

## **President's Report**

**June 2011**

We luckily made it through a beautiful graduation ceremony without a drop of rain! Over 540 students walked across the stage and 3,700 guests attended on an unusually warm May afternoon. With a record number of graduates, a record number of marchers (students and faculty) and a gorgeous campus as a backdrop, it was indeed a special day. Connie Payton, wife of the late Walter Payton and founder of the Walter and Connie Payton Foundation, gave the commencement address; Rita Canning was recognized as the James J. McGrath Award recipient; Dr. Catherine Restovich was recognized as the Distinguished Faculty Award recipient; two Motorola "Award for Excellence" Scholars, Elyse Jacks and Katarzyna Grzesik, shared insights with their fellow graduates; Michael Torio, the Student Senate President, presented the class gifts; and Jacob Sadoff, the 2010 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, encouraged graduates as they move into their future. Graduation is the culminating event of the year. Many people across the College participated in making this year's graduation a wonderful memory for students and their families. It is on this day that the entire work of the College is on display in one setting—from the set-up and technical crews, to the staff and faculty who manage the learning and document the credentials. It was a memorable day and we hope to add to our successes as we go forward.

We are currently working hard on our summer instructional programs, including InZone, our summer youth program, as well as advising and registering new and returning students for the Fall semester. Our credit enrollment for the Summer term is up 1% compared to the same time last year. As the Board will recall from the budget presentation, we have forecast an enrollment increase of 2% for FY2012, but are holding 1% as a contingency in our budget. We will keep you updated as the summer progresses.

Recently, I was contacted by a senior officer for a national policy advocacy group—*Jobs for the Future* (JFF.) JFF is the preeminent policy advocacy group for workforce development in the United States. They have recently been funded by the Gates and Joyce Foundations to test a "real time" workforce development needs analysis at various community colleges across the country, and we have been invited to participate. All costs for this initiative will be covered through JFF grants. Naturally, we are honored to be included and, pending the contractual work, are set to deploy a team. This software will allow us (in real time) to receive job vacancy information by employment sector across our region. It will also specify the skills and competencies that the jobs require. We can then evaluate our current curricular offerings to assure we are aligned with employer and industry needs. This will be a huge asset to our program planning and the ongoing work that is being done to adjust current and develop new curricula. We are fortunate to be included in the pilot group.

An Interest Based Bargaining session was held on-campus earlier this month. Leadership from the collective bargaining units whose contracts expire next year and the administrators that make up the Communications Council were invited to attend. This orientation was facilitated by representatives from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS). FMCS has provided mediation and arbitration services to industry, their communities, and government agencies worldwide since 1947. Their mission is to improve labor-management relations, to promote collective bargaining, and to enhance organizational effectiveness. There was no cost to Harper for the services of FMCS as they are an agency of the Federal government.

Last week, we hosted approximately 60 American Council on Education (ACE) fellows and their advisors. It was an eventful day that focused on the alignment of our student success agenda to the Campus Master Plan. All of the ACE fellows were from four-year colleges and universities and Harper provided the ideal venue for showcasing the vast programming and impressive physical plant that characterize today's community colleges. The day was filled with activities including tours, panels and an activity where the ACE fellows were asked to program a Student Center. The day received rave reviews from all involved.

We also were informed by the Department of Labor that the TAA grant notification has been pushed to mid-September. As you know, we are leading an \$18.6 million dollar grant request for our Northern Illinois Workforce Coalition and participating in a similar venture through a multi-state Auto Communities Network request. Depending on the outcome of these requests, the College hopes to invest Department of Labor funds into a number of new workforce development initiatives.

Currently all of our administrators and their respective staffs are working to finalize the College's Operational Plan for FY2012. We will present the comprehensive College Plan for 2011-2012, which includes the Strategic, Operational, Budget and Capital Plans, coinciding with the August budget adoption. Summer for Harper employees is when we evaluate efforts from the past year and develop plans for the following fiscal year. That work is well underway.

The College welcomed our new Financial Aid Director, Laura McGee this month. Under her leadership, the Office of Student Financial Assistance is working to resolve errors identified in the FY 2009-2010 financial aid audit. We will update the Board as we proceed through this process.

We have launched our half-day Friday work schedule this summer. We have seen an increase in InZone participation and have more than 300 students enrolled in Friday credit classes. The grievance with our Pro Tech union regarding the summer work schedule has been resolved. We are working hard to make Fridays another good access option for our students and intend to grow our Friday offerings in the future.

Lots of other exciting activity is occurring across the campus and highlights are presented below.

### ***Student Success***

- Student Amanda Muledy, who is also a student aide in the Library, was selected as the 2011 recipient of the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Foundation undergraduate transfer scholarship award. She plans to be an English major at Lake Forest College or Northwestern in the Fall.

- Harper's Pom/Dance Team made a presentation at Juliette Low School in Arlington Heights as part of their ExploreMore Day.
- Four student athletes have been nominated for National Academic Awards: two have been nominated for the NJCAA Award for Exemplary Academic Achievement based on their GPAs between 3.60 and 3.79; one has been nominated for the NJCAA Award for Superior Academic Achievement for a GPA of 3.8 to 3.99; and one student athlete has been nominated for the NJCAA Pinnacle Award for Academic Excellence due to a 4.0 GPA.
- Amber Giffin, English tutor, is the recipient of the Local 1600 Norman Swenson Scholarship. She will be attending the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill this fall.
- Chris George is presenting at the Leadership Challenge Forum this July with nationally renowned authors Kouzes and Posner. He'll be sharing information about the Leadership Challenge within a community college environment, as well as outreach efforts with our high schools to bring new student leaders on campus.
- Terry Morris created and published a mobile app, Basics of Web Design Review, for both the Android and iPhone platforms that students can use to review concepts in the WEB 150 Web Development course.
- Dominique Svarc, and three high school accounting instructors from District 214, co-presented a session on "College Accounting" at the 2011 Teacher's of Accounting at Two Year Colleges (TACTYC) Conference.
- The Accounting Department held its annual High School Accounting Contest on Friday, April 29th. The conference was attended by 105 students from eight local high schools.
- Robin James, Instructor/Co-Coordinator in the Management Department and Kathi Nevels, Assistant Professor/Academic Advising and Counseling, have won the Illinois Community College Faculty Association Faculty Grant for 2011.
- Harper College was awarded the "Best College" award at the biennial Deaf Illinois Awards on May 14th. This award recognizes the outstanding services and support provided by the Deaf Team and Access & Disability Services. Harper has won this category every time since the inception of the Deaf Illinois Awards in 2007.
- Enrollment Services, along with the Health Careers area, hosted a Health Care Career Information Night; the event had 140 prospective students in attendance.
- Matt McLaughlin and Vicki Atkinson presented a session entitled "Partnering for Success: Implementing COMPASS Math Testing in High Schools" at the annual Midwest Region COMPASS and Assessment Conference.
- Over 3,000 new full-time students for summer and fall have been invited to attend orientation events this summer. Parent orientation sessions are also scheduled.

- Kim Fournier presented at a NILRC/ILCCO meeting in Springfield, via Elluminate, “Harper College Library on Streaming Media Collections: A Community College Perspective.”
- There were 126 library instruction sessions taught this spring, engaging more than 2,100 students in learning about the library. These classes work with instructors to create a valuable introduction to library resources, how to critically evaluate these resources and use them effectively for their class assignments.

### ***Information Technology***

- Blackboard was modified to enable students to enroll into all appropriate subsections of a given section. For example, a student enrolled in a Chemistry section that also has an associated lab subsection will be automatically enrolled in the Blackboard section and subsections. (Blackboard does not perform this function as part of the base system and the instructor previously had to manually enroll his/her students in the subsections).
- Additional elements were added into the upload process for the COMPASS placement test to enhance data validation and reduce the manual effort in the Testing and Assessment office.
- Daily Business Intelligence (DBI) has been implemented. DBI provides managers with dashboard reports of essential data stored in the Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS). Examples include budget to actual views as well as expense outlook, encumbrances and other essential components of financial analysis.
- Four new servers were brought online to accommodate the Oracle database and application server upgrade project to 11g and Weblogic. Automatic Memory Management (AMM) was enabled in Enterprise Business Suite (EBS) to allow for more efficient and dynamic memory allocation and de-allocation.

### ***Physical Plant***

- D Building Addition and Renovation, Student Center and Hospitality, and Euclid and Roselle Road Entrances: The Qualifications Based Selection process is underway. Staff will bring recommendations for these three projects to the Board of Trustees in the upcoming months.
- G & H Remodeling Project: Holabird and Root have completed the Design Development updates from the Master Plan. The Capital Development Board is processing the Architectural Services Contract and the Construction Management Services Contract.
- M Building Equipment Room and Fitness Center: Construction is scheduled to be completed by the end of the summer.
- L Building Elevators, A and J Building Entrances: Construction on the entrances and windows is scheduled to begin the last week of June. The elevator work is scheduled to start at the beginning of winter break and be completed before the start of Spring semester.

- C Building Toilet Rooms: The first floor toilet rooms are complete. The second floor remodeling will continue through the end of the calendar year.
- Radiology Lab, X134k: Construction has begun and is scheduled to be completed by the start of Fall semester.
- HIT Lab, X126: This project will be completed for the start of Fall semester.
- X236 Offices: The plans have been finalized. Construction is scheduled for Fall 2011.
- Y-Building Back-up Generator: The concrete walls, slab, and walks have been poured. Steel framing is complete and Trespa panels have been manufactured. Completion of the electrical work and restoration of the site are on-schedule for a mid-July project completion.
- C-202a Printmaking Shop: Plumbing, ductwork, and electrical rough-in is complete. Drywall finish work is in progress. The project will include a new ceiling, new lighting, etching tanks, sinks, and counters that are replacing outdated and deteriorated equipment. Interior remodeling is being performed by in-house personnel.
- Sidewalk Replacement at the Blue Pool: Bids were received and this is on the agenda for the June Board meeting. Demolition, construction and site restoration are scheduled for completion by September 1.
- M232 through M237 New Flooring: Abatement work began on May 27, and re-carpeting of three classrooms, a hallway, office and conference room were completed on June 2. All equipment and furniture were returned by June 3 with minimal disruption to Harper faculty and staff.
- Retaining Wall and Fuel Island Concrete Work: Plans are in progress to repair/replace the concrete retaining wall south of B Building where de-icing salt is stored. A safety railing will be added. The concrete apron above the underground fuel tanks west of T Building is being replaced per the recommendation of the State Fire Marshal. Work is expected to start in June and be completed by the end of July.

I want to close by noting the 3,300 degrees and certificates the College awarded this past year. We are well on our way to accomplishing the 10,604 goal as we awarded more than 1,000 additional certificates and degrees this year than we had projected given past trend lines. This is due to the exceptional work of our Strategic Plan Completion Team led by Maria Moten and Kathy Hanahan. Their team has been working hard to assure that students who have earned credentials in fact receive them. This accomplishment is a direct result of our intentional strategic focus on student success.

Congratulations to the Completion Team!

*Ken*