

President's Report

January 2015

The College is once again in full gear! Students and faculty alike have returned to a very busy institution. For most folks a little re-orientation was necessary. Over the holidays, our Facilities and Information Technology staffs were exceedingly busy relocating a dozen or more offices out of D Building into the Career and Technical Education Center (Building H), as well as relocating the Provost's office, Women's Center, Multicultural Learning Center, Assistant Provost's office, and soon the Access and Disability Support area. The staffs also opened the new temporary One Stop Center as we await the build-out of the permanent One Stop in the new Canning Center. This has been an extraordinary effort, made by extraordinary employees. Thanks and kudos to all!

We look forward to welcoming Governor Bruce Rauner on January 23 to help us officially open the Career and Technical Education Center. This will be one of the Governor's first formal public appearances since the swearing in ceremony earlier this month. We are so delighted he will join us. Not long after this public event, we will begin the construction of the new Fabricators and Manufacturers Association's (FMA) Advanced Manufacturing Center. We are so delighted to be partnering with them to put a national spotlight on advanced manufacturing. We opened the construction documents for the Advanced Manufacturing Center earlier this week and they have come in considerably higher than the budget we established well over a year ago. This is primarily due to cost escalations and a more selective bidding environment. Pending Board approval, we will fund the increase in scope with the savings realized in the renovation of the Career and Technical Education Center. We will rebid the project next month. Currently, there are more than 1,000 students (headcount) in the programs this facility supports and the additional technologies we train for will only increase those numbers.

Speaking of numbers, our tenth day enrollment numbers are in. The good news is that there is an increase in headcount over last spring; however, we have seen a decrease in credit hours these students are attempting. More students are attending part-time thus they are taking fewer courses. Again this shows up profoundly in the adult student market.

I have just received the Strategic Enrollment Management Task Force's report and recommendations and am studying it. The Executive Council and I will meet with the Task Force soon to discuss their recommendations, fifteen in all. Central to the recommendations is an emphasis on program/course delivery methodology, and persistence and retention. I believe the Task Force is on the right track. We will find many of their recommendations in the FY16 Operational Plan and FY16 budget recommendations. Our new Strategic Plan should also speak to these themes.

We are well on our way to finalizing the planning for the Strategic Planning Conference in March. We have had all of our plenary speakers confirm their attendance including Dr. Jim Applegate, Executive Director of Illinois Board of Higher Education; Josh Wyner, Director of the

College Excellence Program at The Aspen Institute; Karin Norington-Reaves, Executive Director of the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership; and Dr. Mary Rittling, President of Davidson County Community College. Many of our local educators, business leaders, and elected officials will also attend the conference and react to the plenary presentations. We anticipate a dynamic and successful planning session with more than 100 Harper and community participants.

Below are the highlights of the various student, faculty, and staff accomplishments for the last month:

Student Success

- The Center for New Students and Orientation has been very busy welcoming new students and creating new workshops and support services for new and continuing adult students at Harper. The workshops are designed to provide students with important information about being successful at Harper. The workshops include sessions titled “Undecided?”, “Finish What you Started,” “From Service to School,” “Transfer Tips 101,” and “FAFSA Completion.” The workshops address different student populations and a variety of topics.
- The Harper College Child Learning Center received the Gold Circle of Quality designation from ExceleRate Illinois, the State's new quality rating and improvement system for early learning and development providers. The award is given by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and recognizes the best centers in the State.
- Harper College's Faculty Fellows Program was recognized in the December issue of *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*. In addition to discussing the program designed to mentor diverse faculty interested in teaching at community colleges, the article highlighted the two faculty fellows, Darnell Windmon and Oubria Tronshaw, who are participating in the program this year.
- Harper's Film Club placed third in the 18-22 year old division of the *Don't Get Burned Chicago Contest*. This contest is sponsored by Mayor Rham Emanuel, the Chicago Department of Health and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.
- Seventeen Harper students returned from Costa Rica in early January as part of a study abroad course, BIO150 Field Biology, taught by faculty member Craig Stettner. The course capped a successful semester of study abroad experiences for Harper students. A total of 47 students took courses from Harper faculty in 4 different countries.
- Jessica Walsh, Associate Professor of English, took second place in the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award at the Illinois Emerging Writers Competition for her poem “The Library Again.”

Facilities Management

- Facilities Management staff worked tirelessly with Information Technology, Purchasing, and Carl Dittburner (faculty liaison) over winter break to prepare our new Career and Technical Education Center (Building H) for spring classes. Despite only having one month to complete a project of this magnitude, the move from Building D and other areas of campus into Building H, went very well. Dr. Ender hosted a preview for faculty and staff, and the building was received with great excitement. All work that was part of the original scope has been completed and Facilities Management will continue to work with the building's occupants to complete additional requests. The formal grand opening will occur on January 23, 2015, with Governor Rauner and other dignitaries expected to be in attendance.

- All furniture, fixtures, and equipment remaining in Building D – Phase 2 were either repurposed to the Learning and Career Center, others areas of campus, or auctioned off last week to make way for construction. The auction grossed approximately \$22,000 and the building has essentially been vacated, with the exception of ADS, which will relocate to Building I later this month.
- Roads and Grounds, along with other Facilities Management sections, have been responding during off hours to several extreme weather-related events in the past two weeks. Thus far, none have posed a significant impact to daily campus operations.
- The Provost's office was successfully moved from Building D to Building L to make way for the Building D – Phase 2 project.
- The Temporary One Stop was successfully completed in the northeast corner of Building A. It will remain at that location until it relocates to its permanent location in late 2016.
- The construction of a new Starbucks remains on schedule to be opened in Building D - Phase 1 by the end of February 2015.
- Much appreciation goes out to Facilities and all other staff who sacrificed considerable time over the last month to meet the needs of the College during this incredibly busy period.

Information Technology

- Information Technology put significant effort into preparing equipment and infrastructure for the move to the new Building H, as well as several other office/department construction projects, associated moves, and system upgrades including:
 - Deployed multimedia technologies in 28 classrooms
 - Relocated all staff and faculty computers and other technology from Building D
 - Moved the Career Program Office to Building H
 - Installed printers and multifunction copiers throughout Building H
 - Installed computer labs, involving over 100 computers
 - Relocated Information Technology's Student Service Desk
 - Moved the Provost office into Building L
 - Relocated Student Development Offices
 - Moved staff into the mini one-stop
 - Relocated the Women's Program offices
 - Assisted with technology for remodeling of the President's office suite
 - Relocated the Access and Disability Services classroom to Building I
 - Vacated all technology from Building D in preparation for demolition
 - Deployed 36 new wireless access points in Building H
 - Connected several hundred network jacks to the network infrastructure
 - Upgraded InformaCast, the emergency notification software used by the Harper Police Department
 - Moved the Technology Equipment storage area from X233 into a new storage location in Building V, to accommodate construction of a general classroom in X233.

These efforts involved hundreds of hours throughout the month of December and included a large number of Information Technology staff, as well as a number of Student Workers, who received hands-on experience.

Harper College Police Department

- Atif Bukhari and Melissa Douglas graduated from the police academy in December. Atif joined Harper as a Community Service Officer in March 2013 and is now beginning his career as a Harper College Police Officer. Melissa joined Harper in September 2013 as a Community Service Officer. She was promoted to a Police Officer in September 2014. The Pinning Ceremony for both officers will be held at the January Board Meeting.

Advancement

- 2015 Economic Update and Outlook Breakfast with Jack Ablin will take place Wednesday, January 21, 2015, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m. at Wojcik Conference Center at Harper College. Jack Ablin, Chief Investment Officer for BMO Private Bank U.S., will lay out his global macro strategy for navigating the uncertainty surrounding the ever-changing investment markets and the global economy. Looking at the world from 30,000 feet, Ablin evaluates the economic landscape, addresses public policy and together with market valuation, will lay out an easy-to-understand investment strategy. Drawing upon his investment experience spanning nearly 30 years, Ablin provides a unique blend of quantitative techniques and common sense intuition to formulate his investment perspectives. He also draws on examples that we hear of everyday to bring his approach to life. The result will be clear, easy to understand strategies for traversing the world we live in today.
- Join us for a special alumni basketball event for former Harper basketball players and their families on Saturday, January 31, 2015 at Harper College Wellness and Sports Center (Building M). The schedule includes the Harper Men's Basketball Team taking on N4C foe Rock Valley College at 3:00 p.m. A special halftime presentation to recognize Harper men's basketball alumni, and a complimentary postgame pizza reception at 5:15 p.m. with current and former players. Alumni and guests will receive a free Harper Alumni Basketball t-shirt.
- Several new endowed & unendowed scholarships were established in December including:
 - Donna Penkava Grzegorek Dental Hygiene Scholarship Fund –for Dental Hygiene students
 - Elizabeth A. Troyer Memorial Endowed –for Women's Program participants
 - Wintrust Bank Learning and Career Center Scholarship – (Unendowed) - for Prospect Heights and Wheeling residents and small business owners in financial need

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- The HLC Steering Committee hosted a Welcome Week reception for the five HLC criterion committees to thank them in advance for their important and time consuming work over the next two years. Between the Steering Committee and the five Criterion Committees, 86 Harper employees have volunteered to work on our accreditation process. Accreditation by the HLC (Higher Learning Commission) is a requirement for Harper credits to transfer to other institutions and so students are eligible for financial aid.
- SPA (Strategic Planning and Accountability Committee), with the support of Institutional Research, has developed an employee feedback survey on the SWOT analysis. This survey will allow all employees to contribute their ideas on how to impact the issues identified in the SWOT analysis.

- In regards to the upcoming Strategic Planning Conference, all of the key note presenters have been confirmed and the panelists are close to complete. The external invitations were sent out in December and the internal invitations were extended last Friday. The pre-reading materials will be sent out in early February. All is on track with this important effort.

Workforce and Strategic Alliances

- Three cohorts were launched in the Fast Track program in spring in the following pathways: AAS in Business Administration, Certificate in Human Resources and Certificate in Supply Chain Management.
- The Job Placement Resource Center will be holding pop-up sessions informing students about area job opportunities. The pop-ups will occur throughout the campus in academic corridors.
- The University Center Committee, led by Mark Mrozinski, visited three university centers to view different operational methodologies. The Committee will issue a report on their findings and recommendations to Dr. Ender this spring.
- A Request for Proposals was issued for a doctoral completion program at Harper. A committee has been formed to review the proposals and issue a recommendation. Serving on that committee are: Rebecca Lake, Chair, Ta-Tanisha Young, Roger Spayer, Duboi McCarty, Joanne Leski and Njambi Kamoche. Jewell Jackson and Maria Coons serve in advisory roles.

Diversity and Inclusion

- A two page article, which was teased on the cover, was featured in a recent December issue of *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* magazine. The reporter, Cassandra West, put a spotlight on Harper's new Faculty Fellows program, an initiative that aims to better serve a changing student body with a workforce that more closely resembles the racial and ethnic makeup of the community. This magazine has a print and digital readership of more than 100,000 people. The reporter wrote, "Faculty Fellows enrich the learning environment on campus while they gain experience that likely would have taken years to build elsewhere as adjuncts. They are also bolstering the diversity of Harper's teaching faculty." The Faculty Fellow program has been well received on campus and we have posted ads nationally seeking Faculty Fellows for the 2015-2016 academic year.
- Three employee resources groups (ERGs) have been launched on campus. Employee Resource Groups are designed to assist the college in creating an environment and culture that is welcoming and supportive of all employees but particularly those individuals who are members of historically underrepresented populations. LAND (Learning about Abilities Not Disabilities), SAFE @ Harper (for our LGBTQ employees) and DREAM (for our employees of color) will work closely with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion to assist with development and implementation of a diversity scorecard and a diverse employee recruitment plan. In addition, the ERGs have been charged with hosting at least one (1) program or activity each year that will showcase the unique contributions of the ERG members or the communities from which they originate.

Communications and Legislative Relations

- Dr. Ender was a guest reader at Paddock Elementary School Reading Night on January 15. He was given a thank you card from Paddock's 4th grade class, which has adopted Harper as their

classroom college for their adopt-a-college program. The Harper Drama Club also performed for students.

- Harper will be hosting a table at Euclid School's Family Literacy Night on January 22. We will be handing out information about the College and Career Expo as well as answering questions about college readiness.
- Amie Granger spoke to the 7th and 8th grade college readiness class at Sundling Junior High about her college and career experiences. Mike Barzacchini will be speaking to the class on January 30. The class also toured the campus on December 12.
- Approximately 150 faculty and staff members attended the special January 6 Sneak Peek of the Career and Technical Education Center. Presenters included Dr. Ender; Mary Beth Ottinger, Dean of Career and Technical Programs; and Dr. Wayne Johnson, Program Coordinator for Law Enforcement and Justice Administration. Dr. Johnson shared the story of a recent graduate who tested at about 10 different police departments across the nation and was accepted at the Dallas Police Department where he will start later this month.
- The President's 2015 Spring All Campus Meeting was held January 7. As part of the meeting, Dr. Dave Schuler, Superintendent of High School District 214, addressed the faculty and staff, highlighting the results of the partnership between the high schools and Harper. Other topics covered included the upcoming strategic plan, HLC reaccreditation, Diversity and Inclusion, and the Promise program. Two of the videos presented at the meeting were produced, in part, by four student workers in the Graphic Department. More than 350 faculty/staff members attended the meeting, which was also live-streamed for the benefit of those employees who were serving students and unable to attend the meeting.
- Members of the Harper Promise Scholarship work team spoke at eighth grade orientation sessions that were being held at local high schools. The class of 2019 will be the first group of students eligible for the Promise scholarship. Presentations were made at Rolling Meadows, Palatine, Schaumburg, Buffalo Grove, Fremd, Prospect Heights, Wheeling, Elk Grove, Conant and Hersey high schools. Presentations are scheduled at Hoffman Estates and Barrington high schools. The presentation included a brief preview of the Promise program and the criteria students must meet. The response has been overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic from parents, students and high school staff.
- Republican Governor Bruce Rauner was sworn into office last week as were members of the 99th General Assembly. The spring legislative session begins the first week of February with the Governor's budget address scheduled for February 18. Budget and pensions will be the main focus of the session. With the rollback of the temporary state income tax increase, the state's projected deficit is an estimated \$6.8 billion in FY2015 and could increase to \$12.7 billion in FY2016. Governor Rauner will have to deal with Democratic leaders to move his agenda forward. Democrats hold veto-proof majorities of 71-47 in the House and 39-20 in the Senate.
- News stories about community colleges have been front and center this past week following President Obama's announcement that he wants to make the first two years of community college free for all. The *Daily Herald* ran a front-page, all-zone article about local leaders' reactions. Among them were U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, ICCB Executive Director Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson and Harper's own Dr. Ender, who acknowledged both the benefits involved and the many questions surrounding the proposal. Reporter Katlyn Smith quoted Dr. Ender as saying, "That's a hard program not to like. I think the devil in all these things are in the details, and a huge detail here is the financing of a program like this." Articles about Harper this past week include:

- The *Daily Herald* article about President Obama's proposal put a spotlight on Harper in particular, mentioning, for example, that far fewer students are taking out loans today than a few years ago.
- *Daily Herald* reporter Katlyn Smith wrote a short article about Governor Bruce Rauner's expected visit to the Building H grand opening event on January 23.
- *Quintessential Barrington* ran an article about Dr. Ender's recent trip to the White House education summit.
- The *Daily Herald* sent a photographer out to last week's Beach Party in the Student Center. It may have been 15 degrees outside, but students embraced the tropical atmosphere inside by hula dancing and trying to balance on a mechanical surfboard. The article was prominently featured on the website.
- Harper's reputation as a national leader was mentioned in a *Huffington Post* article about President Obama's proposal. The article included Harper in its list of the "14 best community colleges" in the country. HuffPo included a picture of Avanté in its photo gallery.
- The *Daily Herald*, *TribLocal* and *Patch* all promoted Harper's call for volunteers to take advantage of free ultrasounds offered by the sonography program.
- The *Daily Herald*, *TribLocal* and *Patch* all previewed the Building D auction.
- *Daily Herald* columnist Burt Constable wrote a front-page, all-zone article about Harper alum Kevin Kolman, the prestigious "Grill Master" for Weber. Kolman credited Professor Susan Farmer for "teaching him how to learn."
- The *Daily Herald*, *TribLocal* and *Patch* all promoted the upcoming Economic Update and Outlook Breakfast led by Jack Ablin.

As January ends, one can only hope that we have seen the worst of Old Man Winter! So far, this winter has been a vast improvement over last year! Let's hope for an easy February. Be well.

Ken