to showcase the achievements of the athletic program. Construction is substantially complete.

### *Information Technology*

- IT received an overall satisfaction rating of 97.6% for the month of August.
- Over 250 classroom lab computer workstations were upgraded to new devices.

## Advancement, Marketing and Communications

### *Advancement*

- Year-to-date Promise Fund balance (as of 8/30/2021) is \$24,707,827.56. Total amount paid out for Fiscal Years 2019, 2020, and 2021 is \$2,823,767.80.
- The Foundation welcomed three new board members at their September board meeting: Deirdre Manna, Sr. VP, Head of Government and Regulatory Relations from Zurich NA, Joe Martin, Senior Vice

President from Captive Resources, and Anthony Way, Sr. VP, Practice Leader from Assurance Agency.

- Harper College Alumni and Annual Giving departments will host the Alumni & Friends Social at Top Golf on Wednesday, September 29. Alumni and friends will enjoy two hours of golf and appetizers while meeting other Harper alumni and friends. For more information visit <https://www.harpercollege.edu/foundation/alumni>.
- Alumni and friends are invited to sign up and run, walk or jog in the Fifth Annual Alumni & Friends Virtual 5K event. Participants do a 5K on their own time and at their own pace, then share a photo and participation stats on social media and on the event website when finished. The event will take place from October 1 – 31 with sign up taking place all month. Visit <https://www.harpercollege.edu/foundation/alumni> to learn more.
- Harper College will honor five alumni through the Distinguished Alumni Awards program. The awards will be given at the Distinguished Alumni Awards Ceremony, which will be held in person at the Wojcik Conference Center on Tuesday, October 26, with an additional online option for Livestream viewing. Four alumni will be honored as the newest class of Distinguished Alumni and one alum will receive the Outstanding Recent Alumni Award, an award which honors an alumnus/alumna who attended Harper College in the previous 10 years and is making early impact and contributions in both career and community. The emcee for the evening will be Robin Turpin, 2009 Distinguished Alumna.
  - Outstanding Recent Alumni 2021
    - Roberto Lopez  
*Senior Associate, Technical Projects*  
Elevate Energy
  - Distinguished Alumni 2021
    - Erik Horvat  
*Managing Director & Head of Real Estate, Americas*  
Olayan America
    - James Macnider  
*Head Track and Field and Cross-Country Coach*  
Harper College
    - Dr. Christopher J. Schneider  
*Professor of Sociology*  
Brandon University
    - Joseph Sesso  
*Executive Director of Sales and Marketing & National Speaker*  
Homes.com

Register or learn more by visiting <https://www.harpercollege.edu/distinguishedalumni>.

### Community Relations

- Over the summer, Community Relations partnered with the Make Shop and Campus Recreation to offer enrichment activities to families in River Trails School District 26. Kristin Allen and Mallory Gargo from the Harper Library Make Shop created “Crafternoons,” where students of all ages participated in the virtual activities throughout June and July. Harper also provided supply kits for all the activities. On July 27, Beth Ripperger and Laura Crisman hosted the Harper Wellness Olympics. Families participated in a series of Summer Olympics-inspired wellness activities and learned about the eight dimensions of wellness.

- This fall, Community Relations participated in multiple back to school events and resource fairs including the Barrington Giving Day event in August. More than 200 families in the D220 community attended the event. The Barrington Giving Day organization provides families with school supplies, food, hygiene products, clothes, shoes and other personal items. Families also meet with community organizations to learn about the programs and resources available to them. This was Harper's third year participating in the event.
- In September, Harper representatives from Workforce Solutions attended the GOA Regional Business Association Business at the Ballpark 2021 Business Expo. More than 200 business leaders attended the annual event. Community relations also provided tote bags for the first 100 attendees. Amie Granger represents Harper on the GOA board of directors and is the chair elect.
- This month Jeff Julian, Amie Granger, Melissa McGregor and Vickie Burger attended the Schaumburg Business Association Good Morning Schaumburg 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary breakfast. Harper is a founding member of the Schaumburg Business Association and is a supporting sponsor of the Good Morning Schaumburg program. Laura Brown represents Harper on the SBA board of directors.

### Marketing Services

- The Web team collaborated with the English Department to publish the 2020-21 edition of *Point of View*, Harper College's award-winning arts and literary magazine, on the web. Faculty collaborated with the web team to add Alt text to help ensure accessibility for web visitors who may use text readers. This is part of the Web team's ongoing work to ensure the college's website meets and exceeds established accessibility and usability standards.

### Media Relations

- The *Daily Herald*, the *Phlebotomy Technician Program* blog and *Patch* ran a story about Harper student Arnetta Walker, an Igniting Paths to Success Scholarship recipient who enrolled in last spring's free Career Exploration course (funded by a Perkins Grant) and is now pursuing a credential in phlebotomy.
- A range of publications – including the *Daily Herald*, *National Cyber Security News Today*, the *Photography Jobs 61* blog and *Patch* – ran articles about the FAA selecting the Harper's Drone Technology and Applications certificate program for its Unmanned Aircraft Systems-Collegiate Training Initiative (UAS-CTI). The stories highlight the immediate success of the program as well as coordinator and professor Mukila Maitha and adjunct professor Richard Schultz. Student Angelica Avalos was also quoted in regard to how this program fits into her career goals.
- The *Daily Herald* ran a story about what area colleges are doing to encourage COVID-19 vaccinations and highlighted Harper's vaccine scholarships, clinics and access (via NCH on campus). Chief of Staff Jeff Julian was quoted about Harper's efforts.
- The *Hechinger Report* ran an opinion piece praising the One Million Degrees program and highlighting the success of Harper alumnus Edward Blanco (as well as his mentor, and Harper donor, Linda Kolbusz-Kosan). OMD, and its relationship to Harper, was also featured in a story run by local publication *The Beverly Review*.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* ran profiles of Dr. Tamara Johnson in conjunction with her new role as Harper's first VP of DEI.

- *Pioneer Press* and the *Chicago Tribune* ran stories about Harper Professor Emeritus Pascuala Herrera, related to her book, *Not Always a Valley of Tears*, and her advocacy for people with disabilities.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* ran pieces about Kelsey Lewis, Harper alumna and recent speaker at the Fall 2021 President's Address.
- Harper College was listed as the best community college in Illinois and one of the Top 100 community colleges in the nation (based on data from Niche) in dozens of publications, including *The Telegraph*.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* ran pieces about the Harper College Police Department joining the Major Case Assistance Team (MCAT), which supports police agencies in Chicago's northwest suburbs. Harper Chief of Police John Lawson was quoted about the decision.
- The *Daily Herald* listed Harper's September 10 virtual event with Dr. Nicole B. Simpson in a roundup of area commemorations of the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

## Legislative Affairs

- Governor Pritzker signed more than 600 bills from the spring session into legislative including [comprehensive clean energy legislation](#).
- The college continues to monitor the very active legislative session in Congress as numerous higher education initiatives gain momentum. The House Education and Labor Committee passed its budget reconciliation legislation that included:
  - Free community college tuition in participating states
  - Increase the Pell Grant maximum award
  - Eligibility for HEA Title IV student aid programs for undocumented students protected by DACA
  - Support efforts to increase student success and increase resources for workforce development programs
  - \$5 billion to expand registered apprenticeships
  - \$9 billion competitive grant program to states to increase student success
  - \$2 billion over four years for Community College Workforce Partnerships, a program similar to Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program
- Dr. Proctor and Chief of Staff Jeff Julian attended the Hoffman Estates Chamber of Commerce Illinois Legislative Virtual Update hearing from elected officials representing Harper College's district: Sen. Cristina Castro, Sen. Ann Gillespie, Sen. Dan McConchie, Rep. Tom Morrison and Sen. Laura Murphy.

## Strategic Alliances and Innovation

### Grants Office

- A presentation was conducted for the Social Justice Leadership Cohort around organizational design and shared governance at Harper and their impact on diversity, equity and inclusion. The group reviewed how the leadership structure has evolved over the past 15 years.
- Dr. Maria Coons, vice president of strategic alliances, represented Harper College during a tour of Wheeling High School's Manufacturing, Engineering, Technology and Trades Pathway organized by



the Statewide Latino Elected Coalition's Equity in Construction Jobs Committee. The tour was organized by Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioner Corral Sepúlveda and included State Senator Julie Morrison and Comptroller Susana Mendoza.

### Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered in spring 2021. Harper has administered the CCSSE every three years since 2006. CCSSE solicits student perspectives about institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and retention. The companion faculty survey, Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), was also administered in an effort to obtain the faculty's front-line view of students' engagement and information about their own activities in and outside of the classroom. Additionally, the college conducted the Race/Ethnicity Pilot Survey, which is a stand-alone online survey piloted spring 2021 to help colleges understand their students' experiences with racism, inclusion and belonging. The Office of Institutional Research will be partnering with groups across campus to comprehensively review the results from the CCSSE, CCFSSE and Race/Ethnicity Pilot to identify ways in which we can improve student engagement and provide optimal opportunities for positive student experiences at the college.
- The FY2022 College Plan has been published. This comprehensive document serves as a one-stop resource for information on the planning activities of the college including the President's Goals, Budget and Capital Plan, Strategic Plan, and Operational Plan.

### Workforce Solutions

- Harper participated in the Greater O'Hare Association Expo on September 9, 2021, with information about internships and the Job Placement Resource Center.
- Harper Business Solutions (HBS) supported both the business community and those in career transition during the month of August with a variety of activities including contract renewals for LinkedIn training with Business and Career Services at the American Jobs Center, communications webinars for the Village of Schaumburg, leadership training with GSF and leadership development training with ITW Shakeproof.

### In Memoriam

- Gerald Mellenthin passed away on August 28 at 92 years old. In 1971, he was hired as an assistant professor of data processing in the Business and Social Sciences division. He retired as a full professor in July 1995.
- Barbara "Bobbye" Levine passed away on September 2. She started her 15-year career at Harper in December 1978 as the correspondence secretary in the Publications/Admin Services division. In 1982, she became lead word processing operator in Business Services/Finance and worked there until she retired in June 1994.