



## PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

March/April 2023

Dear Harper College Community:

We have been very busy since the last time I provided an update to you in February. I am pleased to share our many accomplishments and good news from the remainder of February, March and part of April.

First, our students continue to showcase their talents and earn national recognition. Our Speech and Debate team are national champions after competing at the 2023 Phi Rho Pi National Tournament in Bethesda, Maryland. Many thanks to their faculty coaches - Professors Jeff Przybylo, Margaret Bilos, Bill Lucio and Miguel Melgar. I was also honored to accompany Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) student, Emily Alvia, who was recognized as a 2023 Coca-Cola New Century Transfer Pathway Scholar at AACC's annual convention in Colorado. We are Harper Proud of their accomplishments and wish them continued success!

On to employee accolades, Karega Cooper, Sue Egan, Esmeralda Guerrero Lopez, Dr. Stephanie Horton and Sean Warren-Crouch were recognized for Excellence at the League of Innovation Conference. Also, Jeff Julian is now president of NCMPR for the 2023-24 year. Finally, Dr. Tamara Johnson and Jeff Julian have been selected to participate in the 2023-24 Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship Program! This is a prestigious fellowship that prepares the next generation of community college presidents to transform institutions and achieve higher and more equitable levels of student success.

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At the institutional level, in addition to our recent recognition as a Leader College of Distinction, Achieving the Dream (ATD) named Harper College as part of its inaugural ATD Community Vibrancy cohort. We will be one of 17 network institutions to test new tools and training materials which help us address inequities on campus and in our community. I am proud of our inclusion in this cohort and believe it complements our strategic priorities and our You Matter, We Care SOAR Framework that grounds our institutional effectiveness measures.

Regarding the national landscape for our sector, I traveled to Denver, Colorado, to attend the Higher Education Research and Development Institute (HERDI) conference and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) national conference. Attending HERDI and AACC, I provide timely feedback on emerging technologies needed for higher education and present on strategies we're implementing at Harper to impact student, employee and organizational success. I was fortunate to share insights as a panelist on "The President's Role in Student Success" to New CEO Academy participants. I also presented with Dr. Karen Stout and Dr. Mike Flores on the strategies we employed as recipients of MacKenzie Scott gifts and participated in a Community College Voice podcast on this topic. Harper team members also presented at AACC, including Dr. Tamara Johnson and Dr. Markenya Williams on our JEDI Fellows program, and myself, Dr. Maria Coons, Jeff

Julian, and Christopher Maxwell, associate dean of students, shared how the college's transportation initiatives benefit our students.

Our focus on strengthening relationships with local elected officials continued during this period as well as we met with the Village of Arlington Heights team to discuss partnership opportunities, including how the college and village might collaborate on education and training needs as well as on workforce and economic development as the Bears stadium project unfolds. I also met with Congressman Mike Quigley, whose district represents a sizable portion of the Harper College district. Congressman Quigley toured the simulation hospital, surgical technology suite and dental hygiene clinic and met with six health careers students to learn more about their educational journeys. Congressman Quigley, who attended community college, has asked me to articulate how community colleges can be better supported by the federal government so he can share with President Biden. During the latter part of April, I also met with State Senator Dan McConchie, whose district includes all or parts of Algonquin, Barrington, North Barrington, Palatine, Port Barrington, Rolling Meadows, Schaumburg, and South Barrington. Additionally, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi will be on campus for a check presentation to recognize the \$500,000 grant he garnered for the college's aviation programming. This event will include an aviation roundtable with experts to discuss the impact community colleges can have on the aviation industry.

As part of our continued commitment to risk management, senior leaders at the college participated in Incident Command System training led by Tony Butler, director of risk management. In addition to reviewing the National Incident Management System and Incident Command System structure, leaders also worked together to address emergency scenarios. Our team is committed to the safety and security of Harper College; we will continue to train in this manner, including completing online training modules as well as establishing a regular cadence of table-tops and drills.

We also hosted our third annual Professional Development Day with the theme "Listen, Learn, Lead: Building our Toolbox for a More Inclusive Campus." Our employees embraced the opportunity to devote a whole day toward professional learning and growth attending the inspiring keynote from Dr. Jenn Fry as well as taking advantage of the numerous breakout sessions, an equity dialogue luncheon on the importance of racial equity, and opportunities for time to focus on other required trainings such as sexual harassment awareness. I am grateful to the Board of Trustees for supporting us as we provide time, space and resources for our employees to better themselves professionally and personally.

Finally, we celebrated Women's History Month and Disability Awareness Month with activities and events on campus. Our teams always ensure that our students and employees have many opportunities to learn and celebrate the important contributors to our country, especially those women and disabilities advocates whose scholarship and professional endeavors have helped improve our society.



## Student Success

### *Advising*

- Advising Outreach for February through March
  - Advising Services (CNSO/Women's Program and Advising Services/OMD) served students with the following:
    - Student appointments conducted: 3,470
    - Received and supported 8,037 student phone calls
- Differentiated Care Communication Plan Updates
  - Advisors sent out a total of 7,923 notes encouraging students to create their Educational Plan and shared an uplifting communication to students who already had completed this critical step in their academic journey.
  - Our Advising student aides also conducted outreach to provide support and resources for new and at-risk students.
    - A total of 153 students were contacted within this demographic with a 39% live contact rate during this initiative.
    - Academic advisors supplemented this outreach by sending out 5,431 emails sharing important information about resources that can be utilized at Harper.
  - Advisors proactively supported summer and fall 2023 registration goals by sending over 6,660 notes to students to encourage them to get ready for registration and to schedule an appointment for any academic planning needs.
- Impact on Persistence with Differentiated Care Communication Model
  - Persistence probability shows that for students who can connect with an advisor during our week 6/7 outreach, there was a 30% Student Network of Analytics Persistence Prediction (SNAPP) score increase, whereas those who did not connect with an advisor had a 13% score increase.

### *Career and Technical*

- Dr. Jan Roy and students from the Food Service Management Program attended an open house event at Niles West High School. Attendees were able to speak with current students and receive information about the program.
- In partnership with the Graphic Arts Department, led by Professors Kelly Taylor and Patricia Bruner, HP hosted a luncheon for HP employers. The goal was to provide employers with more information and to increase awareness about program and apprenticeship opportunities at Harper College.
- In April, Dr. Frank Trost, program coordinator for the department of Law Enforcement and Justice, hosted an open house/employment event. Thirty-nine law enforcement agencies were present. The well-attended event included current and former students who received great information about available careers and internship opportunities.

### *Enrollment Services*

- Last month, Admissions Outreach hosted approximately 240 high school students for Career Treks – Health Science event. The event provided high school students with the opportunity to learn more about our Health Science Career Programs. High school students heard directly from health science faculty and students about our curriculum and occupational opportunities.
- Also in March, the Project Achievement, Surpassing Obstacles (PASO) team hosted the virtual event – Surpassing Obstacles. Fifteen Latinx students and their families learned about the following services and resources and ways these could help a student be successful in college:



- Access and Disability Services
  - Academic Support Center
  - Undocumented Resource Center
  - Women’s Program
  - ESL and ENG 101-080 ESP
  - Foundation for Allies of Undocumented, Non-citizen, and DACA Students (FAUNDS)
  - Latinos Unidos
- This month, Admissions Outreach partnered with Community Education and Marketing Services to host the event – Career Forward. Career Forward provided an evening of motivation and inspiration for adults looking to restart, refresh or reinvigorate their careers. The event included a series of workshops as well as the opportunity for individuals to connect with our faculty and staff via information tables. Approximately 75 people attended.
  - Customer Relationship Management and One Stop
    - Salesforce
      - We have launched our new Chatbot, Hawk Digital Assistant, on the Harper website, including the home page. Hawk Digital Assistant replaced our old live chat product and will be available for students 24/7. Our Chatbot fully integrates our existing Salesforce program allowing guests to switch seamlessly between a machine and human service, providing a more engaging student experience. During our pilot in March, we processed 190 chats via our Salesforce Chatbot/Live Chat, in which most questions focused on applying to Harper and registrations.
      - We have completed the integration of our biographical, application and checklist items with Banner and Salesforce, which allows data to flow between the two systems. Frontline staff will have visibility to essential information in one system versus moving between two systems. Additionally, we can leverage the data to segment and automate student communications. We are integrating our financial aid data, scheduled to be completed by the end of the spring.
    - One Stop
      - The One Stop processed 7,657 inbound contacts in March. We received 3,943 phone calls, 2,468 emails, 617 in-person visits, and 629 live chats.

### *Health Careers*

- Students from four Health Career Programs participated in Harper’s first ever Interprofessional Simulation Day earlier this month. There were 35 students from Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA), Nursing (NUR), Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), and the Dietetic Internship Programs who came together to take care of a simulated patient who had suffered a stroke. They engaged in interprofessional huddles, learned about each other’s roles and responsibilities, worked on interprofessional communication techniques, and worked to strengthen their own identities as health care team members. The students reported that they now feel more confident participating as part of a health care team and communicating with members of other professions due to the experience and the support they received from their peers.

### *Student Engagement*

- Last month, Harper Wellness and the Harper College Nutrition Department held its first annual Nutrition/Wellness Fair. The fair featured a variety of nutrition booths where participants could learn more about their nutrition and ask questions about their health and wellness. This opportunity allowed the current Harper College dietetic interns to receive hands-on practice during the event and utilize the information they are learning in class and in their internships. More than 80 faculty, staff, and students participated in the event. Of those who completed the post-survey, 67.5% of participants strongly agreed that they understood how and why their bodies worked and how certain behaviors may have a positive and negative effect on the body because of the event.



- Fresh Check Day occurred in March, which was an uplifting mental health awareness and suicide prevention event for college students. A variety of interactive booths were present and operated by different student organizations and campus departments. Each booth touched on a different aspect of mental health. Over 200 students attended the event. Of the 151 students who completed the post-survey, 72.4% of students mentioned that they felt much more aware of the mental health resources available to them, 63.8% mentioned that they were much more likely to ask for help if they are experiencing distress, and 61.2% mentioned that they felt much more comfortable talking about mental health and suicide after participating in the event.
- In Athletics, the men's and women's track and field teams are having a successful season so far. The women's track and field team is currently ranked #1 in the nation with several runners leading the nation in numerous events. Samira Rosenfeld leads the nation in 100m hurdles, 400m hurdles, and high jump. Lilly Alberts is the national leader for 400m and 800m. Arianna Teichman leads the nation with 34.94m in hammer throw. Women's 4x400 relay also leads the nation. The men's track and field team is currently ranked #4 in the nation. Albert Szewczyk leads the nation with 10,000m event. U.S. Track and Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association selected Lilly Alberts as the National Athlete of the Week for NJCAA Division 3.

#### *Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa (PTK)*

- At the end of February, honors students presented at the Honors Council of the Illinois Region Student Symposium in Godfrey, Illinois.
  - Emily Laffey won first place in the presentation competition for her paper on Kimberlé Crenshaw and intersectionality.
  - Allison Mirczuk won first place in the poster competition for her poster on preventing bird death in Illinois.
  - Lydia Schultz won an honorable mention for her presentation on being a mindful traveler.
  - Varshitha Akella and Emily Alvia presented on the importance of interdisciplinary curriculum.
  - Sophia Porges presented on environmental effects of the cannabis industry in Illinois.
- Earlier this month, Emily Alvia was honored as a New Century Scholar at the Phi Theta Kappa Presidents' Breakfast in Denver, Colorado.
- PTK officers Varshitha Akella, Emily Alvia, Sonia Ajakaiye, and Faith Laldinpuii spoke at the spring Induction Ceremony, where 70 new chapter members were inducted.

#### *Interdisciplinary Programs*

- Embedding advisors in sections of First Year Seminar during the fall 2022 semester led to a 12.9% increase in students connecting with their academic advisor to create their educational plan. Source: Degree Works and SARS.
- Students successfully completed Social Justice Studies (SJS) sections of ENG 101, DIV 101, SOC 101, PHI 105, and BIO 120 at a rate of 88% compared to 69% for non-SJS sections. In addition, the equity gap for SJS sections was 3% compared to 11% for non-SJS sections. \*African American student success not included due to small sample size. Source: Grades Dashboard

#### *Student Success*

- Created a new webpart for students on the MyHarper Portal called "My Support Network." This area provides a link for students to be taken to a personalized page that contains the group of faculty and staff that the student has a relationship with at Harper. For each role, students are presented with the employee's name, picture, email, and phone number. Resources for Counseling Services, Hawks Care, Student Engagement, the Library, and the One Stop Center are also included.



## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Our first International Women's Day lunch celebration, "Magnitude and Bond," attracted approximately 90 faculty, staff, and students from across the college. This program featured poetry by Michelle Mabry from Facilities, a reflection by Dr. Alina Pajtek, Liberal Arts Professor, and keynote speaker, April Wells, a local author and consultant.
- In collaboration with Academic Affairs and the Office of the President, the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) facilitated the second of three Equity Dialogue sessions. The focus on this dialogue was, "Why is racial equity particularly important?." Over 150 faculty and staff participated.
- Earlier this month, Drs. Tamara Johnson and Markenya Williams presented at the AACCC Conference in Denver, Colorado. Their presentation was titled, "Promoting Faculty Development: The JEDI Fellowship."
- Dr. Alina Pajtek presented at Professional Development Day on the topic, "Whose Culture is (Our) Institutional Culture?."
- In April, Dr. Tamara Johnson presented at the Faculty Women of Color Conference in Arlington, Virginia. Dr. Johnson's presentation was titled "From Faculty to Administration: Assessing Your Skills and Gaining Relevant Experiences."
- Employee Resource Groups (ERG)
  - LAND (Learning About Abilities, Not Disabilities), the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Access and Disabilities (ADS) Success Club, and SJS co-sponsored the movie screening for *Crip Camp*, a film about how a group of disabled teenagers who connected at camp went on to launch a national movement for disability rights in America. Approximately 20 students, faculty and staff attended this program.
  - LAND is partnering with Transition Autism Program (TAP), ADS, and SJS to support the movie screening of *In a Different Key*. The film screening will be later this month in J Theater. The film is about a mother who tracks down the first person ever diagnosed with autism, now an elderly man in rural Mississippi, to learn if his life story holds promise for her own autistic son - a true story of love, autism and the fight to belong.
  - SAFE (Staff Administrators and Faculty for Equality) members Sean Warren-Crouch (He/Him) and Joe Scrima (He/Him) presented at Professional Development Day on the topic of Prioritizing Pronouns and Chosen Names. The session included the importance of using a person's correct pronouns and names and how we at Harper are implementing policies around this.
  - DREAM (Diverse Relationships Engaged in Affirming Multiculturalism) members held their annual Mentor celebration with a panel of employees sharing their stories. Professor Karega Cooper, Chris Candelas and Professor Bhasker Moorthy played key roles in leading, facilitating and sharing the historical background of DREAM.

## Finance and Administrative Services

### *Facilities Management*

- Design development of the Canning Center is going to the April Board meeting. An updated cost estimate will be completed at the end of April. Design development is going to the Capital Development Board in early May.



- The Business and Social Sciences Center (Buildings I and J) is wrapping up the proposed program for a recommendation to the Executive Cabinet. The steering committee will review the final proposed program for recommendation to the Executive Cabinet and will present it to the group later this semester. The months of April and May will consist of negotiations for the balance of the architectural/engineering consulting fees.

#### *Information Technology*

- In March, a survey was conducted to gather the opinions of employees and students on the Technology Strategic Plan. Using the results of the survey, the Chief Information Officer (CIO) is collaborating with the Technology Shared Governance Committee to develop a comprehensive Technology Strategic Plan. A draft of the plan will be shared with the college community by the end of April to gather valuable input to improve its effectiveness. The draft will also be reviewed by Gartner, a respected IT research and advisory firm, for their expert insights. After considering feedback from both Gartner, the college community and the Board, a final Technology Strategic Plan will be prepared and presented to the Board in August.

#### *Human Resources*

- In March, Beverly Riley, Helen Oh and Amanda Duval presented the success of Growing@Harper at the League of Innovations conference in Tempe, Arizona. Their presentation was well received.
- In April, we held the third annual Professional Development Day. For the keynote speaker, we had over 180 in-person attendees and over 200 online. It was a wonderful day of learning, laughter and camaraderie. We had a great keynote speaker, a packed room for Equity Dialogues and a showcase of the great talent that we have in our employees across campus and their willingness to share.
- Also in April, we hosted a Search Onboard Advance Realize (SOAR) session that brought 25 new employees together to gain a sense of campus operations. While building relationships, the new employees also learned about our core values.
- In April, the Supervising@Harper sessions started its second round of presentations. This round, we will be recording the sessions so they can be posted to the professional development page for easy access.

#### *Harper College Police*

- HCPD honored Harper College students with the first-ever Citizen's Letter of Appreciation because of their immediate response to an emergency in class. See the Daily Herald article [here](#).

#### *Risk Management*

- The Dispatch Center radio upgrades and cybersecurity insurance review were completed.

### **Advancement, Marketing and Communications**

#### *Advancement*

- The Harper College Educational Foundation will host its 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing at the Inverness Golf Club on Monday, June 12. Proceeds from this tournament support student scholarships and emerging educational initiatives at Harper College. To date, the Foundation has secured \$118,000 in student support for this year's outing.
- The nursing faculty and students created the Student Nursing Association Endowed Scholarship for Service Experience this month. The scholarship supports nursing students who wish to pursue service experiences that will enhance their multicultural literacy. The fund was created through the generosity of



the Student Nursing Association who dedicated the proceeds of their transfer fairs to the creation of the scholarship.

- As of the end of March, the Foundation is 99% to its \$30 million Inspire Campaign fundraising goal. Forty-five new scholarships have been created during the campaign. The campaign is scheduled to end in June 2024.
- In March, Harper Alumni Relations partnered with Student Engagement and the Job Placement Resource Center to host Career Connections with Harper Alumni. The program featured alumni on panels discussing topics such as leadership, transferring and career readiness. The program also included a Professional Leadership Dinner where nearly 100 students participated in the events over the course of two days and the program had close to 30 alumni participants.
- The HOPE Giving Circle at Harper College hosted its annual Women at the Table panel discussion event featuring female leaders in the fields of STEM in March. Over 50 women came together to attend the event which focused on women's leadership. HOPE will award five \$10,000 scholarships for the 2023-24 academic year – an expansion from the four scholarships given on an annual basis.
- The Foundation hosted the Realizing Dreams Brunch in April. Over 175 students and donors signed up to attend this annual event that pairs scholarship recipients with donors. As of the end of March, over \$4 million in scholarships and awards have been awarded to Harper College students.

#### *Community Relations*

- In early March, Harper participated in the STEAM Fair hosted by Olive-Mary Stitt Elementary School in Arlington Heights. More than 400 families participated in activities throughout the event. Harper Wellness, Community Relations and the Library Make Shop all hosted activities.
- In mid-March, Harper hosted an information table at the Elk Grove Village Mayor's Luncheon. Attendees received information about summer programs, Harper's business services and opportunities for adult students. Multiple Harper representatives also attended the annual event to learn about new village projects and milestones from the past year.
- It is never too early for young students to start exploring career interests and educational opportunities. Last month, Sandburg Junior High in Rolling Meadows hosted their annual WOW Day for students to learn about different career paths. Reyna Espinoza and Amie Granger talked to students about Harper's career programs, scholarships and planning for college.

#### *Marketing Services*

- Harper College received the following recognition in the 38<sup>th</sup> annual Educational Advertising Awards announced at the beginning of March:
  - Bronze: Digital Video Ad-More than 2 minutes, Harper College Mass Communication Program
  - Merit: Digital Video Ad-More than 2 minutes, Harper College Early Childhood Education Program
  - Gold: Integrated Marketing Campaign, Destination Harper
  - Silver: Website, Harper College "Visit Harper" Landing Page
  - Merit: Website, "Paying for College" Landing Page
- Web content manager Patrick Kelly presented "Quick Launching a Career Site with Pathways, Student Workers, and AI" at the Modern Campus Conference in early March.





- The latest data for [harpercollege.edu](http://harpercollege.edu) indicates the growing trend of users bypassing the college's home page, using Google and site search to go directly to the content they seek. This speaks to the continued importance of content marketing and search engine optimization to serve web visitors.
  - Percentage of users bypassing Harper's homepage by year:
    - 2018 - 53%
    - 2019 - 57%
    - 2020 - 58%
    - 2021 - 62%
    - 2022 - 72%

### Media Relations

- *Diverse Issues in Higher Education, Educational Trends, Journal & Topics* and more publications reported on Harper's recertification as an Achieving the Dream Leader College of Distinction and the college's focus on equitable outcomes for students.
- *The Daily Herald* published a front-page report about increasing enrollment numbers at Harper and other Illinois community colleges. The story included a photo of a Harper classroom and observations from Bob Parzy, associate provost of Enrollment Services.
- *The Daily Herald* and *Patch* posted articles about Harper's University Center and its new offerings – an MBA and two new majors – in partnership with Roosevelt University.
- *The Daily Herald, Journal & Topics* and *Patch* ran pieces previewing Harper's Career Forward Event, including quotes from keynote presenter Dr. Sean Bailey.
- *The Daily Herald, Journal & Topics* and *Patch* ran articles about Harper students being honored for their emergency response when an instructor collapsed in class.
- *The Daily Herald, Journal & Topics* and *Patch* ran stories about the second year of the Community Innovation Fund Grant Program.
- *The Daily Herald* and *Patch* published articles about the Harper College Police Department becoming the second community college police force to receive the Illinois Law Enforcement Accreditation Program (ILEAP) accreditation.
- *The Daily Herald* posted a piece about Dr. Avis Proctor delivering the keynote address at this year's Barrington Area Development Council's annual dinner and awards ceremony.
- *The Daily Herald* and *Journal & Topics* ran an article about WHCM, Harper College Radio, being named the best community college station by the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System.
- *Crain's Chicago Business* ran a story about Harper's role in District 214's Career Pathways program.
- *The Daily Herald* and *Women Daily Magazine* published stories about Harper's GLIDE mentor program.
- *The Daily Herald, Journal & Topics* and *Patch* ran stories about Harper maintaining the top Aaa bond rating from Moody's.



- *The Daily Herald* wrote about Harper's forthcoming Canning Center and capital projects that have been impacted by inflation.
- *The Daily Herald* and *Patch* published articles about Harper's InZone summer camp and the benefits of the camp's offerings for young learners.
- *Community College Daily* and the U.S. Department of Labor published posts highlighting Harper as one of the 15 institutions receiving the Strengthening Community Colleges Federal grant.
- *Community College Daily*, *Journal & Topics* and *Patch* ran pieces announcing that Jeff Julian, Harper's chief of staff, was installed as the president of National Council for Marketing & Public Relations.
- ICCB's February and March newsletters included photos of Harper's GLIDE program mentors and mentees and Fulbright Scholar in Resident Dr. Rabia Ali as well as a link to a *Daily Herald* report about Harper's ECACE grant for early childhood education students.
- *The Daily Herald* and *Patch* published stories previewing STEAM Fair 2023, Disability Awareness Month and Fresh Check Day, and playwright Boo Killebrew's visit to Harper, in conjunction with the Harper College Theater Ensemble's presentation of her play, *Lettie*.

## Legislative Affairs

- In March, the College completed three applications for federal funding through the Community Project and Congressionally Directed Spending processes. Requests submitted were for funding for the Emergency Services Training Center through Senator Dick Durbin and Congressman Mike Quigley as well as a request for support for a semiconductor and nanotechnology technician project through Senator Tammy Duckworth. Last year, the college received \$500,000 through this process from Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi to support our aviation programming.
- In April, Congressman Mike Quigley visited Harper for the first time since Harper College became a part of his Congressional district. Congressman Quigley toured the health careers area including the simulation hospital, surgical technology suite, and dental hygiene clinic. Congressman Quigley also met with students from our nursing and dental hygiene programs and discussed the importance of a community college education.
- In April, State Senator Dan McConchie visited Harper for a tour of the Center for Student Veterans and Military-Connected Students. Sen. McConchie met with Dr. Avis Proctor and student veterans to hear more about their experiences navigating the higher education system and the support offered by Harper through the center.

## Strategic Alliances and Innovation

### Grants Office

- Harper was notified by the U.S. Department of Labor that it was one of 15 community colleges across the country to be awarded a Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC) training grant. The \$1.6 million grant will be used to develop two new comprehensive career pathways in Cybersecurity and Artificial Intelligence/Cloud Infrastructure. The Innovation Accelerator, in collaboration with the Career and Technical Programs and Continuing Education Divisions will implement the key activities included in the



grant over the next four years. The project activities are also geared at enhancing equity and improving persistence and completion among historically underrepresented groups in IT/emerging technologies programs. Startup activities have been quickly implemented, including posting job positions for the Project Director, Pathway Navigator, and Job Developer, along with preparing a Request for Proposal for a third-party evaluator.

- The National Science Foundation (NSF) selected Harper to participate in their Enabling Partnerships to Increase Innovation Capacity (EPIIC) initiative. As a result, Dr. Maria Coons and Martha Karavitis-Hemmati attended a three-day conference at Emory University in Atlanta along with 50 other community colleges and universities to participate in a "pitch" presentation. Harper, along with Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Washburn Institute of Technology and WSU Tech in Kansas formed a cohort to present Generating Regional Innovative Partnerships (GRIP). The focus of the pitch presentation was on how the cohort would lead innovation in emerging technologies with engaged partners. Our pitch was selected to move to the final stage which is developing an NSF grant proposal for \$400,000 per institution over two years to build capacity for engaging strategic partners. This aligns with goal five of Harper's strategic plan.
- The Grants Division, in collaboration with Student Engagement, began planning for the implementation of the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act. This act addresses gaps in mental health services on college campuses across Illinois through training, peer support, and community-campus partnerships. To support community colleges in implementing mental health support services, the ICCB provided grant awards. Harper is scheduled to receive a total of \$1,601,209 (\$191,318 received so far, the remaining funds will be allocated each fiscal year if successfully appropriated in the state budget). The Harper Project team, led by Dean of Students Mary Kay Harton, has been preparing a comprehensive plan to enact the requirements in the allocated four years that will increase students' awareness and understanding of mental health issues and increase access to services.

## Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- In fall 2022, employees provided feedback on the campus climate through the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE). More than 600 employees, representing all areas of the college, completed the survey. Results of the PACE survey have been received and provide the college with data that can be used to facilitate open and constructive campus conversations around climate. This data also provides a snapshot of how the institution is performing, highlight areas for growth, and identify opportunities for improvement. Overall results indicate an increase in overall climate, as well as significant increases in the areas of supervisory relationships and teamwork. Student focus remains a strong climate factor and the climate factor of institutional structure provides opportunities for improvement. Results will be shared and utilized to continue to improve campus climate.
- In developing Harper College's next Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan, the Office of Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness worked with the Technology Shared Governance Committee to conduct a survey asking employees for their input on seven areas of opportunity, which included: supporting student success; supporting teaching and learning; implementing innovative computer-based technology; implementing organizational efficiencies using data and technology; protecting resources and reducing risks; IT staffing; and IT Project Governance. Employees also provided input on how IT can best support technology needs, identified best practices, and shared approaches for leveraging technology at Harper. A total of 327 employees responded to the survey and the results are being used to inform plan development.



- As the College approaches the end of the third year of the four-year Strategic Plan, the six goal teams and their related subgroups have been working diligently to make progress. The impact of efforts can be seen in measures related to students, employees, the community, and our partners. For instance, our graduation rate has increased and a reduction in equity gaps has occurred in several areas. Additionally, employees have reported an increased spirit of cooperation across campus as well as increased satisfaction with professional development opportunities. Finally, the college outreach efforts have been expanded and enhancements have been made related to partnership engagement.

## Workforce Solutions

- In March, more than 85 business representatives joined us at our event: *Apprenticeships: Grow Your Workforce, Come for Breakfast, Partner for Success*. During the session, we had guest speakers from Rush Hospital, Barrington Bank and Trust, Northwest Community Hospital, Zurich and Crafts Technology.
- Arc-Tronics, Inc. from Elk Grove Village is our new employer partner for the Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program.
- Scott Cashman has been elected as the chairperson of the Board of Directors for The Learning Resources Network (LERN). LERN is the largest professional organization for continuing education in North America. Scott will serve in this position until March 2024. Scott and Kevin Hahn attended the LERN Leadership Conference in March. Scott presented *The Foundations of Race and Racism* and was a panel member for the State of Continuing Education and a discussion leader for Hot Issues.
- Harper College pursued membership with the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce. Martha Karavitis-Hemmati has been appointed as a member of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce Technology Council and attended the initial meeting which took place last month. The Technology Council meeting was attended by diverse industry leaders and provided opportunities to learn, connect, and build new relationships with organizations and experts in technology. The Technology Council focuses on emerging technologies such as AI, 5G, IoT, blockchain, AR/VR and helps companies prepare for disruption across both tech and traditional industries.
- Harper Business Solutions (HBS) has a DEI contract with the Township of Schaumburg in the amount of \$100,000. HBS will be delivering to the Township of Schaumburg a comprehensive and actionable DEI strategy with clear themes, high-level goals, and a well-defined desired future state that aligns with existing legislation and Township Council priorities. Together we will set the specific initiatives, actions, timelines, resources, and responsibilities necessary to move the internal team and the community as a whole forward in our DEI efforts.
- Sue Mulvey, with Harper Business Solutions, forged a new customized training partnership with Blue Water Builders, located in Elk Grove Village, in offering OSHA 10 training to its workforce. Due to the excellent experience, Blue Water is seeking to secure additional contracts for OSHA training along with OSHA 10 training in Spanish. Other new and recent contracted training solutions include Microsoft 365 training for the Village of Hoffman Estates and Emotional Intelligence training for Atlas Toyota.