

President's Report

May 2016

We have come to the end of another academic year! In fact, it has been a really fascinating, fast-paced, and remarkable academic term. If not for the challenges we are facing in the State of Illinois, and the impact and toll it has taken on higher education and Harper, I would say it has been a terrific year.

We continue to monitor the ongoing budget impasse closely. Last week, the Executive Council spent an entire day working on strategic issues, including contingency planning if additional revenue does not flow from the State of Illinois. Overall, our financial footing is solid as evidenced by another Moody's Aaa bond rating. The stewardship of the College's resources is the top priority for the Executive Council as we work through this saga.

Despite the budget woes and our recent staff reductions, the campus community is working hard and steadfastly. Everyone on campus is looking forward to graduation, working to ensure our students are completing their programs and that the campus is immaculate for all the visitors who will be attending the festivities.

This Saturday we will enjoy commencement in our new venue. The "pavilion on the lake" will be an impressive site for this celebration, as will the newly refurbished Building D. The latter has come together in spectacular fashion and we wish to commend Power Construction for delivering the site and the building on time, and within our forecasted budget. In fact, we believe the project will end with a significant balance in the contingency fund that will be applied to other needed preventative maintenance and replacement initiatives. During commencement, we look forward to awarding President Toni Preckwinkle an honorary degree and hearing her address to our graduates.

Our summer enrollment is currently flat. For the upcoming fall term, our applications are up 6%, however actual enrollments are slightly down. Earlier today, we sent 5,000 students who have not yet enrolled a communiqué seeking their intentions for the fall and sharing our interest in assisting them with enrollment issues they may be experiencing. We will continue to work the enrollment funnel for the fall semester throughout the summer and keep the Board informed with respect to targets met, or not, as the summer progresses.

Last week, I had the honor of viewing most of the projects developed by our Harper Leadership Institute members. There were many smart ideas tested and projects completed that will provide important insight into our campus programs and practices. Dean Chavis will provide an update at Wednesday's Board meeting.

Much is going on this important month of May, details are below.

Student Success

- The 48th annual “Celebration of Excellence” awards night was held on Friday, May 6 in the Performing Arts Center to honor the outstanding co-curricular achievements and leadership contributions of various student leaders, student organizations, and their advisors during the 2015-2016 academic year.
- On May 11th the Honors Convocation was held and recognized over 100 students who have excelled academically during their time at Harper College. During the ceremony faculty member Wendy Mertes was honored as the Motorola Solutions Distinguished Faculty Member, and faculty member Pascuala Herrera was honored with the Larry Moats award.
- The Men’s Track and Field Team finished third in the nation and Juan Barajas was awarded Male Athlete of the Year. All-American Awards went to Laith Kanan (National Champion in the Hammer and Shot Put), Adam Brauer (National Champion in the 5k and 10k), T.J. Paton (Runner-up in the 10k), Will Troman (Runner-up in the 5k), Eric Theis (Runner-up in the 400m hurdles).
- The Women’s Track and Field Team finished third in the nation and Leah Kloss was awarded Female Athlete of the Year. All-American Awards went to Ashley Proksa (National Champion in the long jump), Leah Kloss (National Champion in the hammer and Runner-up in javelin), Ali Gutt (National Champion in the 1500m and 800m), Mary Saitta (National Champion in the discus).
- Admissions Outreach conducted the annual Spring Open House event and welcomed over 590 prospective students and guests. At the event, prospective students have an opportunity to receive an overview of the college, learn about financial aid and scholarships, speak with faculty and program coordinators, and obtain information on transferring.
- On Friday April 8, nearly 100 high school students visited Harper College for the Graphic Arts Boost event. This event targeted high school students interested in graphic arts or graphic design. The students worked in the Graphic Arts Technology program classrooms and labs. They left with an idea of how our classes are run, careers they can obtain upon graduation, and some projects to take home with them.
- Got Money? That was the theme of the financial literacy table set-up in Avanté on Tuesday, March 29. Over 100 students stopped by to answer trivia questions about financial literacy, financial aid and other random trivia. As students participated in the various activities, they earned entries for a \$250 scholarship.
- OSFA was one of the stops for the 5th and 8th grade school tours organized by Amie Granger, Community Relations Manager. Students from different schools in the district visited to experience Harper College for the day. Future students learned about financial aid and then teams of students played against each other in Financial Aid Hang Man. Each group consisted of 15-25 students and each day there were 3-4 tours.
- Student Eric DeBold was elected Student Trustee for the upcoming year. Nearly 500 votes were cast online from across the student body.
- The Student Activities Board sponsored the first-ever “Zero-Waste” event on campus mid-day Wednesday, April 6 to heighten awareness of recycling and conservation in a campus context. The event featured a “coffeehouse” style performance by Angie Kielhauer, former contestant on NBC’s 2016 “The Voice”.

- Hospitality students (Stephanie Young, James Payne, Rafal Siwiecki, John Demma, and Millard Jones) showed their versatility by winning both the bistro trophy and the hotel challenge at the 2016 hospitality competition held in Orlando, Florida. Teams in the culinary competition had 90 minutes to plan, prep, plate, and present their multi-course meal to a panel of judges. Their entree had to incorporate plantains, the secret ingredient unveiled at the onset. The students won the “hotel challenge” by successfully inspecting a hotel room and managing different challenges of hospitality scenarios presented in a case study. Rafal also took first in the cake decorating contest and he received an individual medallion.

Facilities Management

- The Building D Renovation Phase II project reached substantial completion on May 11. The furniture installation will begin May 23 and will be completed by July 15. Move in will be complete by August 15.
- The outdoor amphitheater project will be mostly complete by May 16 and ready for Graduation. The contractor is completing the final landscaping improvements and the restoration of the Stackhouse sculpture. The landscaping is being completed this week. Sod has been installed between the canopy and the lake and between the fire lane and Building D.
- Classroom X228A will be converted into a new Surgical Tech Suite for the Nursing Department. The existing Virtual Hospital will undergo renovation to address sound and observation requirements. This project is currently being bid.
- The Building P Chiller Plant will be expanded to serve Buildings A, C and W, in addition to currently connected Buildings F, L, P and R. Heating system work is scheduled to begin in early August so that it can be completed before the heating season. The cooling system work will follow throughout the heating season to be completed for next spring.
- The scope of work for the LCC chiller replacement includes the removal and replacement of the chillers at LCC. The existing units have exceeded their life expectancy, are no longer reliable, and require replacement. This project is currently being bid.

Information Technology

- The Technical Services team assisted with the final installation of a new Firearms Simulator system for use by our academic programs, as well as provided a training tool for Harper Police staff and officers. The tool used by Information Technology, Service Desk Plus (SDP), to track client requests, system changes, projects, and IT assets was upgraded during the month of April. The updated version of SDP contains minor feature enhancements and some bug patches. Focus continues on obtaining and preparing the numerous technology related products for the new Building D. Many devices have been received and work is underway to prepare these technologies for installation once the building becomes available.
- The Enterprise Systems team partnered with Student Development and Enrollment Services to complete the installation, configuration, extensive systems testing, and deployment of the latest release of Degree Works. Degree Works is a comprehensive academic advising, academic planning and degree audit system that helps the College’s students successfully develop and complete pathways to completion.

Advancement

- Harper College Annuitants Association and the Educational Foundation Professional Advisors Committee is hosting *Seeking a Way Forward*, presented by Ralph Martire on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at the Wojcik Conference Center.
- The Educational Foundation will soon be offering PAVERS for PROMISE. Alumni, retirees, current employees, and community members will have an opportunity to purchase 4x8 inch pavers for \$150 or 8x8 inch pavers for \$300 along with an engraved message or name. The pavers will be installed adjacent to the Outdoor Pavilion, the site of Harper's graduation. Proceeds for the sale of the pavers will support the Harper College Promise Scholarship.
- The 2016 Educational Foundation Golf Open will take place on Monday, June 13 at the Inverness Golf Club. The outing will follow the same structure and format as last year with the goal to raise \$120,000 in net profit. The Golf Open committee has several new members this year and they are in the final stages of securing sponsorships and planning the event

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- The College was visited by our Achieving the Dream coaches on May 12-13, 2016. Strategic Goal teams engaged with the coaches in a rich dialogue around strategies, best practices and new opportunities. Additionally, over 40 faculty and staff participated in an Institutional Capacity Assessment through a World Cafe activity. This activity engaged the group in meaningful conversations around seven capacities essential to creating a culture that promotes student success at Harper College.

Workforce and Strategic Alliances

- Fast Track has been working collaboratively with Health Careers to offer an additional Health Information Technology certificate allowing students to complete another credential; 25 students are expected to enroll in the cohort.
- The Illinois Network for Advanced Manufacturing (INAM), the consortium of 21 Illinois community colleges, is winding down their work which was supported by a \$13 million Department of Labor grant. A two-day grant close-out meeting was held at Harper last week. All 21 colleges reported on the outcomes of the grant. Most notably, the grant provided capacity building at each institution through new equipment that was added to their manufacturing labs. In addition, alternative scheduling, pathways, and employer engagement were noted as significant changes that resulted from the grant. Kudos to Dr. Rebecca Lake who led this effort, along with Melissa MacGregor.
- The Workforce Certification Center has seen a 27% (n = 945) increase in exams administered so far this fiscal year. Since FY14, testing volumes have increased by 253%. The Workforce Certification Center is located at the Harper Professional Center and administers professional certification testing for Harper students and the community at large. The mobile unit has extended the work of the Center allowing Harper to deliver certification testing and training at a distance to area businesses and educational partners.

Diversity and Inclusion

- We recently administered our second Cultural Values Assessment (CVA). We received nearly 500 responses, which will provide enough data to be statistically reliable and enable us to compare our results to the first assessment completed three years ago. The CVA is based on appreciative inquiry — a form of change management that is aimed at identifying what is working well, examining why it is working well, and then using those pearls of wisdom to improve the overall health of an organization. The assessment was recommended as a part of the final report prepared by the 2012 Diversity & Inclusion Task Force. All data was compiled and analyzed by a third party and Harper will receive information at the aggregate level for sharing with the college community.

Community and Legislative Relations

- On April 20 and 25, Sara Mikula and volunteers from CNSO and the Career Development Center hosted Enrichment Days at Lake Louise Elementary School. Approximately 400 students in 3rd – 6th grade participated in a “Roadmap to Harper” workshop. Students worked in groups as they participated in activities based on skills they will need to develop for college. Groups rotated through 4 activities within 45 minutes and received Harper items as their prize for completing the workshop. Activities included:
 - Goal setting! Students decorated and cut out a soccer ball to put in the goal net to stress the importance of setting goals.
 - Career Readiness! Students completed a “My First Resume”.
 - Problem Solving! Students were given a hard choice question and talked about the issue and made a decision. The activity highlighted the hard choices that may come up on their roadmap to college and resources that can assist them (family, teachers, etc.).
 - Team Building! Students were given 20 sheets of paper, a roll of tape and books. Students worked together to create a tower to hold as many books as possible. The activity highlighted the benefit of using your strengths when working with others.
- A very big thank you to Sara Mikula, Jennifer Godish, Jennifer Olsen, Nancy Trenkle, Jennifer Rojek, Joanne Walker, Anita Rehberg, Megan Dallianis and Melissa Hernandez-Martinez for making the event so successful.
- Over the last month Community Relations has hosted 600 students for campus tours from Eisenhower Jr. High (D54), Sunny Hill Elementary (D220), Kimball Hill Elementary (D15), and Virginia Lake Elementary (D15). Students participated in activities and learned about departments and programs including Manufacturing, HVAC, Law Enforcement, Career Discovery, Library Services, Architecture, Business, Financial Aid, Student Involvement, Music, Nursing, Sustainability, and Marketing.
- On May 3 Amie Granger, Margaret McGowan along with Harper students Olivia Wolicki and Lindsay Killips volunteered at the Holmes Campus Family Fitness night in District 59. Families from Holmes Jr. High, Forest View Elementary, and the Early Learning Center participated in yoga sessions, competed in athletic challenges, sampled smoothies, and learned about Harper programs.
- *Governing* magazine, which covers politics, policy and management and has a circulation of about 85,000, ran an article previewing the White House’s announcement that it’s launching a \$100 million grant initiative to expand tuition-free community college programs. Reporter Alan Greenblatt interviewed Assistant Provost Michelé Smith, who gave an overview of Harper’s Promise Program. She stressed that students will earn their scholarship and pointed out how

approximately 4,600 high school freshmen have signed up. She says: “We want to create a college-going attitude in our community.”

- *University Business* wrote a lengthy article about the White House’s announcement which mentions Harper College.
- The *Daily Herald* and Peoria-area media covered Illinois Central College’s announcement that Chief of Staff Sheila Quirk-Bailey will serve as its next president. The local *ABC* and *NBC* affiliates aired stories on several of their newscasts and articles appeared in numerous publications and radio stations including the *Pekin Daily Times*.
- The *Arlington Heights Post*, *Barrington Courier-Review* and *chicagotribune.com* ran an article about Harper’s new Summer Scholars program, which helps prepare incoming students for college. Reporter Karen Cullotta interviewed Michelé Smith and student Jasmine Wilson, who is thriving after successfully completing a similar program that helped pave the way for Summer Scholars.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about the Foundation’s new HOPE Giving Circle, which brings together influential women of diverse backgrounds to support other women pursuing higher education.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about Dean Mark Mrozinski’s selection to the Aspen Institute’s inaugural class of the Aspen Presidential Fellowship for Community College Excellence.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about the speech and debate team placing fifth at the Phi Rho Pi national community college competition.
- *Plant Services* magazine ran an article about an open house that took place earlier this week in the FMA Metal Fabrication Lab. Managing Editor Christine LaFave Grace writes that the \$1.5 million facility is preparing students for lifelong careers and helping employers meeting critical skilled-labor needs.
- *Daily Herald* reporter Madhu Krishnamurthy wrote an article about Harper and four other suburban community colleges making the schools.com top 10 list of the state’s best community colleges.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article in the sports section about both the men’s and women’s track and field teams finishing third in the NJCAA national meet in Westfield, Mass.
- The *Daily Herald* wrote about Harper alum and former “American Idol” contestant Haley Reinhart in an article about the long-running hit show’s end.
- The *Daily Herald* ran another article about Harper’s call for Distinguished Alumni nominations.
- The *Daily Herald*, *Chicago Tribune* and *Patch* ran articles about Harper hosting “The Voice” contestant Angie Keilhauer for its first “zero-waste” Coffeehouse Concert.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article on the \$600 million stopgap funding bill aimed at keeping Illinois universities and community colleges afloat through the summer, and how it won’t reverse job reductions announced at Harper and College of Lake County. *NBC 5 Chicago* aired a segment on its newscast.

- The *Daily Herald*, *chicagotribune.com* and *Patch* ran articles about the Community Festival at the Learning and Career Center.
- *Examiner.com* ran a Q and A with Harper alum Nadia Ivanova about her career as a fashion designer.
- The *Elgin Courier/chicagotribune.com* ran an article about Harper winning a cupcake competition over Elgin Community College. The fourth annual event is part of the Hoffman Estates Bon Appétit Community Food and Drink Festival.
- The *Chicago Tribune* ran an article about motorcycle season and area motorcycle safety programs including Harper's.

With commencement, we mark the informal closing of the FY16 academic year, as our academic calendar closes six months later than the lunar year. Most folks I have spoken to around campus are both relieved and excited that the year is ending. Typically, we find that most are overwhelmed by the pace to graduation, and yet melancholy about the end and what it means. Many students we have gotten to know and admire are leaving us. We take great joy in their accomplishments, and will miss them dearly.

As is my custom, I'll take the week off after graduation and retreat to Virginia. There will be much to do this summer—we intend to approach the work with renewed energy and commitment. The summer will fly by!

Enjoy!

Ken