



PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

February 2023

Dear Harper College Community:

The spring semester brings a plethora of rewarding advocacy and professional learning opportunities. These include the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Workforce Development Institute (WDI) in California, the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) National Legislative Summit and Community Colleges for International Development (CCID) National Conference in Washington, D.C. and Achieving the Dream's (ATD) DREAM 2023 National Conference in Chicago. As I traverse different time zones, I am definitely proud of our trustees who strongly advocated for our needs and our faculty and staff who shared their expertise with colleagues from around the globe. These scholarly exchanges continue to bolster the recognition of Harper College as a leader and an innovative community college at the national and international levels.

At WDI, I was able to share our institutional strategies on addressing Tight Markets and the Trades via our Business Strategy Team outcomes and our Innovation Accelerator. Further, our trustees' passion and clarity for community college priorities resonated on the Hill and strengthened relationships with our elected officials. We were able to reconnect with our longtime politicians in Congress, but we began developing new relationships including meeting with first-time Congresswoman Delia Ramirez, whose district includes Elk Grove Village and Mount Prospect, on the morning before she delivered the progressive Democrats' response to President Biden's State of the Union address. At CCID, we advanced the conversation around the critical role community colleges can play in international education. As board chair of CCID, I'm particularly delighted that we have many faculty and staff elevating our work that supports improved student success as a result of our international education program. Finally, a sizeable delegation of Harper faculty and staff is representing the college at DREAM in Chicago this week. Harper's ATD journey has been a significant part of our progress in closing equity gaps for our students. In addition to the rich learning opportunities offered at the conference, we will be awaiting the announcement of Leader Colleges, which is part of the conference's Recognition Luncheon. Harper was named an ATD Leader College of Distinction at the 2020 conference, and previously was recognized as a Leader College and the 2016 Leah Meyer Austin award winner. We remain hopeful to retain our Leader College of Distinction status.

Campus News . . .

[Student Success](#)

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

[Finance and Administrative Services](#)

[Advancement, Marketing and](#)

[Communications](#)

[Legislative Affairs](#)

[Strategic Alliances and Innovation](#)

[Planning, Research and Institutional](#)

[Effectiveness](#)

[Workforce Solutions](#)

Over the past few weeks, the college has hosted numerous events and programs in honor of Black History Month. I was particularly moved during our first ever Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration, especially by the words of civil rights activist JoAnne Bland. Ms. Bland delivered a powerful address to the Harper community recounting her many memories of living, suffering and leading during the civil rights movement. Ms. Bland equated the social justice movement to a puzzle, one that can't be completed without the participation of any one of us. "You are the most important piece," she told us. Truly inspirational words from one of the remaining living connectors to those harrowing and transformational events of the 1960s. As many of our civil rights leaders of the 60s depart this earth, I am grateful we were able to experience the rare opportunity to hear her voice on campus.

Student Success

Enrollment Services

- Admissions Outreach is ramping up for the spring recruiting season after wrapping up a successful fall. This spring we will be offering several on-campus and virtual events to engage and educate prospective students and applicants on the opportunities and benefits of enrolling at Harper.
 - New events include a Public Service Expo in late April and a Decision Day in early May to celebrate students' commitment to enrolling at Harper this summer or fall.
 - We are also excited to welcome back our local high school students and Northwest Educational Council for Student Success (NECSS) counselors in March and April for our Career Trek programs, which have not been offered on campus since 2018-19.
- We are excited to announce the pilot of our new Chatbot called Hawk Digital Assistant on the One Stop page, which will increase engagement with students and improve their overall experience. A Chatbot is a machine-operated service that acts like our live staff, helping visitors with their everyday queries. If a student says something which matches the bot's database, the bot returns an appropriate answer. We also added common questions at the start of an inquiry to help visitors navigate the Chatbot at a click of a button. Our Chatbot is fully integrated with our existing Salesforce live chat interface, allowing guests to switch seamlessly between a machine and human service. During the pilot, we will evaluate the Chatbot and make necessary adjustments to improve the student experience. If successful, we plan to expand the Chatbot in March to additional web pages, which will replace our current chat product. We want to recognize the team working on implementing and piloting the Chatbot.
 - Implementation Team: Sarah DeMay, Patrick Kelly, Michael Shaw, and Rebecca Suthers
 - Staff piloting Salesforce Chatbot/Live Chat: Bri Cepeda, Brian Collins, Jazmin Lupercio, Tatyana Polocki, and Reshma Valiyapurayil

Student Engagement

- The Student Activities Board hosted their first movie of the semester last month with *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*. Approximately 100 students and Harper community members enjoyed a night in the Performing Arts Center, viewing the film and making connections.
- Pool Party-Palooza: Over 250 students splashed into the start of the semester at a pool party sponsored by the Student Activities Board, the Buddy System, and the Health and Recreation Center at the end of January. Students competed in cannonball competitions, swimming races, and lounged in the water while meeting new students. Additionally, students were treated to pizza and beverages in Harper's wet classroom, connected to the pool.
- Volunteer Fair: Thirteen partners from the Harper Community gathered in the Avanté Concourse in January to talk with students about volunteer opportunities at their organizations. Students learned how they could give back to their community while gaining valuable skills.
- Club Expo: Over 40 student clubs and organizations took over the Avanté Concourse last month to share information about their group with students. The event featured giveaways, music from WHCM, and opportunities to connect with groups or one-on-one with the Buddy System.
- Freedom Summer: The Black Student Union and Student Engagement sponsored bringing Risking Everything: A Freedom Summer Exhibit to the Avanté Concourse for the Harper Community. This traveling exhibit features a series of moving images of the "Freedom Summer" in 1964 when a group of college students and volunteers from the North, along with Black Mississippians, risked their lives to overturn racist institutions by attempting to integrate Mississippi's segregated political system. These civil rights activists were met by extraordinary violence, including bombings, kidnapping, torture and murder. Much of this was



covered on national television and focused the country's attention on civil rights issues for the first time, spurring public outrage and leading to the U.S. Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Harper Wellness

- During Orientation Week, Harper Wellness hosted a self-care workshop for employees to discuss wellness goal setting and implementation for the new year. Twenty employees were in attendance.

Student Affairs

- In fall 2022, Harper faculty issued almost 3,300 Kudos, which is the sending of positive encouragement and recognition to their students. In fact, of all early alert tracking items raised during the fall semester, over half were Kudos. Early assessment of fall 2022 to spring 2023 persistence rates shows that students who received Kudos from faculty have an eight-percentage point increase in persistence rates as compared to similarly matched students who did not receive a faculty issued Kudos.
- In the month of January, Advising (Center for New Students and Orientation/Women's Program and Advising Services/One Million Degrees) served students in the form of 2,404 student appointments. The advising centers took a combined total of 6,187 phone calls.
- Advisors welcome their students each semester by sending out communication reminding them about important support resources and encouraging them to check-in when needed as well as the importance of building an educational plan and how to schedule an appointment. This communication will result in 16,000+ total notes to students being sent out by the end of week four. Advisors are also working on outreach to 500 students with an at-risk persistence indicator, while balancing appointments and instructor flags as well.

Performing Arts

- At the beginning of this month, Kevin Long, associate professor, Liberal Arts-Theatre, held a high school outreach program he calls "Inside the Rehearsal Room at Harper College." Eighteen to twenty students from Palatine and Fremd High School participated in this inaugural event. Professor Long toured the students through our theatre spaces and provided a pizza dinner for the students and their teachers. Afterwards, they watched as he and the company of our upcoming spring show *Lettie* shared their work. This event provided hopeful future Harper theatre students a true "behind the scenes" view of theatre-making a one-of-a-kind evening of creativity, discussion, and theatre.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion hosted a successful Equity Dialogues lunch during Orientation Week. More than 150 faculty and staff participated in roundtable discussions focused on "What does it mean to have an equity mindset?". Special thanks to the faculty and staff facilitators that participated in a three-hour training to prepare them to lead the dialogues.
- The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion held an inaugural celebration in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in January. The keynote speaker was Ms. JoAnne Bland, civil rights activist, and the program included a liturgical dance, spoken word and various roles for students, faculty, staff and administrators. A reception followed the celebration, which included authentic soul food. Our sincere thanks to all those that attended, volunteered and participated in the program.
- We extend our appreciation to Matt McLaughlin for creating a Starfish report for Guiding Learners to Intentionally Develop Efficacy (GLIDE), our Latinx and Black student peer mentoring program. Initial results



were very promising, including that 84% of GLIDE students earned a 2.0 or higher GPA and as of the beginning of January, 86% of GLIDE students had registered for spring 2023 courses.

- Dr. Johnson was appointed to serve as Senior-Level Professionals Liaison on the NASPA Region IV-East Advisory board for 2023-2025. In this role, she will serve as the voice for senior-level professionals throughout the region and present their suggestions to the Executive Board.

Finance and Administrative Services

Facilities Management

- The scope of work for the Business and Social Science Center (Buildings I and J) will include replacement of the existing facilities for the Business Programs, Social Science Programs, select Career and Technical Programs, and may include additional programs such as Fast Track, Child Care Center, Regional Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center, the Small Business Development Center, the Drone Program, and the Cannabis Lab. User input group meetings are continuing. The program analysis phase is currently scheduled to be presented to the Board of Trustees in June 2023 for approval.
- The scope of work for the Emergency Services Training Center Study will include architectural and engineering services required for the program analysis. This will include the project scope of work to form a complete basis for the project design, including field verification, construction options, site analysis, cost estimate and project timeline. The program analysis was presented in February 2023 at the Committee of the Whole.

Information Technology

- The Chief Information Officer is working with the Technology Shared Governance Committee in preparing the IT strategic plan survey that will be sent out to employees and students.
- The IT Prioritization governance model has been developed and implemented. Three projects moved through the prioritization process and approved by the Executive Cabinet.

Risk Management

- Incident Command training is scheduled for February 21.
- The campus wide fire alarm testing has been completed.
- Eye wash stations across campus have been upgraded, tested, and are in compliance with ANSI and OSHA standards.

Advancement, Marketing and Communications

Advancement

- The Harper College Alumni Program kicked off its annual Alumni Virtual Mentoring program at the beginning of February. The program gives students and recent alumni a chance to connect with a Virtual Mentor from Harper College's Distinguished Alumni. The program gives mentees the opportunity to seek career guidance, ask questions, and learn from Harper College alumni. Visit harpercollege.edu/alumni to learn more.



- The Alumni Program will host an “Alumni and Friends Social at Top Golf” for Harper College alumni in March at Top Golf in Schaumburg. Alumni will have the opportunity to connect with fellow alumni and Harper College while enjoying two hours of golf and appetizers.
- Next month, Harper Alumni Relations in partnership with Student Engagement and the Job Placement Resource Center will host Career Connections with Harper Alumni. The program, which is open to all Harper students, features alumni speakers in panel discussions, professional development opportunities such as a Professional Leadership Dinner, and networking with Harper College Alumni.

Community Relations

- This past month, Community Relations participated in two college and career nights at Grove and Holmes Junior Highs in Community Consolidated School District 59 (CCSD59). Participants from local businesses, community organizations and various career areas answered questions about their fields. Students were able to speak with a Harper representative about preparing for college. Harper alum and University Center student Eliza Ferstein spoke to students about her experience as a Promise scholar and choosing to complete her bachelor’s in communications with DePaul University through the University Center.
- In January, more than 100 fifth grade students from CCSD59 visited Harper as part of their talent development program. Students gathered in the Wojcik Amphitheatre to hear from representatives of the Des Plaines Library, Arlington Heights Police Department, and Elk Grove Fire Department as part of their problem-based learning project. The students will use the information they gathered and develop solutions that they will share with the organizations.

Marketing Services

- Marketing Services collaborated with Harper Hawks Athletics to produce a commemorative poster honoring the national champion cross country team. Mike Hubatch photographed the team, Donna Racher-Cazares designed the poster, and Epifanio Perez coordinated the printing.



Media Relations

- The *Journal & Topics* newspapers, *Daily Herald*, and *Patch* featured articles about Dr. Rabia Ali, Harper’s Fulbright Scholar in Residence for the spring 2023 semester.



- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* ran stories previewing Harper's first Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, featuring civil rights activist JoAnne Bland.
- SHRM, the Society for Human Resource Management, highlighted Harper's apprenticeship program with Zurich North America in an article about how community colleges are partnering with businesses.
- The *Daily Herald*, *Journal & Topics* newspapers, and *Patch* published pieces about Harper's Spring Film Series, running from January through May.
- The *Journal & Topics* newspapers, *Daily Herald*, and *Patch* ran pieces about Harper's Valentine's Day blood drives in February.
- WBBM Radio highlighted Harper as one of the recipients of the Illinois Board of Higher Education Nursing School Grant Program, set to improve access and training for nursing students.
- The *Chicago Reader* included WHCM, Harper College Radio, as one of five finalists for "Best Overall Radio Station" in its Best of Chicago online poll.
- The *Daily Herald* published a profile of high school student Madelin Luna, who has found success taking Harper classes via District 214's Middle College Program and plans to attend Harper full-time next school year in the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program.
- *Utah Business* published a release spotlighting Harper's enrollment successes with personalization software from Utah-based technology start-up Halda Inc.

Legislative Affairs

- Dr. Proctor, Vice Chair Bill Kelley, Trustee Herb Johnson, Student Trustee Maricarmen Gonzalez and Jeff Julian, chief of staff, attended the ACCT Community College National Legislative Summit 2023 in Washington, D.C., where they met with Harper's federal elected officials. The team advocated for national and local priorities including short-term Pell for programs with 150 clock hours, a community college job training program similar to the TAACCCT grants, and a permanent legislative solution to support undocumented and DACA students, apprenticeships, basic needs support, community project funding and more.

The college delegation held an incredibly productive meeting with the Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education with Assistant Secretary Amy Loyd and Noah Brown, senior advisor for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), where they discussed Secretary Cardona's "Raise the Bar" initiative and the important role community colleges play in our country's global competitiveness. Additionally, the team met with Representatives Raja Krishnamoorthi and Delia Ramirez as well as meeting with legislative staff members from the offices of Representative Mike Quigley and Senators Tammy Duckworth and Dick Durbin. The Illinois delegation of trustees, presidents and institutional legislative affairs representatives also met with Senators Duckworth and Durbin. Finally, Dr. Proctor conducted interview meetings with the Chronicle of Higher Education, Community College Daily, and Inside Higher Education.



Strategic Alliances and Innovation

Grants Office

- In January, Harper was awarded a total of \$17,500 from the Nuts, Bolts, and Thingamajigs Foundation to support summer camps for middle and high school students, including Girls in Engineering, the Vex Robot Olympics, and Programming Self-Driving Cars.
- The Innovation Accelerator is focused on the development of Cybersecurity and Artificial Intelligence programs. For the development of these programs, the nationally recognized Business and Industry Leadership team (BILT) advisory council model will be piloted. The Innovation Accelerator is hosting two informational sessions on February 28. There will be a breakfast session for regional business and industry leaders and others interested in learning about the BILT model and a lunch session for Harper employees. The primary guest speaker at both events is Dr. Ann Beheler, Principal Investigator of the National Science Foundation National Convergence Technology Center where she developed the BILT model. She has helped colleges and universities across the country implement BILTs.
- The Innovation Accelerator is leading Harper's participation in the American Association of Community College's (AACC) Artificial Intelligence (AI) Incubator Network funded by Dell and Intel. We now have four Community Education (CE) and Continuing Professional Education (CPE) instructors who are certified as Lead Facilitators for Intel's AI for Workforce program which allows them to deliver Intel-developed content to our students and provide train-the-trainer sessions for Harper faculty and instructors interested in using this content in their courses. These sessions and other AI integration workshops are expected to be offered late spring. As a part of this network, the Innovation Accelerator is coordinating the creation of a dedicated AI Lab that will have state-of-the-art equipment, online tools and local PC tools, and AI robots for students to actively learn AI concepts, develop AI applications, and analyze real-world problems related to AI.
- The Innovation Accelerator has collaborated with CE and CPE to develop and offer four courses in emerging technologies, including an Artificial Intelligence Awareness course, Artificial Intelligence Foundations I and II courses, and an Exploring Emerging Technologies course. Classes are being offered this spring and enrollment is growing.

Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- The Office of Institutional Research has developed a Harper College Profile infographic to provide a visual picture of the main facts about Harper's students, employees, and the communities served. For example, in fiscal year 2021-22 Harper served nearly 30,000 students through credit and non-credit offerings, awarded more than 4,000 credentials, and disbursed \$41 million dollars in scholarships, grants, and tuition waivers to more than 13,000 students.
- The Office of Outcomes Assessment and the Learning Assessment Committee are collaborating with faculty to conduct assessments of two general education outcomes this spring. The first is a large-scale assessment of Critical Thinking - Use evidence to develop arguments, make decisions, and evaluate outcomes. Courses mapped to the Critical Thinking outcome with a relatively large percentage of students with 45+ credit hours were selected for this assessment. The second assessment is a follow-up assessment of Information Literacy - Apply a variety of credible sources to support a given topic. Follow-up assessments are conducted three years after the full-scale assessment and include courses from the original assessment. Artifacts will be collected at the end of the spring semester with scoring and analysis of results to occur during the summer.



- Harper is sending a large contingent to DREAM 2023, the annual meeting of Achieving the Dream. Attendees include those leading the strategic plan efforts on campus such as strategic plan goal leaders, goal team members, as well as faculty and staff representing various areas of the college. DREAM 2023 is being held in Chicago this month with the themes of access, mobility, momentum, and community impact.

Workforce Solutions

- Last fall at the Unique Venues Annual Members Conference, the Wojcik Conference Center (WCC) was voted as a 2022 Unique Venues Planner's Choice Award Runner Up. The WCC is officially an award-winning venue within the hospitality industry in the High-Tech Venue category. This award positions the WCC to shine its light for event planners and industry peers. This recognition runs from January 2023 through December 2023.
- For the past several years, the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Harper and its partners have increased efforts to attract Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) clients. As a result of these efforts, 43% of clients that used SBDC services in CY 2022 were MBEs. This is up from 23% in 2019, 28% in 2020, and 30% in 2021.
- Dexter Magnetic Technology from Elk Grove Village is our new employer partner for CNC Precision Machining Program. They have signed the agreement to participate in our apprenticeship program and will be hiring two candidates for the CNC apprenticeship program in the fall.

In Memoriam

- [Jeff Butzen](#), a board member for Excel Beyond 211, passed away on February 5. Jeff taught GED Math at Harper College through Partners for Our Communities (POC) Community Resource Center. He is also remembered for his "Tips and Timelines" that he would email to EB211 mentors each month.