

## **President's Report**

**April 2011**

Despite the cool temperatures, spring is in the air! This month, we welcome three new Trustees to the Board: Trustees Walt Mundt and Jim Gallo, and Student Trustee Justin McDermott. We look forward to working with these new Board members.

We are coming to the end of a very hectic but productive month. Our Theater Department produced the musical, *Evita!* and did an outstanding job. High honors and awards were received by our culinary students, Speech and Debate Team and Phi Theta Kappa Chapter. These award winning students have been asked to participate in the April Board meeting. Our students are also excelling in athletics, the Track and Field Team is nationally ranked again this year.

Our Accounting Office has received a very prestigious award. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) established the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting program to encourage government entities to go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles and to prepare comprehensive annual financial reports (CAFRs) that evidence the spirit of transparency and full disclosure. The College prepared its first CAFR for fiscal year ending June 30, 2010 and submitted it to the GFOA for review. GFOA awarded Harper College the prestigious Certificate of Achievement with our initial submission. This is the highest form of recognition in government accounting and financial reporting.

The College has also been engaged in two competitive grant applications which have kept us extremely busy. We completed a grant request for \$18.6 million to the Federal Government's Department of Labor through a Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) competition. Harper led this effort which included 14 community colleges and 7 workforce systems in the northeastern region of Illinois. If the grant is awarded, Harper will lead its implementation and will serve as fiscal agent. We joined another group, the Auto Communities Consortium (ACC), in completing a second TAA grant application. This was a multi-state initiative and the ACC grant request was for \$20 million. If that grant request is funded, Harper College would receive \$713,214 to develop programming in Logistics and Transportation, and enhance academic support services. Maria Coons led these efforts and she was assisted by two Harper retirees, Julie Hennig and Russ Mills. Their efforts are much appreciated as they did an outstanding job coordinating these efforts and meeting key deadlines.

Below is a summary of other activities and accomplishments.

## Student Success

- Harper's Phi Theta Kappa chapter received four national awards, including an award for the Honors in Action Projects, and an award recognizing chapters for their College Project, which was the BOSS mentoring program. Our chapter also won the award for Distinguished Chapter, which is an award for chapters with strong Honors in Action Projects and College Projects. Finally, John Garcia, chapter advisor, received the Paragon award which is given to new chapter advisors.
- Harper's culinary students won the Food Network Iron Chef contest.
- Speech and Debate Team finished third at this year's nationals, its highest finish. Nine of the squad's 23 speeches were in the final rounds. The squad won gold in three speaking events.
- Wendy Mertes, Associate Professor, Early Childhood Education, has postponed her approved sabbatical from Fall 2011 to Spring 2012 to serve as coordinator of the department while her colleague is on maternity leave this Fall. We appreciate that Wendy changed the dates of all her scheduled appointments with early childhood centers across the country to accommodate this unexpected college need.
- Pardess Mitchell, Instructor, Wellness and Campus Activities, won the Best Paper Award for her presented paper, "The Millennial Student," at the International Conference on Teaching and Learning recently held in Jacksonville, Florida.
- Dr. Terry Morris, Associate Professor, Business and Social Science, had her book *Basics of Web Design: HTML5 & CSS* published in March by Addison-Wesley Pearson Education.
- Kappa Beta Delta, an international business honor society for two-year colleges, held its spring induction ceremony on March 30. Ninety-two new members from Harper College joined this academic year.
- The Career Center held its annual Spring Job Fair on April 1. More than 60 employers participated in the event.
- The Electronics Engineering Technology Department recently received several wind turbine/solar power generation training stations purchased with funds from the Illinois Clean Energy Grant. These stations are being used by students enrolled in wind and solar power courses to obtain hands-on experience in operation, installation and servicing of this type of equipment.
- The Admission Outreach department recently hosted the Latino Summit. More than 210 students participated from ten of our district high schools.
- Kathy Millin, adjunct faculty, Adult Education, received an award for outstanding community service work from the Northwest Cook Leaders.

- The first class in the NIU doctoral program began this month. Eighteen Harper College faculty and staff were joined by six district high school faculty and administrators to begin their doctoral studies at Harper College.

## Finance

- GFOA awarded Harper College with the Certificate of Recognition for Budget Preparation for the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. The 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.

## Information Technology

- *Who-Where Directory* – Implementation of an automated process to publish employee photos into PeopleSearch on a nightly basis has been completed. Employees will now be able to self-opt-in to have their photo published in the directory. Requests will be systematically processed on a nightly basis.
- *Network Monitoring Device Installed* – A network traffic monitoring and shaping appliance was implemented in the Harper lab network. Similar to the device previously installed in the public network, this appliance will allow Harper to prioritize academic Internet traffic as well as ensure compliance with legal provisions (HEOA).
- *Classroom Upgrades:*
  - ✓ Installed closed-caption devices in 18 classrooms
  - ✓ Refreshed podium workstations in 17 smart rooms
  - ✓ Refreshed monitors in 60 smart rooms
  - ✓ Completed four new smart room installations
  - ✓ Completed three classroom renovations

## Physical Plant

- As part of their Class Gifts, the Student Senate honored the five Physical Plant departments (Roads and Grounds, Maintenance, Utilities, Custodial, and Logistics) for their hard work during and after the blizzard of February 2 to get and keep our campus functioning so that students could pursue their academic goals. The awards were presented at the Student Senate meeting on April 15.
- *Exterior Light Fixture Replacement* – Excellent progress has been made by Harper's contractor to replace 120 outdated building-mounted exterior light fixtures. Work is 95% complete. The new fixtures consume one-third of the energy and the lamps are expected to last a minimum of seven years. Approximately 60% of the cost is being paid through a grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.
- *Y-Building Standby Generator* – The construction contract has been issued and major equipment has been ordered. Excavation and foundation work will commence in April and

will continue as weather permits. The generator will provide power for critical cooling equipment in the Data Center that runs campus-wide computer systems. This project is expected to be complete by mid-July.

- *C-202a Printmaking Shop* – Plans are complete, demolition work is done and mechanical/electrical piping is about to commence. New sinks and countertops will replace deteriorated equipment and a new ventilation system and safety-related upgrades are being installed. Construction work is being performed in-house by Physical Plant.
- *Sidewalk Replacement at the Blue Pool* – Investigative work is in progress to determine the cause of sidewalk damage around the fountain area west of Building I. Soil borings have been taken and an architect has been engaged to analyze test results and prepare detailed bid documents for the corrective work.
- *Master Plan Implementation* – Appropriate processes are being determined to proceed with the Roselle Road and Euclid Avenue entrances, the Student Center and the D Building renovations.
- *G & H Remodeling Project* – The architectural services contract is complete and Holabird and Root is working on the Construction Documents. The review of the Design Development Revisions by faculty and staff is complete. The CDB is still negotiating the construction management fees for this project. Negotiations are expected to be completed the week of April 18, 2011.
- *2011 Elevators and Entrances* – Bids were received and the project is within budget. A recommendation is being submitted for approval at this month's Board meeting.
- *C Building Toilet Rooms* – The first floor toilet rooms are complete. The second floor remodeling will continue through the end of the semester.
- *W First Floor – Office remodeling* – The minor remodeling is complete.
- *Radiology Lab, X134k* – Construction will begin after the spring semester and will be completed for the fall semester.
- *HIT Lab, X126* – Construction is scheduled to begin in May and will be completed for the fall semester.
- *B Building Office Remodeling* – Construction is scheduled to be completed by April 28.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who supported my brief stint as a waiter at the Chicago Prime Steakhouse. More than \$10,000 was raised, which is quite an accomplishment for a bet that was lost! This was for a great cause—scholarships for our students!

It's been quite a month!

*Ken*

