

President's Report

March 2011

Spring is in the air at Harper College! Next week, students and faculty will be on Spring Break. Although the campus will be open March 21 - 26, we anticipate it will be quiet as other employees embark on spring vacations. Classes will resume on March 28, leaving two months to prepare for graduation which will be held May 23. The graduation committee has confirmed that this year's graduation speaker will be Connie Payton, wife of the late Walter Payton, a famous and popular Chicago Bear. We anticipate a very engaging and positive address from Mrs. Payton.

This month's Board agenda includes a recommendation for approval of a three-year contract extension for the full-time faculty. We are very pleased to propose this extension and commend and congratulate the faculty leadership for the positive and collegial manner in which they expressed themselves during discussions. We will begin working with other employee groups, as well. The plan is to develop a campus-wide committee consisting of individuals from Custodial and Maintenance, Professional-Technical, Police, Adjunct Faculty, Part-time Counselors and Librarians, Classified, Supervisory-Management and Administrative groups. This committee will guide the request for proposal (RFP) process that will engage firms qualified to conduct a comprehensive compensation study for the College. We intend to make this analysis as transparent and open as possible. Following the study, which should be conducted and completed over the summer, contract proposals will be developed for the other organized groups. Current contracts are due to expire June 30, 2012. The plan is to negotiate and implement new contracts by July 1, 2012 that assure fair and equitable compensation for all employees. We believe we have met this goal with the full-time faculty and intend to do so for all employee groups.

Over the last several weeks, the College has received several payments from the State. To date, we have received 8 of the 12 monthly payments due the College. Budgeted revenue projections for tuition and fees, property taxes and state operating grants are on target. If the College experiences a surplus at year-end, a recommendation will be made to the Board to transfer those funds to the capital reserves so they can be used to help implement the Campus Master Plan.

As we begin to implement the Campus Master Plan, a traffic study will be conducted. Top priority has been placed on improving the Euclid and Roselle entrances and the ring road. Construction drawings are currently being developed for Buildings G & H. As you will recall, the State released \$4 million to begin this project. Other priorities include an addition to and renovation of Building D, renovating the Library, renovation of and additions to Building A to create a comprehensive Student Center, and improvements to Building M. Construction of at least one parking structure is also planned, as are other site improvements. We continue to be

optimistic that the State of Illinois will meet its capital obligations which will allow the College to accomplish these aggressive renovation and construction plans.

Much of this work will be directed by a new position, Executive Director of Facilities Management. A national search was conducted to fill this position and the search committee and Dr. Ally are recommending Mr. Thomas Crylen. Tom has 25 years of experience in facilities management and capital development. He holds a master's degree from Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering and a bachelor's degree in Architecture, Art and Urban Planning from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Pending a background check, Tom is scheduled to begin on May 2.

This month, we have also brought closure to the Chief Information Officer position. The pool of candidates was impressive and we are pleased that Patrick Bauer is being recommended for the position. Patrick distinguished himself as the Interim Chief Information Officer at Harper College for the past 18 months and is well-respected across the campus.

Search committees have been formed for the final positions that need to be filled in Dr. Ally's area: Chief Human Resources Officer and Controller.

Other news from around campus is highlighted below.

Finance

- Bond Issue Update – On March 1, the College sold \$4,520,000 of general obligation limited tax funding bonds approved by the Board on February 16, 2011. On the same day, \$2,915,000 of debt certificates, which were issued in December 2010, were paid off with the bond proceeds.

Information Technology

- Robo Registrar for Transcripts – The automated transcript processing went live this month. This will enable students to request transcripts to be sent to other schools via the website.
- Banner Financial Aid Upgrade – The financial aid module in Banner was upgraded to the latest release, 8.1. The needs analysis module was implemented which offloads this function to SunGard.
- Access for Print Jobs – This access allows Harper employees to submit print requests to the Print Shop from off-campus locations.

Physical Plant

- B-Building Boiler No. 2 Re-Tubing –The new boiler jacket was installed and testing is now complete. The water treatment system is being connected and the boiler is expected to be activated within a week.
- Y-Building Standby Generator – The construction contract has been issued and major equipment has been ordered. Excavation and foundation work will commence in April,

weather permitting. The generator will provide power for critical cooling equipment in the Data Center, which runs campus-wide computer systems.

- C-202a Printmaking Shop –Some demolition work has started as final plans are being reviewed. New work counters and corrosion-resistant sinks are replacing deteriorated equipment. Ventilation and safety-related upgrades are planned.
- C Building Toilet Rooms – The first floor is scheduled to be completed by the end of March. The second floor remodeling will continue through the end of the semester.

Public Safety

- The Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP) has appointed Mike Alsup co-chair of the state-wide Communications and Technology Committee.

Student Success

- Patricia Hamlen, Associate Professor of Anthropology, has been awarded a Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad program grant to Brazil. The grant will pay all costs associated with domestic and international travel, accommodations, and other expenses associated with the four-week program.
- Dan Stanford is the co-author of an article published in the spring 2011 issue of *CUR* (Council of Undergraduate Research). The title of the article is “Successful Student Transitions from the Community College to the Four-Year College Facilitated by Undergraduate Research.”
- Deborah Damcott, Maggie Geppert, Brenna Lorenz, and Collette Marsh participated in the inaugural GEMS event (Girls Empowered by Math and Science) at Conant High School.
- During the recent NJCAA National Wrestling Championships, Harper wrestler PJ Starnes won the National Championship in his weight class. Five wrestlers were All-Americans and Harper had the highest point total for non-scholarship teams.
- Dan Loprieno was elected as President of the NJCAA Wrestling Coaches Association. Coach Loprieno has also been inducted into the NJCAA IV Hall of Fame.
- Harper Interior Design students won all four awards at the NKBA Chicago Midwest Chapter Kitchen and Bath Student Design Competition.
- Patrick Beach was awarded an honorary doctorate of Food Service by NAFEM.
- Greg Clemons served as chief judge and clinician for the *31st Annual State of the Art Catholic Band Competition* held at Marian Catholic High School in Chicago Heights.
- The Music Department hosted the *Second Annual Harper College Jazz Fest*.
- Dennis Kmiec from the Center for New Students organized a successful Adult Transfer Fair.

- The Office of Student Financial Assistance and Admissions Outreach conducted three Financial Aid workshops, assisting students and parents with the Financial Aid application process. Approximately 235 students and parents attended.
- Admissions Outreach has conducted 26 high school visits and will meet with more than 300 students over the course of the spring semester.
- The Library hosted “Civil War Reader’s Theater,” performed by members of the Harper College Speech Team.
- In the first four weeks of the semester, the Tutoring Center served 1,673 students and provided 2,238 contact hours of support.
- Planning is underway for Harper’s annual Job Fair which will be held Friday, April 1 from 11am – 3 pm. More than 1200 job seekers and 70 employers are expected.

In closing, I would like to remind the Board that the College’s production of *Evita* opens next weekend, beginning on Friday evening March 18. We hope that many of you will be able to attend the opening night performance. Kevin Long is directing the production and many of our students are in the cast. It promises to be a wonderful production.

The morning following the opening of *Evita*, Cathy and I will be traveling to the Virginia mountains for Spring Break, along with Sammy and Sissy. We will return the following weekend.

Spring is definitely upon us!

Ken