

President's Report

February 2017

It is such a pleasure writing this report and gazing out the window at a brown (not white!) winter wonderland. No snow! I most likely just jinxed us, but it has been wonderful not dealing with snow. We are seeing dividends on reduced overtime, less energy usage and fewer supplies for cleaning and de-icing our roadways and sidewalks. Our expenses are under-running budgeted amounts and this will hopefully contribute to a balanced budget on June 30. Let's hope for more of the same.

We continue to watch the situation in Springfield with hopes that a "grand bargain" might still be attainable and an FY17 budget adopted. The Senate has 13 separate pieces of legislation that must be passed so they can move to the House floor. This legislation would provide an appropriation bill for the second half of FY17, generate \$6.4 billion of new revenue, freeze property taxes, and provide pension reform. These are just some of the elements that are most relevant to public higher education. We should have a good idea by the end of this month whether the "grand bargain" has a chance. We shall keep a close eye on it.

The College is pleased that our Moody's Aaa bond rating has been reaffirmed in spite of the State's inability to pass a budget. This was a required step as we move into the final phase of issuing approximately \$5 million in bonds as a means of financing capital projects on campus. The Moody's report does however site caution which reflects the challenges community colleges will continue to face if the State does not pass a budget and meet its obligations. The very difficult decisions made last year to reduce the budget by \$5 million were necessary to ensure Harper's financial standing and played a key role in our Aaa bond rating. We also received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation award this month. This latest award represents the 18th consecutive year of being acknowledged by this notable group. Certainly this is something to celebrate.

Recently, we were honored by the Gates Foundation and Pearson/McGraw Hill with a visit to our campus. They were joined by senior executives from the City Colleges of Chicago and Chicago Public School System. We were asked to give our guests a full description of the Northwest Educational Council for Student Success (NECSS) and all the many projects flowing from this partnership. Without a doubt, the best form of flattery is imitation and we were delighted to share our work and have it validated by these distinguished visitors. Later this month, Dr. Brian Harris (District 220), Dr. Kenya Ayres (VP and Chair of the NECSS Board), and I will also share this work at the annual Achieving the Dream conference at a "spotlight" session.

Our campus strategic planning goal teams are working hard. Areas of interests or "meta majors" have been identified by the Educational Planning and Pathways team; our Curriculum and Instruction team is focusing on both digital education and engagement in the classroom; the Student Experience team has set its sights on developing a "culture of care" throughout the campus. This is just a represented sampling of the work to-date.

Our Title III team is currently working with the Civitas group to install their products in our electronic support system for student engagement, advisement and proactive outreach. The Civitas tools assist counselors and advisors as they manage their caseloads of students from entry to completion. We are very excited about the implementation of these tools.

The campus has been very busy in this last month. Please read below for divisional highlights.

Student Success

- Two student veterans, Anthony Nishimura and Ernest Feret, joined Keith O'Neill, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, at the 2017 National Conference of the Student Veterans of America (SVA). They attended a variety of skill-building and training workshops relevant to strengthening Harper's own SVA chapter. The conference was an excellent opportunity to network with other SVA chapters and to learn more about the resources and program ideas that Harper's SVA can offer to its students.
- One of Harper's newest student clubs, the Social Justice League, held its inaugural open forum in the Student Center on January 26. A variety of speakers, poets, and others shared perspectives on leadership through advocacy. More than 100 students attended the event which included representatives from off-campus partner agencies and volunteer organizations. Many students had the opportunity to sign-up to engage more with social justice issues and dialogue through this event.
- On Thursday, January 19, Erin Morettes, Manager of Student Involvement, and DuBoi McCarty, faculty in Student Development, facilitated a dialogue for students entitled, "I Have a Dream: MLK Conversation and Remembrance." More than 50 students attended and enjoyed a guided discussion on the message and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and how they apply in the past, present, and future.
- Harper's One Stop Center celebrated its second anniversary in January 2017. Harper's One Stop helps students navigate enrollment processes such as registration, applying for financial aid and scholarships and consultation on payment plan options. The One Stop averages 2,500 walk-ins per month. By providing personalized high-touch services to students and families, the One Stop ensures students are able to remove any barriers to enrollment and continue on a path to completion of their educational goals.
- Five One Million Degree (OMD) scholars completed their credentials and graduated in December. Contributing to the success of OMD is assistance from the Harper College Educational Foundation which provided \$15,935 to cover last dollar scholarships to these scholars in the fall semester.
- Harper College recently registered to participate in the "Healthy Campus Challenge," a White House initiative designed to engage college and university campuses to help get more students and young people enrolled in the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Dr. Bridget A. Cahill, Harper's Director of Health Services, registered the College and coordinated Harper's outreach for the program. More than 360 colleges and universities across the country participated in this challenge. Participating institutions were invited to send three representatives to be recognized at the White House's "Healthy Campus Challenge Day." Harper was represented at the White House by Dr. Cahill and Dr. Travaris Harris, Dean of Student Affairs, and Dr. Keith O'Neill, Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

- On January 6, Admissions Outreach participated in a staff development day at Barrington Middle School. The session was designed to provide more than 100 faculty and staff with information about admissions, curriculum updates, student involvement, and the Promise Program.
- The popular “Career Changers” Workshop Series exclusively for prospective, new or continuing adult students returns for spring 2017. The workshops are led by Anita Rehberg, Adult Student Specialist in the Center for New Students.

Finance

- Harper’s Aaa Moody’s credit rating was affirmed. The report does however site caution which reflects the challenges community colleges will continue to face if the State does not pass a budget and meet its obligations. The rating helps to ensure the College will pay lower interest rates when we issue bonds.
- The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) established the Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program to encourage government entities to prepare budget documents of the highest quality that reflect both the guidelines established by the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting and the GFOA’s best practices on budgeting, and then to recognize individual governments that succeed in achieving that goal. The GFOA awarded the College its 18th consecutive Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016.

Facilities Management

- Grants have been received to convert Room A137a in Building A into a space for student veterans. Construction has begun and is scheduled to be completed in February 2017.
- Classroom X228a in Building X will be converted into a new Surgical Tech Suite for the Nursing Department. The existing Virtual Hospital will be renovated to address sound and observation requirements. The simulation hospital work is scheduled to be substantially complete by February 28, 2017.
- The Building P Chiller Plant will be expanded to serve Buildings A, C, and W, in addition to the currently connected Buildings F, L, P, and R. Construction has begun and will be completed by September 2017. The contractor has completed all piping work and the new chillers have been installed. Testing will begin March 1, 2017.
- Classrooms H166, H184, and H186 in Building H will be converted into the new Building Energy Systems Technology (BEST) Lab for the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Technology program. Construction is scheduled to start in May 2017 and be substantially complete by November 2017.

Information Technology

- Significant effort updating and preparing computers and other technologies in classrooms throughout campus took place in anticipation of the start of the spring semester. This included updates to desktop operating systems, software updates, and desktop management system

upgrades. Preventative maintenance activities also took place to ensure classroom technologies such as projectors, computers, and document cameras were ready for classes.

- A large number of upgrades and modifications to the infrastructure has taken place in the past month to prepare for an influx of new systems.
- The “Phishing Security Awareness” training was rolled out to all faculty in January. To date, 79 faculty have successfully completed the training. The Data Privacy video was featured in the January 26 issue of Inside Harper. The video was the number one clicked item for that issue.
- The Information Technology team completed work on Starfish Early Alert to track if degree-seeking students who place in developmental level courses have registered for those required courses. Work began in the pre-production phase of Banner on the Banner XE Advising Profile. A Banner defect that was causing AccuPlacer test scores not to properly align with prerequisites was corrected, and the Employee Compensation statement was added to Employee Self-Service in EBS.

Advancement (Foundation, Communication, Marketing)

The following are highlights from the Foundation Board Committee:

- The Finance and Investment Committee met on February 7, 2017 and reviewed the asset allocations as of December 31, 2016. The asset allocations for the General Endowment are 54% equity, 25% fixed income, 8% alternative investment and 13% cash. The asset allocation for the Promise Fund are 24% equity, 44% fixed income, 2% alternatives and 30% cash. The committee approved a 4.5% spending rate for the FY18 scholarship awards allocation. A subcommittee was created to review the Investment Policy.
- The Federal 990 forms were electronically filed with the IRS on February 15, 2017. Although all the work papers were prepared last October 2016, SIKICH, LLP, the Foundation’s auditor, was waiting for Commonfund Investments to release the K1 statement for the Private Equity Investment. The K1 statement was made available to the Foundation in January 2017.
- The Annual Giving Committee met on January 18. The committee will continue to steward relationships with any donors that have made a gift to the Foundation under \$10,000 with phone calls and thank you notes. Fifty two gifts were received by the Foundation through the Year-End Appeal totaling \$24,520.22. The Employee Giving Campaign is scheduled for April 10-21. To date, 48 brick pavers have been sold totaling \$11,850.00. The Foundation staff will continue to reach out to Harper Retirees, current employees, alumni, Harper Student Organizations, community groups and local businesses to promote the pavers.
- The golf committee had their first meeting on January 25, 2017. The 29th Annual Golf Open is scheduled for June 12, 2017 at Inverness Golf Club. The committee is hoping to have 130 golfers and increase the number of attendees for the dinner. Sponsorship packets will be sent out early next week and the committee will follow up with phone calls.
- The Individual Major Gifts Committee has identified 20-50 top prospects, which they continue to cultivate, solicit and steward for major gifts. The Major Gifts Committee will be developing plans for two prospect cultivation events this spring that target “next generation” prospects (ages 50 and younger). The committee is utilizing Dr. Ender’s February 26 presentation at Barrington White House to further engage major gift prospects.

- The Gala Committee meets monthly to review sponsorship activity, identify live auction items and engagement strategies to plan a fun, celebratory evening for all guests. A program sub-committee also meets monthly to plan the Gala's agenda and activities. To date, the Gala has secured almost \$300,000 in sponsorship revenue.
- Last Spring, the Resource for Excellence committee met and awarded \$88,738 to six applicants for Fiscal Year 2017 projects. Funding was made available on July 1, 2016 and will expire on June 30, 2017. Fiscal Year 2017 awards were made to the following:
 - Childhood Education and Child Learn Center Staff curriculum training-\$7,300
 - InZone access for low-income students-\$29,960
 - Scrapbook restoration and Harper History preservation-\$14,000
 - Open curriculum development in Math department-\$10,000
 - Diversity and Inclusion trainings to Harper faculty and staff-\$20,900
 - LCC to Main Campus transportation project-\$6,578
- The Scholarship and Awards Committee met Tuesday, January 31. Executive Committee suggested that the Scholarship Committee communicate scholarship award amount to donors for the year based on the annual allocation rate to determine if donors wished to add to their scholarships annually. A letter will be sent to donors as part of the "Top It Off Program" in February.
- Marketing Services is collaborating with Financial Aid on a weekly series of articles for the Parents' Blog during Financial Aid Awareness Month (February). Topics include understanding the financial aid process and resources to help parents research aid options. Parents will also be invited to attend one of two Paying for College Workshops at Harper on Thursday, March 2. Along with the parent's blog, information will also be shared in the parents' e-newsletter and on social media.
- Marketing Services is collaborating with Engineering faculty to promote an Engineering Week event to be held on Saturday, February 25 in the Wojcik Conference Center. High school students and their parents are invited to learn about the many benefits of studying Engineering at Harper College. Featuring a keynote presentation by Dr. Vladimir Goncharoff, Engineering lecturer at University of Illinois Chicago and Harper College Distinguished Alumni recipient. Students and parents will have the chance to meet with representatives from Harper's four-year university partners: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Illinois Chicago, and Northern Illinois University.

Workforce, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criterion Teams continue their work to build an evidence-based assurance argument that makes the case that Harper College meets the HLC Criteria for Accreditation. The draft assurance argument will be out for campus feedback in April. Additionally, sessions are being held throughout the spring semester to further engage the campus community in the accreditation process.
- Harper College's apprenticeship program was featured prominently in an article in *CityLab*, an online publication of *The Atlantic*. The article, [Why Apprenticeships Are Taking Off](#), features an interview with Dr. Rebecca Lake, Dean of Workforce and Economic Development, which discusses Harper's apprenticeship work with the Department of Labor.

Diversity and Inclusion

- The second session in the campus conversation about the President's Student Artwork selection is scheduled for February 13. More than 80 employees have registered for the session which explores the tension between institutions and individuals. The session includes a discussion about how institutional structures dictate the way we interact with one another as well as a series of short talks from four perspectives as well as Q&A from the audience and strategies for moving forward and bridging gaps.
- Continuing our campus engagement work from fall, seven additional D&I Dialogue Workshops have been scheduled for spring. Various time offerings have been planned to accommodate the varying work shifts of all campus employees.

Community and Legislative Relations

- On Wednesday, January 11, Harper hosted Colonel Jill Morgenthauer for a lunchtime presentation entitled, "Personal Power: Stand Up and Standing Out!" The event was a partnership with the Hoffman Estates Chamber's Women Engaged in Business group. More than 80 business leaders attended the event hosted in the Wojcik Conference Center. Colonel Morgenthauer was one of the first women to enter an experimental class for women in the U.S. Army ROTC and train as an equal with men. Overcoming obstacles, she was the first woman Battalion Commander in the 88th Regional Support Command Division, the first Brigade Commander in the 84th Division and then rose to the rank of Colonel. She was also the first woman to run homeland security for the State of Illinois. During her presentation Colonel Morgenthauer shared stories about her courageous leadership experiences during war time and peace including a showdown with Saddam Hussein and saving an American engineer from a Soviet kidnapping. Proceeds from the event were donated to the HOPE Giving Circle.



- On January 26 Harper faculty and staff attended three area school events. Dr. Ender was a guest reader for Paddock Elementary Reading Night in Palatine. Paddock's 4th grade class has adopted Harper as their classroom college. Harper's Chemistry Club, led by Dr. Karen Dailey, also provided engaging hands-on science activities at Paddock. Julie Ellefson-Kuehn hosted a chemistry activity at Robert Frost Elementary STEM Night in Mount Prospect. Harper was also represented at Kilmer Elementary STEAM night in Wheeling. Jim Edstrom engaged

students in a mad libs activity to promote literacy skills. Frost and Kilmer are both part of the Ambassador School program. By hosting engaging activities at school events we are introducing students and families to Harper and building excitement about higher education.



- Harper’s apprenticeship programs recently received media coverage by two highly respected, national publications. The first was *CityLab*, a publication from The Atlantic magazine that focuses on pressing issues facing the world’s metro areas. *CityLab* looked at the re-emergence of apprenticeships across the country. They work, *CityLab* wrote, because employers need skilled workers and young people want a path to a good job without accruing a lot of debt. Key to the in-depth article was a spotlight on Harper’s apprenticeship programs, currently offered in general insurance, industrial maintenance mechanic, CNC precision machining and logistics/supply chain management. Reporter Lisa Rabasca Roepe spoke with Dr. Rebecca Lake, Dean of Workforce and Economic Development, who captured the obvious appeal of apprenticeships to students: “They graduate from college with zero debt and they have a job,” adding that the employer pays tuition on top of paying apprentices \$12 to \$13 per hour for their work.
- The second mention came in the *New York Times*, which wrote about the difficulty employers are having finding skilled workers. Employers, Jeffrey Selingo wrote, “are turning more and more to community colleges to help fill the skills gap. And while the building trades still dominate the apprenticeship landscape, the types of occupations offering internships have expanded to include jobs such as pharmacy technician and project manager.” He writes about Harper’s partnership with insurance and financial services company Aon to offer general insurance apprenticeships. The article is appearing in newspapers across the country.
- The *Daily Herald* covered the Foundation’s recent reception recognizing the first three recipients of its new Dream Big – Angel Grant program to support emerging and active entrepreneurs. The driver behind Harper’s new program is Barrington-area philanthropist Kim Duchossois who donated \$1 million to Harper last year of which \$250,000 is to launch the Angel Grant initiative and \$750,000 for Promise. Reporter Chris Placek included a quote from grant recipient Ana Santos, who owns Brazil Express Grill in Schaumburg with her husband: “It’s like someone believes in us.” Students in Harper’s entrepreneurship program will get their own opportunity to compete for grant money later this spring. The article also ran in the *Business Ledger* and *University Business*, and NBC 5 Chicago discussed the proposal during a 30-second segment on the station’s morning broadcast.

- The *Business Ledger* ran an article about what Donald Trump's presidency may mean for businesses. Reporter John Slania spoke with economics Professor Getachew Begashaw, who said a widespread perception is that the new administration will have a positive impact on the economy. He said, "Lowering taxes leaves more money for people to spend and businesses to invest. Spending more on infrastructure creates jobs. You can see business responding to these expectations with the rise in the stock market."
- *Quintessential Barrington*, *365Barrington.com* and the *Daily Herald* each previewed Dr. Ender's upcoming lecture at Barrington's White House about the "Communiversity" concept. The free event takes place Sunday, February 26.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about Teagan Schirmbeck, the 19-year-old from Palatine who received the Gilman Scholarship and is studying abroad this spring at Heriot-Watt University's School of Textiles and Design in Scotland.
- *eCampus News* ran an article about Harper's new partnership with Civitas Learning to support the College's student success initiatives.
- The *Daily Herald* ran a front-page article about Harper's proposal to increase tuition by \$5.75 per credit hour. The Board will vote on the increase at the February board meeting.
- The *Daily Herald* and *chicagotribune.com* previewed Harper's sustainability event about community-supported agriculture.
- The *Chicago Tribune* ran an article about hypnotist Jim Wand performing at Harper.
- *The Kane County Chronicle* ran an article about accomplished pianist and Harper employee Chiayi Lee's role in Soiree Lyrique, an Elgin-based music organization.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about Continuing Education's new partnership with Vortex UAS to offer classes on flying drones and how to make a commercial enterprise out of it.
- The *Daily Herald* and *chicagotribune.com* ran an article about the Clay Guild club's upcoming Cups for a Cause sale benefiting the WINGS organization.
- The *Daily Herald* sports section ran an article about star volleyball player Katelyn Somers, who led Harper's team to a national championship, transferring to Trinity International University in Deerfield on a full athletic scholarship. Somers is a great ambassador for the program and Harper as a whole, saying, "I would encourage local players to consider Harper as their college. Not only is the volleyball program great, but so is the rest of the Harper experience."

President's Priorities Update

1. Advocates for Students

- Academic Success Coaches: Approximately 240 new students starting this spring semester with developmental placements were added to the Academic Success Coaches' caseloads during the second week of classes. Additionally, during the month of January, 22 unduplicated (28 duplicated) students were seen by the coaches with an average show rate of 85%. This number is not inclusive of other means of communication with the students (i.e. email, phone, and text). By the end of January, 100% of the students within the pilot were contacted via

various means (663 students) by the coaches either as a “welcome back” or to set up future appointments.

- Counselors Through Completion: Of the 62 students being case managed this fall/spring, 39 have met face-to-face with their counselors thus far. A total of 68 face-to-face contacts, 47 phone contacts, and 274 email contacts have been made. Ten additional students have been added to the pilot as an additional counselor has joined.

2. First Year Seminar and Educational Plan

- During the fall 2016 semester, more than 700 students completed First Year Seminar courses and other Start Smart programs. Two sections of First Year Seminar courses are being offered during the spring semester to accommodate a number of students who are new to Harper in the spring. Combined with the fall enrollment, the total number of students impacted by a First Year Seminar course will exceed the target of 750 students.
- Students participating in the First Year Seminar courses and Start Smart program complete an educational plan to completion in consultation with a counselor. During the fall 2016 semester, 91.1% of students who successfully completed their course developed an educational plan.
- The First Year Seminar team is already planning fall 2017 course offerings. The team will be working closely with the Academic Planning and Pathways team to develop course offerings that better align with the areas of interest that are currently under development.

3. Completion of Buildings F, M and the Canning Center

- Building F Renovations – The demolition is complete and the contractor is currently constructing interior walls.
- Building M Renovations and Addition – Bids have been received and a recommendation for award has been submitted for the February Board meeting. Northwest Community Hospital has approved the design for their leased space. The temporary spaces needed for Building M programs have been identified.
- Canning Center – The State of Illinois has put the Canning Center project on hold.

4. Promise Program Funding - Currently the promise funds are \$8,520,473.14 with 363 donors and 85% to goal.

In closing, Bill Kelly, Eric DeBold and I will be traveling to Washington, D.C. on Monday, February 13 for the annual American Community College Trustees’ Legislative Summit. During the visit, I will have the honor of introducing Senator Tammy Duckworth to the trustees and presidents at a meet, greet and discussion forum. Bill, Eric, and I will also be meeting with many members of the Illinois legislative delegation advocating for the nation’s community colleges. It will be an honor to represent Harper College in the nation’s capital.

Spring is most assuredly on the way. I’m looking forward to working the soil in my garden in March and planting in April—as winter will truly change to spring.

Take care,

Ken