

President's Report

July 2013

As we approach mid-summer, from the perspective of the academic calendar, the College is extraordinarily busy. The summer InZone program for children is in full swing with record enrollments. This week we hosted the Chicago Cubs summer youth baseball camp among other activities. It's great to have all the youngsters on campus as we provide them with meaningful educational activities and introduce them to the world of post-secondary education through Harper College. No doubt, many of these young people will be Harper students throughout their lives.

Our summer credit enrollment has not met our earlier expectations. We are about 2% down in enrollment—a month ago we were up about 3%. What happened? Unfortunately, we dropped approximately 2,200 early registrations for non-payment. We were able to reach out and reenroll 1,200 of these students; however, the lost registration contributed to an overall diminution of the enrollment for the summer.

Currently we are significantly ahead of our enrollment for the fall semester, compared to a year ago on this date. However, currently 6,000 of these students have not paid their tuition. It is fairly predictable that a number of these students will be “dropped” for non-payment and we will, again, be reaching out to bring them back. The strategy we have employed over the last decade or so with respect to dropping students and then re-registering them is clearly not working today. We are exploring a new system that would require a certainty of payment *at the time of registration*. This system would integrate our financial aid information, credit information, past payment history of the student, scholarship data and bring these elements into the initial registration process rather than as a post-registration transaction. The student would leave with their registration secured. This will take some system adjustments on our part but we believe we will have a much better handle on our enrollment management program as a result.

Over the last couple of months the College's administrative team has been actively engaged in vetting the College Plan for next year. Strategic and operational objectives, with corresponding success metrics, have been developed for the entire institution. The Board will receive that information in August as we formally launch these activities for the year. In the last two weeks the Communications Council has met formally with me to review the Plan and make adjustments. We spent about two half-days together in this culminating planning session. I'm very proud of the goals that have been established and the hard work they will represent by this team. We look forward to the August presentation.

The calendar has been filled with wonderful activities in the past month. Several significant meetings and events have occurred, both on and off the campus. At the end of June, the College conducted a formal graduation ceremony for our GED (General Education Development

or high school equivalency) students. It was a wonderful celebration attended by a full house in the Performing Arts Center. I must say, it is an event that I hope all of our Board members and campus leaders get to experience as it really represents the turning point for so many families in our community. Trustee Mundt attended and his attendance was welcomed and recognized.

An unanticipated opportunity was presented to us at the end of June. Brevard College in Florida invited us to join in a \$25 million dollar Department of Labor TAACCCT Round 3 grant application, seeking funding to build a national certification system for Supply Chain Management. With support from the Gates Foundation, Brevard is leading an effort for funding that would bring together eight community colleges (Florida, New Jersey, Illinois) with three research universities, (Northwestern, Rutgers, Florida State) to develop these credentials. We had three weeks to complete our application for \$1.5 million dollars. Needless to say, the earlier work we led which resulted in the awarding of a TAACCCT Round 2 grant and the data we collected at our recent “skills” conference was very helpful. Dean Michelé Robinson, Wendy Moylan, and Sheila Quirk-Bailey were instrumental in meeting the deadlines. We are keeping our fingers crossed that the grant proposal will be funded by the Department of Labor.

Also, at the end of June we had the privilege of hosting a group of Chinese college presidents and regional higher education leaders for two days at Harper. This was an event we hosted at the bequest of the American Association of Community Colleges which served as the group’s American sponsor. Our guests spent a day touring our campus and meeting with faculty and administrative leaders. They used the second day to debrief their entire American experience (their Harper visit was the culminating event following three weeks in the United States) with the AACC staff. There is no question that the 21st Century Community College is globally connected! We shall seek other opportunities to participate in the international arena.

As another reminder of our “global connections,” Cathy and I hosted the College’s summer international students at a picnic in our yard and home. We had about 40 students, mostly Asian and Eastern European at the gathering. It is fascinating to hear their stories and get to know them in this relaxed and fun way. They, in turn, are so “honored” to meet with us. I’m sure there are a lot of Facebook pictures out there telling the story of the day.



This week we received the consultant's report regarding the program opportunities and challenges that align with the Northeast Center (NEC). Clearly, there is tremendous need in the community the NEC serves, with approximately 60,000 people living within a mile of the facility. Many of these community members are experiencing financial, social, and educational challenges. Many have no transportation, thus the NEC represents a real opportunity to provide occupational and workforce credentials without having to travel to the main campus. We will be closely analyzing this report as we seek to determine the appropriate program and service mix for the NEC. It may become a very important element of our next Strategic Plan.

At the end of June, we met with the Village of Barrington's Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. I made a presentation about the College, higher education and workforce/economic development that was well received. There appear to be many opportunities to partner with the Chamber and its member businesses.

In early July, the Aspen Institute (DC) invited me to attend the roll-out of their Findings regarding the qualities needed in the 21st Century Community College Presidency. Earlier in the year, I participated in a planning meeting with them regarding their exploration of these qualities. The report identified 5 essential qualities of highly effective community college presidents including: Deep Commitment to Student Access and Success; Willingness to Take Significant Risks to Advance Student Success; Ability to Create Lasting Change within the College; Strong, Broad Strategic Vision for the College and Its Students Reflected in External Partnerships; and Ability to Raise and Allocate Resources in Ways Aligned to Student Success. The report was very credible to me and my understanding of the challenges faced by Presidents today.

Here are some highlights of activities happening around campus.

Finance and Administrative Services

- As of June 29, 2013, the HarperStore is being operated by Follett Higher Education Group Ltd. (Follett), a local company with corporate offices in Oak Brook, IL and River Forest, IL, and a new automated distribution center in Aurora, IL. Currently managing over 930 college bookstores nationwide, Follett has been in the business for 140 years and runs 350 bookstores at two-year colleges, more than all their competitors combined. The transition is going well, with all previous HarperStore full-time and part-time employees, as well as student aids, being offered positions with Follett, which will help ensure a smooth transition. Driven by technology and increased competition, the bookstore business is rapidly changing. Follett's mission is to drive the success of students and their partners with exceptional, full-service campus stores constantly evolving and adapting in this new environment.

Information Technology

- Significant progress has been made in preparing for the implementation of a new student information system release (Banner 8.6) in July. The new release has been installed in a pre-production environment, and comprehensive testing is approximately 90% complete. Go-live is anticipated July 15.
- Information Technology installed and implemented Service Desk Plus (SDP) for the Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Division and the Center for Innovative Instruction (CII). SDP is a project tracking system that will improve project requests, tracking, and reporting.

- The Information Technology team supported the transition to the new Follett-managed HarperStore, which included assistance with replacing equipment, coordinating new data services, and providing temporary systems to allow returns of book rentals.
- Jim Batson, Director of Technical Services, gave a presentation on Harper's new leading edge classroom technology infrastructure at the UBTech National Conference. This event, sponsored by *University Business* magazine, was an educational conference attended by over 1000 representatives from over 400 colleges and universities from across the globe.

Student Success

- Sam Giordano, Program Coordinator was recently nominated by Fire Chief Scott Anderson of the Palatine Fire Department for "Harper College Outstanding Business Partner" for the "NECSS" Northwest Educational Council for Student Success.
- Jane Suárez del Real and Devin Chambers co-presented at the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. Their presentation was titled "Teaching Adult Students to Excel and Access our 21st Century World."
- The International Student Office hosted a visit from eight U.S.-Korea Fulbright International Education Administrators. The Fulbright grantees are traveling in the Midwest for three weeks to visit colleges, universities, U.S. American cultural sites, a middle school, and the national NAFSA: Association of International Educators annual conference.
- Marianne Farinas de Leon organized and presented at the "Gender Issues Curriculum Infusion" Workshop that was sponsored by the Women's Center and board member Rita Canning.
- John Gilmore's book *On the Run with Bonnie & Clyde* has been published with an introduction by Kurt Hemmer.
- Richard Middleton-Kaplan has a chapter in the book *Levinas and Twentieth-Century Literature* that has just come out from University of Delaware Press. The chapter is titled "Dialogic Ethics through Levinas and Bakhtin: Dialogism and Infinite Obligation to the Other in Three Twentieth-Century Dramas." The three plays discussed span the century: Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1921), Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* (1947), and Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* (1991-1992).
- Department of Music Chair, Greg Clemons, continued his busy spring semester schedule of activities as a guest conductor, adjudicator, and clinician recently with both the Festivals of Music Competition and the Music in the Parks Festivals. Both are nationally acclaimed music festivals for high school musicians directed by Educational Programs Network of Philadelphia. Greg was recently elected to a fifth term on the Illinois Council of Orchestras Board of Directors where he serves as director of the ICO Awards Program.
- Professor Laura Pulio Colbert directed *Italian American Reconciliation* by Academy Award winning playwright John Patrick Shanley this past spring in the Liberal Arts Center Drama Lab.
- In collaboration with the Hanover Township, two of our Career Center counselors (Bill Hengtgen and Jen Godish) led two separate workshops for community members. One

workshop guided participants through career exploration; the second workshop assisted participants with resume and cover letter writing.

- Matthew McLaughlin, Admissions & Testing Manager, and Michael Szela, ERP Systems Technical Manager, presented at the Ellucian Illinois Conference which was held at Joliet Junior College on May 21st. Their conference presentation—“Placement for Success: Synthesizing and Streamlining Students’ Course Placement”—outlined the system Harper has implemented which automatically synthesizes placement data from Banner to clearly articulate placement results.
- The Testing Center completed their spring 2013 student satisfaction survey. The mission-specific satisfaction score of students served in this office was 98.4%, which represents an almost 12% increase from two years ago. Recent improvements in the Testing Center include:
 - The Testing Center has developed and put in place new operating procedures to facilitate the implementation of a new math department policy for special testing that can improve chances to accelerate through the developmental math sequence. Nearly 300 students were identified as being eligible for this special permission to retest in COMPASS to determine if they can place higher.
 - The Testing Center is using laptops to help meet the demand in new student placement testing. The additional 23 laptop computers increase testing capacity by 29%, and that is especially significant during the peak summer months.
 - New degree-seeking students can now receive a COMPASS preview/preparation session in the same room in which they will take the exams.
 - COMPASS testing at our partner high schools is underway with over 4,500 exams administered so far this spring. Although testing is continuing through early June, we have already experienced a 30% increase in spring semester high school testing.
- The Center for New Students has seen a 28% increase in student traffic in Orientation compared to last year – largely due to the additional volume of new students who are required to attend Orientation by virtue of their degree-seeking status. They have introduced a New Orientation Preview in the MyOrientation Tab that launches a 30-minute, interactive presentation designed to prepare new students for the decisions they’ll make at Orientation.
- The Office of Student Involvement coordinated the 42nd Annual Dinner and Jazz Event featuring the Ken Spurr Jazz Ensemble and the Harper College Jazz Lab on June 20. The event was free to all Harper College students, faculty, and staff and family and 307 people attended the event.
- The Harper Athletic Program was ranked 24th among all Junior/Community College athletic programs in the final standings of the 2013 Learfield Sports Directors’ Cup. Harper was the top ranked team from Illinois. The Directors Cup is a “program that honors institutions maintaining a broad-based program, achieving success in many sports, both men’s and women’s.” Each institution is awarded points in a pre-determined number of sports for men and women. The overall champion is the institution that records the highest number of points in their division’s Directors’ Cup standings. This was the first year that 2-year athletic programs were included in the program that honors NCAA DI, DII, DIII and NAIA athletic programs. Scholarship and Non-scholarship programs from the NJCAA, California Community Colleges and Northwest Community Colleges are combined in the final rankings. Standings are updated on NACDA’s website, Learfield Sports website and published in USA Today.

Workforce and Strategic Alliances

- The Workforce Board Support area assisted dislocated workers with exploring career training options at Harper College. As a result, 193 Individual Training Agreements (vouchers) were awarded to clients seeking training at Harper College.
- Harper College hosted 38 workshops for universal clients at the Arlington Heights One Stop (unemployment office). Over 300 individuals participated in the workshops.
- The Fast Track area held a special graduation for students completing certificates and degrees in this accelerated modality; 121 students completed programs and 150 credentials were awarded. Diplomas were earned in multiple disciplines including the Associate Degree in Arts, the Associates Degree in Applied Science in Business Administration, Certificates in General Management, Advanced Management, Human Resource Management, Inventory/Production Control, Health Insurance Specialist, and Supply Chain Management.
- There has been a 13% increase in InZone enrollment this summer. Over the past two years, enrollment has increased by 20%. Currently, there are 5,825 duplicated headcounts (some campers enroll in more than one program) in InZone this summer. Youth are participating in enrichment, sports and aquatics programs.

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- The *Accountability Report for 2013* has been published. This document highlights progress in meeting the College's Institutional Effectiveness Measures, Operational and Budget goals.
- A special research project on the usage of the Northeast Center was completed. The summary report is being reviewed and will be shared with the College community.

Advancement

- After many months of stewardship, the Foundation received official paperwork for the Esko-Graphics, Inc. in-kind donation of graphic design software. The in-kind value increased from \$1 million to \$3 million due to additional licenses donated.
- The Motorola Solutions Foundation approved a \$48,000 grant to support three different scholarships for Harper students: The Award for Excellence; an engineering scholarship; and a scholarship for Adelante! students (Hispanic students from Barrington District 220 who successfully complete Harper's summer bridge program).

Legislative Relations

Illinois State Representative Fred Crespo (D-Hoffman Estates) secured a \$200,000 state grant to support the partnership between Harper, Elgin Community College and the Cook County Workforce Partnership to open an extension site in Hanover Park.

A special committee, appointed by leaders of the Illinois General Assembly, continues to work on legislation to address the State's pension crisis. Two Harper district legislators, Senator Matt Murphy (R-Palatine) and Representative Elaine Nekritz (D-Des Plaines) are co-chairs of the

committee. The committee is carefully examining the cost shift proposed by state universities and community colleges. However, the Council of Community College Presidents and the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) have expressed reservations about the latest version of the plan, which was written by committee staffers, because it includes cuts in benefits for Tier 1 employees and could trigger a wave of early retirements.

Media Relations

For the June 14 through July 12 media cycle:

- 31 story placements.
- The *Pioneer Press* had a large feature story on 50 Barrington High School students who are taking part in the Adelante! summer bridge program.
- The *Chicago Tribune* did a large feature story on former Harper soccer player Amanda Herdegen and her success at Eastern Illinois University.
- The proposed parking structure was featured in *Patch* and *Daily Journal and Topics*.
- Novelist and *World War Z* author Max Brooks' visit to Harper was featured in the *Daily Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune*.
- Harper and local artists displaying their work in Studio V were featured in *Patch*.

So, it's safe to say that the College is a year-round operation. The College is engaged and working very hard this summer. 21st Century Community Colleges are very busy institutions. They must be. Our future depends on them. Enjoy the summer!

Ken