

## PRESIDENT'S *UPDATE*



March/April 2020

Dear Harper College Community:

Based upon our recent COVID-19 experiences, the saying “*What a difference a day makes!*” has dramatically shifted to “*What a difference an hour makes!*” I certainly hope that each of you are finding new things to be grateful for and filling your gratitude jars as we move through this pandemic crisis with laser focus on our mission. As I said in our March 31 Virtual Town Hall, thanks to all of you for stepping up in some way to help us keep our community safe and well during this crisis while still providing a high-quality education to our students. While we are adjusting to this new reality of working remotely, please continue to be flexible and compassionate in our response to this disruption. We ended February with an excellent Strategic Planning Conference and quickly moved into setting up our Emergence Response and Planning team in preparation for this pandemic. The SPA Committee continues its work and will be sharing draft goal statements for feedback from the college community.

As of April 14, our FTE enrollment for spring 2020 was still up at approximately 1.07% from last spring and our summer FTE enrollment was down significantly at 9.86% compared to last summer. This is concerning and may be reflective of the challenges our students are facing. Thanks to those of you who have supported students via our [Harper Student Emergency Relief Fund](#). If you haven't donated and are able to assist students, please consider doing so.

### Campus News . . .

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We must also remember that responding to the [Census](#) is critical for our state for federal funding, our representation in Congress and more. Please be sure that you and your families are counted and encourage others to complete the Census. There are also job opportunities related to getting an accurate count and the federal government is still continuing this work with health and safety in mind. Don't miss the opportunity to be in the count for our community!

As many of you know, we are in the midst of budget preparation for next year. While some say it may be too early to tell, the summer enrollment metric prompts us all to be even more proactive and vigilant in our planning for the future. How we serve our students will matter even more and some tough decisions are potentially ahead of us. Thankfully, Harper College is expecting to receive \$5,526,516 per the United States Department of Education, half of which must go directly to students to help them during this pandemic. On April 9, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced the expedited release of funds to directly support students as authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. We have already submitted our Funding Certification and Agreement for Emergency Financial Aid Grants under the CARES Act so we can receive \$2,763,258 to directly support students and are still waiting on federal guidance on how the college can receive the remaining half to mitigate the costs and losses associated with our COVID-19 response while strategizing the future.

Amid all of this, we were still able to promote 17 faculty members in recognition of their contributions and will honor them at a future in-person board meeting when it is safe to do so. Though we are not hosting our on-campus event for Employee Recognition and Service Awards, our colleagues deserve to be recognized for the incredible milestones they have earned. Kudos to all of you! We will be posting a list of honorees to HIP and

InsideHarper over the next few weeks as well to highlight these accomplishments. Additionally, we have launched new professional development options via [LinkedIn Learning](#) so please take advantage of this as well.

Our searches for the Provost and Executive Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services positions have continued with a virtual approach. Please be sure to view the videos that will be shared this week (Provost) and next week (EVP) and provide feedback for my review.

I want to close this report with thanks to all of you for living our core values and taking a team approach to solving problems and being innovative in unexpected ways. This does not go unnoticed, including nationally, as even CNN was on campus this week to highlight our partnership with D214 to make PPEs for local first responders. It takes a village to make this work and I thank all of you! We are Harper!

## Student Success

### *Access and Disability Services*

- COVID19 Response
  - A phone call campaign launched on Thursday, April 2, in conjunction with ADS and the One Stop to reach all currently enrolled students with a message of positivity and support.
  - The Student Development team responsible for the processing and triage of the general advising, orientation, counseling and ADS Formstack have processed 150 requests with 60 coming in last week. An additional 35 requests were received over the weekend (through Sunday evening) for a total of 190 thus far. (Source: Formstack data)
  - Anita Rehberg, access advocate, has been sending a daily e-mail to Transitional Autism Program students with motivational messages and tips for succeeding in online courses.
  - ADS recently had its first meeting with the Academy to discuss digital accessibility and how to best support the faculty members in creating accessible online content for their courses. The meeting will occur on a weekly basis for the remainder of the semester.
  - The Assistive Technology Lab team has been performing document conversions to ensure that students with disabilities can utilize screen reader software to read the documents. The volume of work has increased significantly with the shift to distance learning.
- LaVonya Williams, student development faculty counselor, co-presented Safe Zone Ally Training with Elke Weinbrenner (ASL) and Carolyn Phipps, Financial Aid, last month to 20 Harper employees.

### *Student Engagement*

- Fresh Check Day held in March was a student-centered event focused on mental health and suicide prevention. Over 200 students attended this event where they interacted with a variety of booths led by student club and organizations, including Student Government, Positivity Club, Hawks Care, Student Activities Board and the Student Veterans Association. Moreover, other departments were present



including Counseling Services, Harper Wellness, Health and Recreation Center, and Access and Disability Services. Some of the highlights from the post-survey include:

- 56% of students who completed the post-survey mentioned that they felt much more prepared to help a friend who is exhibiting warning signs of suicide or mental health concerns
- 51.6% of students reported that they were much more aware of mental health resources available to them after engaging in the event
- 51.6% reported that they are more likely to ask for help if they are experiencing emotional distress

### *Interdisciplinary Student Success*

- Seventy-four students were recognized at the Spring Phi Theta Kappa Induction Ceremony. Dr. Proctor gave opening remarks and Margaret Bilos, associate professor of speech, was the guest faculty speaker. PTK Officers Sergio Bardesi-Texocotitla, Emma Law, Kimberly Sanfilippo and Kelly O'Sullivan also presented during the ceremony. There are 216 new student members this spring.
  - Sergio Bardesi-Texocotitla and Emma Law, president and vice president of our PTK chapter respectively, were to be recognized in Springfield this month as Harper College's Members of the All-Illinois Academic Team. This team is comprised of two nominees from each state's PTK chapter. The award is for outstanding academic accomplishments.
  - Emma Law, VP of our chapter of PTK and an outstanding member of the Honors Program, will receive the Lake Forest Full Tuition Scholarship as part of a scholarship agreement between Lake Forest College and the Harper Honors Program.
  - Kimberly Sanfilippo, president of the Honors Society, will receive the Full Tuition Scholarship to Elmhurst College as part of a scholarship agreement between Elmhurst College and the Harper Honors Program. She will be entering the Nursing Program at Elmhurst.
  - Samantha Kyriazakos and Noah Vega were nominated by the Honors Program for "Preferred Consideration" in admissions at Georgetown University. Georgetown gives priority in admissions to students nominated by select community colleges. Harper has sent several students to Georgetown through this program over the past several years, and the program originated with an agreement between Georgetown and the Harper Honors Program.
  - Honors students Sergio Bardesi-Texocotitla, Daniel Foster, Sasha Goldberg, Alyssa Hammer, Katherine Neuckranz, and Kimberly Sanfilippo presented work at the Honors Council of the Illinois Region Student Symposium in February at University of St. Francis in Joliet, IL.
- COVID19 Response
  - Students are able to serve the community despite social distancing: the Honors Program has posted a link to the Palatine Food Pantry, for students to make online donations as a way to continue to help their communities while they are unable to help in person.

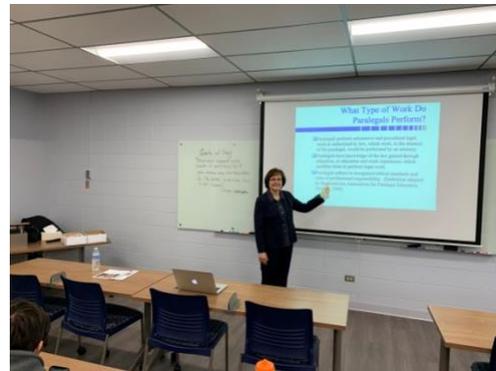
**Notable Events** (Notable employee, student, or community events that occurred on or off campus.)

### *Athletics*

- Doug Spiwak will be honored at the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) Annual Meeting in June as one of this year's recipients of the Under Armour Athletic Director of the Year Award. "The Athletics Director of the Year Award acknowledges the leadership and positive influence top athletics directors have had at their respective institutions across all levels," said Brian Cummings, Under Armour's vice president of North America sports marketing. "Under Armour is proud to partner with NACDA to honor those individuals who set the standard in guiding their student-athletes through the on-going journey to be better."
- The Harper Hawks Wrestling Team finished in third place for non-scholarship colleges (eleventh overall) at the NJCAA National Championship. Three athletes finished as All-Americans: Munkhtulga Zuunbayan, Champion (157#); Nicholas Mihajlovich (184#), Sixth Place; and DeMarco Lee, Seventh Place (197#). Tulga Zuunbayan received the Ernest B. Gould Outstanding Wrestler award. This is the second year in a row for a Harper Athlete to win this award.

### *Career & Technical Programs*

- In February, Carol Carlson-Nofsinger, coordinator of paralegal studies, spent the day at Wheeling High School presenting information about the paralegal career and the Harper College Paralegal Studies Program to high school students enrolled in the law and equity pathway. Other law-related career educational options in the Public Service AOI were also discussed such as law enforcement.



- In February, Adjunct Chuck Knittle and four Harper College paralegal students participated in a panel discussion about the paralegal career and PLS Program educational requirements at the District 214 Law and Public Service Conference attended by approximately 300 District 214 high school students.
- In February, Carol Carlson-Nofsinger, coordinator of paralegal studies, arranged for Attorney Anne Harrigan, a Harper College alumna, to speak to paralegal students about her educational journey, career path, and position as Chief Legal Counsel for the City of Indianapolis.
- In February, Harper hosted an event for the Illinois Manufacturers' Association. Approximately 30 people attended this event.

## *Business & Social Science/Makerspace and Entrepreneur Center*

- COVID19 Response
  - Jeff Moy completed and shipped several remote 3D printings for members and students so projects could be completed without access to campus.
  - Face Shield Projects – D214 Collaboration for Visor Cutting - Harper's role is to produce and supply the visors. D214 will 3D print and distribute. Initial Goal 3,000 by April 13, balance of 5,000 by April 27; 1,000 have been produced to date.
  - Collaborated with the library staff and outside companies to process material.
  - Scientific Spectrum, our Universal Laser supplier, and Dremel are contributing.

## **Finance and Administrative Services**

### *Facilities Management*

- The Emergency Shoring of the Building A Pedestrian Bridge was to address structural concerns. Construction is completed. The bridge is open at the south entrance to building A. The lower level will remain closed.
- The scope of work for the Building M Gymnasium Floor Replacement Project will include the demolition and replacement of the gymnasium flooring. The existing flooring has exceeded its life expectancy and requires replacement. The project is scheduled to start in March 2020 and be completed in August 2020. Phase I for the environmental remediation will be completed in early April.

### *Information Technology*

- The Harper Service Desk serves as a central hub for technical assistance for the college. The Service Desk has assisted hundreds of clients with a variety of requests including O365 questions, moving files to the cloud, using WebEx as well as assisting users with setting up VPN access. Currently an average of 230 users are active on VPN each day. Client support has been provided via calls, chat, and email. The Service Desk reached peak volume on March 16 with a total of 435 calls and 126 emails. Amid aiding clients, the Service Desk team also had to implement and adapt to remote work themselves. This entailed off hours set up of equipment and testing to ensure functionality of equipment and new processes. On multiple occasions Service Desk staff started work almost two hours before their scheduled shift or checked in on unscheduled days to assist with services.
- Employee Technical Skills Training: LinkedIn Learning, Enterprise Implementation - Prepared and Implemented:
  - Test Pilot Standard User
  - Information Technology Pilot
  - Building and Curating Learning Paths
  - Creating documentation for the HIP Page for LinkedIn Learning Go-Live

- IT Network Team:

- Rapid onboarding for WebEx and WebEx Teams. Although Harper has had WebEx for a while, numerous users have never used this service. There have been numerous support activities to allow users to employ these tools to continue their business. This includes work with OneStop, Advising, and ADS.
- Enabled Cisco Expressway, which allows the linking of the Harper phone system to WebEx teams allowing employees to receive and make calls from home using their Harper extension and allowing Harper branding experience – this was important for OneStop and Advising – and the displaying of the Harper extension.
- VPN services – Added additional licenses (200 acquired from Cisco); implemented new servers; added the necessary client for Chromebook support; stood up an RDP server to allow the ability to remote one's desktop for the power users.
- Harper phones at home – enabled network technology and built kits which allowed Harper phones to be taken home.
- Tenant sharing – Harper employees have embraced the O365 platform. There is also O365 for students. Sharing between the Employee O365 and Student O365 was enabled to facilitate faculty sharing with students.
- LinkedIn Learning – the interface to LinkedIn Learning from O365 was enabled to allow employees seamless access to this learning from the Harper O365 environment.
- Came onsite for backup tape exchange with Iron Mountain. This allows the necessary server backups to continue as required.
- Remote board meeting setup and support as well as Town hall meeting setup and support.

- Licensing and Acquisitions:

- Provided emergency provisioning for hardware and software to enable employees' ability to work remotely.
- Negotiated license with LinkedIn Learning for enterprise implementation
- Acquired additional software licenses e.g. VPN Camtasia

- Desktop Services:

- After hours, prepared a large number of classroom laptops with operating systems and additional software for the students and faculty to use during this remote work period
- Multiple faculty needed additional software loaded on laptops for remote teaching
- Prepared, scheduled pickups and trained users on the 30 loaner Chromebooks and 15 laptops

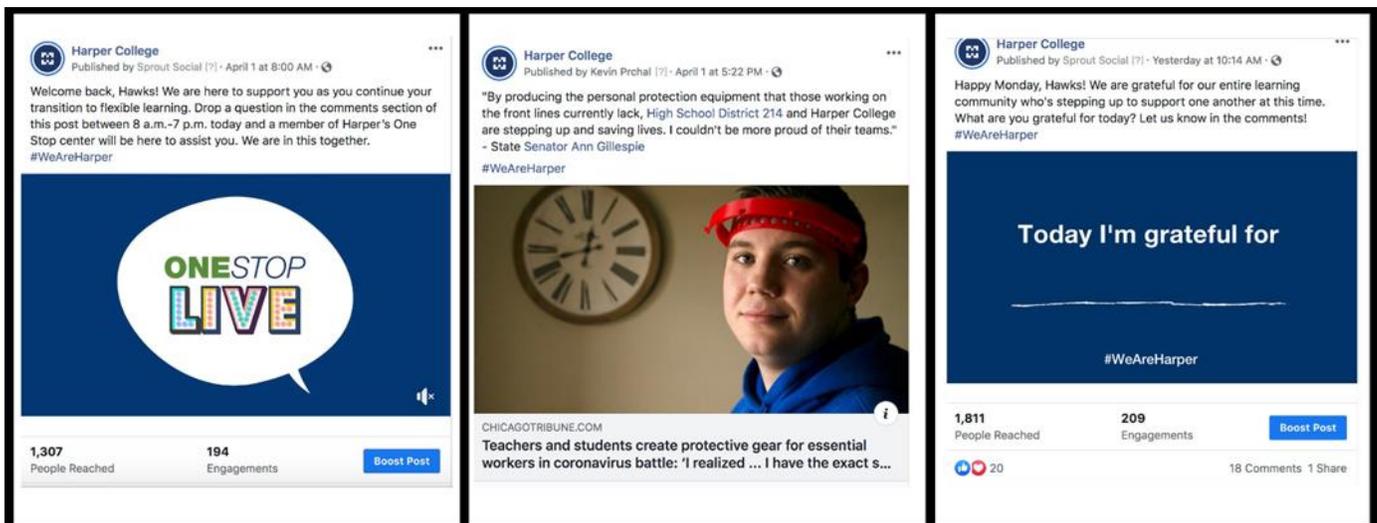
## Human Resources

- HR continues to identify and support online opportunities for professional development and compliance training. On-boarding of new employees continues for those hired prior to the college's move to offsite work. Development of Memos of Agreement (MOA) have been coordinated with all of the college's collective-bargaining units to help us navigate as partners in the management of this crisis. Analyzing and developing plans for the coordination of college provided employee benefits and those provided under the Families First Act and the CARES Act.

## Advancement, Marketing and Communications

### Marketing Services

- Throughout this period of remote learning and working Marketing Services is helping the college connect with students and the community via social media. This includes collaborating with OneStop for Facebook OneStop day, answering student's questions as they returned from spring break; working with Harper Wellness to communicate programs, such as meditation; showcasing the college's response in working with District 214 to produce face shields for health care professionals; and providing students an opportunity to share what they're grateful for during these challenging times. From March 24 to April 6, Harper's institutional social media channels generated 113,866 impressions, 7,619 engagements, and 1,656 link clicks. Here are examples of a few recent Facebook posts.



### Advancement

- The Foundation's e-appeal to over 41,000 donors, alumni, employees and retirees, and community members resulted in \$46,930 in donations to the Harper College Student Emergency Relief Fund. The average donation was \$125 with 48% of donations coming from current Harper staff and faculty and 27% of donations coming from alumni. These donations, combined with \$50,000 in funding from the Foundation's Resource for Excellence Fund, and \$50,000 from the college resulted in over 286 students receiving emergency fund relief of \$122,659 as of April 7.



- Harper College is now accepting nominations for the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Awards. The Distinguished Alumni program honors Harper College alumni who have distinguished themselves in their careers and in the service to their community. The program has celebrated 68 Harper Alumni since 2008 and last year established a new award, the Outstanding Recent Alumni Award, which honors an alumna or alumnus who is less than 10 years from their attendance at Harper but already making great strides in both career and community. To learn more about previous honorees, award criteria and nominating instructions, visit [harpercollege.edu/alumni](http://harpercollege.edu/alumni). The nomination period is open now through May 15 at 5 p.m. The awards reception will be held on October 22, 2020, on Harper's campus.
- Nearly 60 women attended the HOPE Giving Circle's Women at the Table breakfast, a panel style event focusing on women and leadership. The event featured female business owners in an engaging panel style discussion and keynote speaker Dr. Amy Derick, owner and medical director of Derick Dermatology. The HOPE Giving Circle is Harper's women's philanthropy program offering scholarships and mentoring to female students pursuing education at Harper College and beyond.

### *Community Relations*

- Many organizations have moved to virtual events in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the past weeks, Amie Granger has attended virtual networking events and board meetings for the Greater O'Hare Association. She will be attending more events hosted by various chambers of commerce throughout April.
- Community Relations has created an e-newsletter to keep Harper's community partners up to date on the status of the college as well as resources for students, community members and businesses. The communication is being shared with leadership at chambers of commerce, civic organizations, non-profit organizations and school districts.
- Fridays just aren't the same without young students visiting campus for their school tour. Even though the campus is closed, the Harper students and alumni that normally volunteer their time as tour guides are still connected. The group is often sharing good news and messages of support with each other. The group is even meeting virtually to catch up with each other. It's this positive spirit that makes our Harper community so amazing.

### *Legislative Affairs*

#### State

- Governor J.B. Pritzker extended Illinois' stay-at-home order until April 30 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the General Assembly remains adjourned until further notice, legislative leaders are working to determine the best and safest way to reconvene. The Illinois Senate created more than a dozen bipartisan working groups to begin the process of identifying possible legislative responses to the pandemic and prioritizing the urgency of legislation. Governor Pritzker has acknowledged that next year's budget will look dramatically different than the one proposed in February.

#### Federal

- United States Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos issued a letter to college and university presidents on how to secure the emergency financial aid grants to students authorized by the CARES Act. Our Funding Certification Agreement has already been submitted to obtain \$2,763,258 to directly support students



- The college shared information with employees about the emergency paid-leave benefits program outlined in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which includes direct payments to most families and offers other assistance.

### *Media Relations*

- TIME magazine published an article about legislation that would support apprenticeships. Reporter Abby Vesoulis featured Harper student Danielle Polk, who used to work two jobs before becoming an apprentice in the insurance program with Zurich North America.
- The *Chicago Tribune*, *Daily Herald*, *Journal and Topics* and *Business Ledger* ran articles about Harper partnering with District 214 to help make personal protective equipment. Their goal, with the help of dedicated employees in the Makerspace and Make Shop, is to donate 5,000 face shields for area front line workers.
- Harper alumna Grace Roman, a member of the *Daily Herald's* Sounding Board of opinion advisers, wrote a first-hand account for the newspaper of her decision to enlist in the Marine Corps.
- The *Daily Herald* and the *Journal and Topics* ran a few articles about the measures Harper has been taking to minimize the risk of exposure to the coronavirus.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Journal and Topics* ran articles about Harper partnering with several area communities to hold an event aimed at recruiting new and diverse police officers. The event was ultimately canceled due to the pandemic.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about Harper being named a Leader College of Distinction by Achieving the Dream.
- In an article about how District 211 is managing the pandemic, the *Journal and Topics* mentioned the Harper Promise Program and how the college recognizes the need for flexibility around eligibility criteria, the details of which will be announced soon.
- *Insurance Journal* wrote an article about Harper's partnership with Zurich North America. It featured graduate Noelia Salgado, who went through the program and has since been promoted to international service specialist.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* ran an article promoting the Harper Ensemble Theatre Company's production of Shakespeare in Love.

### *Student Communication*

- In collaboration with the communication care team, we've launched an updated resources page for students and developed and deployed new how-to content to help students connect with faculty for course questions. In addition, we've filmed and edited two videos – one about the transition, with tips for success, and one featuring Dr. Proctor and Dr. Coons. We've been leveraging all of the communication channels at our disposal, including social media, email, text messaging, phone calls and the MyHarper portal to keep students up-to-date and connected. We're building communication plans for the revised summer and fall registration periods and are working closely with the Convocation and Graduation teams as we transition these events from on-campus to virtual experiences.



## *Internal Communications*

- Established a hub for information on the college's intranet (HIP) to keep faculty and staff informed. Content included a robust page with information and resources for employees along with FAQ sections to address questions around travel and human resources. Content has been continually updated to keep pace with the ever-evolving situation.
- Designed and deployed a series of Daily COVID-19 Update e-blasts to provide immediate updates to employees as the situation unfolded.
- Used existing channels (InsideHarper and HIP) to continue to provide updates regarding the college's response to the pandemic.
- Leveraged text messaging to alert employees about an important message update from Dr. Proctor.
- As the college transitioned to a longer-term remote working environment, developed the InsideHarper Bulletin to supplement the weekly newsletter on an as needed basis.
- Hosted the college's first virtual Town Hall for Dr. Proctor to address employees' concerns and questions about the changes due to the pandemic. Through 900 connections, nearly 700 employees attended the live one-hour event and actively engaged by submitting questions. An additional 66 faculty/staff watched the post-event video. The number of attendees was 50% greater than the semi-annual, in-person President's All Campus Meetings. Collaborated with ADS to ensure the town hall was accessible to our deaf and hard-of-hearing employees, both in real time and in the final video.
- Wrote/edited two stories about the ways in which members of the college community stepped up during these challenging times: *Helping Some of Our Most Vulnerable Students* and *Answering the Call for Masks: Mariah Molina, Harper Student*.

## **Institutional Planning and Strategic Alliances**

- The Office of Institutional Research has smoothly transitioned to remote working conditions. After a couple "set-up" days, the team has been able to continue to support staff and faculty. For example, the Current Enrollment Power BI dashboard has been enhanced to include information about drops and withdrawals for the current year as compared to the previous year. The enrollment management team is using this to track the impact of the pandemic on student registration.
- The Institutional Effectiveness/Outcomes Assessment Office continues to be responsive to the needs of the college. Over the past two weeks, the IE/OA Office administered student and employee surveys related to the transition to remote learning and working, how Harper can further support student and employee needs and other concerns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The office analyzed the results of these surveys and quickly created reports that allowed college leadership to immediately address student needs. Additionally, recurring surveys continue to be administered with reports created to support departments. Further, the general education outcomes assessment work is moving forward, collection of artifacts continues, and the scoring of assessments has begun. Overall, the team has transitioned to working remotely and is appreciating opportunities for online collaboration and WebEx video interactions.

- The strategic planning work of the college continues. The Strategic Planning and Accountability Committee is working diligently to develop strategic goal statements. Once these goals are drafted, they will be shared with the campus community, proceed through the shared governance process and presented to the Board of Trustees in June.

## Workforce Solutions

- Career Training and Community Education will continue offering learning opportunities this spring and summer. The team has identified classes that can be delivered online, and they are preparing multiple scenarios for InZone based on social gathering restrictions that may be in place through the summer. Adult programming will be offered solely online for the remainder of the spring and summer terms. The CE team is working intensely with CE Instructors to accomplish the migration from on-the-ground to distance learning modalities. The CE team is developing multiple scenarios for youth programming that will be responsive to social distancing requirements through the summer. This may involve a staged implementation of online, blended, and adapted on-the-ground programming.
- Small Business Development Center has seen a significant increase in requests for assistance the past three weeks from business owners seeking clarity on emergency funding programs. They are providing small business owners and entrepreneurs with advice, guidance, and answers to questions preparing them to respond to federal assistance programs.
- The Apprenticeship Program has quickly adapted to remote delivery. They continue to reach out to new and existing employers via Zoom or phone call. They have finalized a partnership with one additional employer since moving to remote work and are currently assisting all employer partners with recruiting and hiring for fall. Employers are still interviewing. Apprentice coaching sessions have continued weekly. We are in contact with employers regarding Harper's evolving strategy for instructional delivery continuity as well as how each employer is handling the pandemic.
- Job Placement Resource Center is assisting students and alumni via email, WebEx video and phone appointments and chat. The JPRC website provides numerous resources for students, faculty and employers, which includes sample resumes and cover letters, an interactive interviewing program, online workshops, videos and the online job board, Hire a Hawk. The JPRC has reached out to faculty with a resource list that can be added to Blackboard. Emails have been sent to select employers to emphasize that the JPRC is available to help with employment needs. Students have been contacted via email, faculty outreach and other Harper communications.

### *Promise*

- High School Senior Promise participants are expected to attend a Promise Preview Session by April 30. These have now been moved to a virtual format in response to coronavirus and 75 students have already completed the session.
- There will be the following changes to the Promise criteria due to the coronavirus:
  - Attendance at the high school will be tracked up to March 1, 2020. Any day absent after March 1 will not affect eligibility

- Community Service will be prorated, and students will be given until the end of the following school year to complete their service for the current year and the next year.
- While the Persistence and Rigor/Quality criteria are not changing, students will still have the opportunity to appeal for extraordinary circumstances should they not meet one of these criteria.

## **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

- The Social Justice Leadership Certificate cohort 2 continues to meet and will be able to complete their projects this spring.
- We are currently interviewing and hiring for three Diverse Faculty Fellows for FY20-21.
- Harper College participated in two best practices conversations with Lorain County Community College related to how to develop an Advocacy and Resource Center and how to develop an equity-minded college.
- Wifi hotspots are being shipped to students who are in need of internet access in their homes. Six of the 25 remain available.
- The Basic Needs Project just completed all assessments including the Trellis Survey and 154 responses from employees. The project is on track to provide a recommendation in May.