

President's Report

August 2015

It's mid-August and finally, the temperatures have reached 90 degrees during the day and 70 degrees at night. Some refer to these times as "the dog days" of summer. I consider this almost as pleasant as Virginia weather! If you are a gardener like me, this is the perfect summer weather. I find myself harvesting tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, beans, beets, and potatoes daily. Gardeners consider this great fun!

Summer is now blending into fall. The College will soon be in starting the fall semester, and the garden will be a pleasant but distant memory! We approach the fall semester concerned about enrollment. Current fall enrollment is down as compared to last year. We are currently down approximately 10%, despite having the same number of applications for admission. We are also experiencing an increase in financial aid applications and packaging.

The penetration rate for high school graduates remains very high. However, each senior class continues to be smaller. We also continue to experience enrollment declines in young adult and adult market segments. In part, this can be explained by a rebounding job market. Curriculum alignment that is attractive for adults is also something that is being reviewed.

On the positive side, we have seen increased demand for our Fast Track programs; sufficient enough for us to consider opening additional cohorts this fall. While Fast Track still requires students to complete a degree in a little over two years, it is important to note that students are pursuing two to three classes each semester, thus they are considered "part-time." The unique features of this program are attractive to adults because they outline a path to graduation, and classes in the sequence are guaranteed to run. Students are in cohorts and attend classes on the same weeknight from 6-10 PM until they complete their certificates or degrees. This allows them to plan for child/elder care or adjust work schedules. This type of intentional programming needs to be examined for further application.

We end the summer ready to lead our strategic plan through the formal shared governance process. I am convinced that both our completion agenda and enrollment difficulties can be addressed through this plan. The plan calls for much more intentional engagement with our students, and directs us to more robust student onboarding, assessment, and program and career advisement. It will also inform the mapping of specific pathways to degree completion, provide early alerts to students who are in jeopardy, enhance professional development that is aligned with these activities, and provide analytical support as student patterns emerge through data.

Currently, we are very well positioned to serve capable students—particularly students coming from college-educated families. We are not positioned for our changing student body; one that includes greater numbers of first-generation college students. Attending college can be confusing and overwhelming to those who are not familiar with the post-secondary experience. Students choose Harper because they seek a path to a career via a four-year institution—or through an applied associate’s degree. Our new plan, executed with discipline and persistence, will enable more students to identify and achieve their goals.

The summer has been very productive with regard to our fundraising and outreach for the Promise Scholarship Program. Soon, we will announce a very large investment by a local family in support of Promise. Over the summer, we have hosted several small gatherings of those positioned to make similar investments. Momentum is growing and we are working hard to reach our fundraising goal. This program is drawing attention nationally. We look forward to welcoming the first Promise Scholars this fall, as they will register for the program in October.

In the pages that follow, you will note many accomplishments by our students, faculty, and staff. Harper has accomplished much over the summer. Take a look.

Student Success

- Harper education student Karenina Thomas is one of two students nationwide who have been awarded the National Scholarship from the National Association of Community College Teacher Education Program. (NACCTEP.) NACCTEP is committed to promoting the community college’s role in the recruitment, preparation, retention, and renewal of early childhood and K-12 teachers and to advocate for quality teacher education programs in community colleges. This is the 2nd year in a row that an education student from Harper College has won the NACCTEP National Scholarship.
- During the 2014-2015 academic year, 48 Women’s Program participants completed a certificate or degree at Harper. The Women’s Program served 477 students, which is an all-time high. Completion rates remain strong with 89% completing their courses in the fall and 83% completing their courses in the spring.
- The One-Stop Center has seen 2,846 students and their families in-person between May 18 and July 17. The One-Stop team helps both continuing and new students navigate the registration, financial aid and payment processes to ensure students are prepared and make timely decisions to move forward. Additionally, the One-Stop Center, Registrar’s Office and Admissions Outreach are reaching out to 100% of all new students 48 hours before and 48 hours after their orientation appointment to ensure all of their enrollment questions and concerns are answered.
- Harper College hosted the Golden Corridor Advanced Manufacturing Partnership Quarterly Meeting on August 4. Over 40 guests attended the breakfast and meeting. Dr. Ender spoke about the Promise Scholarship. Several local partners also participated in the event including Michael Carr, from Oakton Community College, and Patrick Osborne of the Technology and Manufacturing Association. Tours of the Career and Technical Education Center and the site of the new Fabricators and Manufacturers Association Fabrication Lab were also available.

- Through the use of the newly automated Advanced Placement (AP) exam upload program, 2,502 Harper College credits were awarded in a matter of minutes. This came as a result of 385 students submitting 1,102 AP exams following their spring 2015 semester testing. In summers past, the process of evaluating such a large volume of AP credits in an accurate fashion would have taken two weeks.
- Accounting Faculty, Lisa Busto and Dominique Svarc, and their students, volunteered for the Ladder Up organization. Ladder Up is a nonprofit organization that trains and deploys more than 1,100 volunteers to offer free financial services to low-income families in and around Chicago. During the 2015 tax season, 27 Harper volunteers returned an estimated \$286,770 in tax refunds to hardworking clients through Ladder Up's Tax Assistance Program.
- The Office of Student Financial Assistance informed our students about their financial aid earlier than ever before. Staff has consistently completed the initial processing of files in an extraordinary timeline of less than a week. With the new payment commitment initiative, student awareness of their financial aid is an essential component to getting students registered for classes.
- Laura Bennett, Student Conduct Officer, served as a faculty member at the Donald D. Gehring Training Academy, hosted by the Association for Student Conduct Administration. Laura taught courses in the Student Conduct Director Track (designed to teach student conduct administrators how to be a director of a student conduct office) and also taught a day-long seminar on Student Activism, Protests, and Free Speech.
- Dr. Joanne Leski, Nursing Professor, participated in an Evaluation Review Panel which is an appointed position by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) Board of Commissioners. Joanne reviewed and presented six programs at this meeting. Following the review, Joanne received a letter from the Chief Executive Officer of the ACEN complimenting her on the dedication and outstanding work she provided.
- The *Daily Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune* recently featured articles about Studio V and the trunk show series. Studio V is a professional, student-run boutique offering a wide array of student-designed work including jewelry, fashion items, accessories, sculpture, art and original pieces. Community events and public workshops hosted in the retail space allow the classroom to become a part of the community.

Facilities Management

- The Building D – Phase II project is progressing well and remains on schedule for spring 2016 completion.
- The Outdoor Amphitheater and Pedestrian Mall is progressing well and remains on schedule for spring 2016 completion.
- Building F Library Renovation Project design work is progressing well and remains on schedule for completion in mid-to-late 2016. Progress reports will be provided to the Board of Trustees at key milestones throughout the design phases.

- The Canning Center and Hospitality projects remain on hold by the State of Illinois. No updates have been provided by the Capital Development Board.
- Phase I of the West Campus Infrastructure Project is progressing well and is on schedule for fall 2015 completion. Phase II of this project will not commence until the Canning Center project is released from its current hold.
- Landscaping work surrounding the Building D addition, East Campus Parking Structure, and Building H has been completed.
- The new outdoor patio area outside the Building D addition has been completed.
- Annual sidewalk replacement work throughout campus has been completed.
- The Facilities Management service yard asphalt and concrete pavement replacement project behind Building B has been completed.
- The new vestibule linking Buildings L and Z together has been completed.
- The new bridge from the north campus parking lots has been completed. Landscape restoration is in progress.

Information Technology

- The Information Technology team completed the upgrade of the College's Student Information System (Banner) and the associated database technology (Oracle). The Student Information System upgrade included Banner student modules, accounts receivable, financial aid, and payment processing. Members of the Applications Support, Database, Network, and Server teams worked throughout the weekend of July 25-26 to complete the final upgrade.
- The Enterprise Systems team partnered with Student Development and Enrollment Services to complete the implementation of a new degree audit system for our students. Degree Works is a web-based system that enables students and their advisors to review academic coursework and to evaluate progress towards fulfillment of degree requirements. The system is now a key component of My Plan, which provides students with resources for financial and educational planning, student acclimation and campus life, career planning, personal portfolio, employment support, and more.
- The West Campus Infrastructure project required AT&T fiber and copper connections to be moved. The Telecom team facilitated this move, were onsite when the work occurred at 4:30 am, and verified functionality after the move was complete.

Human Resources

- On July 1, the new applicant tracking system (ATS) became fully operational. The PageUp People ATS gives internal users features such as a Quick Search function, interview scheduling capability, and a simplified approval process. The new system offers applicants the opportunity to subscribe for personalized job alerts and includes the ability to filter job searches by job category and type.

- On July 10, Harper celebrated and recognized the efforts of the classified staff with an appreciation luncheon. Students from the Harper College Massage Therapy program were on hand to provide complimentary chair massages.

Finance and Administrative Services

- The College has been participating in the State's Local Debt Recovery Program (LDRP) since October 2013. This program allows government agencies to collect unpaid debt through the Illinois Office of Comptroller by offsetting state proceeds due to the debtor. The debtor is provided a notice of the offset and given 60 days to file a written protest with the Comptroller's office. If no protest is made after the 60-day period, the amount owed is transferred to the College. During Fiscal Year 2015, the college collected \$128,957, and has collected \$273,953 since joining the program.

Harper College Police Department

- Under the Illinois Police Training Act, the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board will reimburse Harper \$6,000 for Basic Police Academy Training for Officers Atif Bukhari and Melissa Douglas, both of whom completed the Basic Police Academy in 2014.

Advancement

- The Illinois Manufacturers' Association (IMA) Education Foundation awarded Harper College \$25,000 in scholarship funds for meeting a series of set standards and performing at a high level of active engagement to foster greater educational opportunities within the field of manufacturing. Harper College is one of six institutions across the state that is receiving a scholarship from the IMA Education Foundation this summer.
- Kimberly Jimenez is the 2015/16 recipient of the Sunderbruch Speech and Debate Scholarship. But speaking has not always come naturally to her. In fact, Kimberly spent her childhood and early teen years in speech development to relieve a severe speech impediment. Kimberly became introverted and hated any kind of public speaking until high school, when she entertained the idea of joining the debate team more to avoid public humiliation than for interest. She struggled at first, only doing the minimum because she still feared speaking in a group setting. If her team did win, she felt guilt, thinking she didn't have much to contribute.

Kimberly started to question why she was on the team. Then one day, she was approached by some of her fellow teammates, who convinced her that there was more to winning than having the trophy, and that allowed for greater satisfaction in her performances. Suddenly, everything clicked.

Kimberly became immersed in the realm of debate and was a semi-finalist at the IHSA State Debate tournament, placing sixth in the final round out of over 200 competitors from over 25 schools. Now at Harper College, Kimberly has a 3.0 GPA and has chosen to continue her extremely successful growth and progression in forensics at Harper College. And we're lucky to have her!

Marketing & Communication

- Marketing Services coordinated focused August enrollment radio spots on specific career program messages, including Entrepreneurship and Medical Coding, week of August 3, Manufacturing and Early Childhood Education, week of August 10, and Health Care and Supply Chain Management, week of August 17. Radio spots were targeted to males and females, 18-34 years of age. Station selection included most-listened-to stations in our district among those demographics, including WKSC-FM, WBBM-FM, WKQX-FM, WTMX-FM, WEBG-FM, and WMVP-AM. The media plan was designed to reach 75% of the target audience with the message at least four times during August.
- A series of initiatives to market fall Fast Track opportunities was completed. Programs marketed included the AAS degree in Business, HIT Medical Coding Certificate, Supply Chain Certificate and Human Resource Certificate. Activities included:
 - Direct mail to all district households (this mailer also promoted general fall opportunities for adults and high school graduates).
 - Email to prospective Fast Track students for each program.
 - Web and social media marketing.
- Marketing Services attended the Fast Track Summer 2015 graduation on July 29 to take photos and to videotape the student speaker. You may view a gallery of Fast Track graduation photos by Nick Wenzel, Marketing Services student photographer, here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHskgG2Edd>
- Continued to collaborate with Enrollment Services to send daily email reminders to fall students in the 48-hour cue for the payment deadline. Emails averaging approximately a 50% open rate, well above benchmark averages for this type of email messaging. This is one of many tactics the College is using to reach out to students who have yet to pay tuition and fees for fall.
- Collaborated with Enrollment Services to communicate Saturday One-Stop events on August 8 and 15, providing applied/not registered students with resources to help them start this fall. Tactics included landing page and electronic RSVP form development, email marketing, and social media posting.

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- Produced the annual Institutional Accountability Report, summarizing the accomplishments of the College related to three main areas: Institutional Effectiveness Measures (IEMs); Strategic Plan; and Operational Plan.
- Updated the IEM and Strategic Plan dashboards to provide internal and external constituents access to current data on college performance.
- Received approval from the Higher Learning Commission for Harper College Quality Initiative Proposal: Improving student achievement through broad-based evaluation and planning. This multi-phased initiative engages stakeholders in a thorough evaluation and planning process that focuses the institution on the modifications needed to meet the needs of our changing district and student populations, improve overall academic quality, and increase student achievement.

Workforce and Strategic Alliances

- A completion celebration was hosted at the Harper Professional Center for students completing Fast Track certificates and degrees; 21 degrees and 127 certificates were awarded. Drs. Ender and Marwick certified and presented the credentials. The keynote speaker was a Fast Track graduate, Lina Loncar. She provided great insights into the challenges adult students face in pursuing post-secondary education (work, family) and how Fast Track facilitates successful completion.
- The first cohort of manufacturing apprentices was welcomed to the College at an official launch celebration. Dr. Ender welcomed over 50 attendees, which included the apprentices and their families, business partners, and local politicians.
- The Continuing Education area hosted a new program, InZone Access. This program provided scholarships to InZone for homeless youth. InZone Access was proposed via the Harper Leadership Institute (HLI) and was supported by the Educational Foundation. One of the classes these students took was in documentary film making. During the class, the students created a video that explained why they are planning to pursue the Promise Program. Here is a link to that video. <http://youtu.be/3OJfD0p8A1M>
- Continuing Education hosted a launch meeting for the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI). Over 150 people attended the launch which generated more than 500 enrollments in LLI classes. This is the 13th year LLI has offered specialized programming to community members 55 years and older. During the launch meeting, attendees previewed programs that will be offered during the year. LLI offers classes at Harper, The Garlands, Friendship Village, Addolorata Villa, Arlington Heights Senior Center, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Brookdale, and The Moorings.

Diversity and Inclusion

- The Special Assistant to the President for Diversity & Inclusion Michelé Robinson and the Acting Director for One Million Degrees Kris Hoffhines attended a two-day meeting of the Minority Male Community College Collaborative (M2C3) July 29 - 30. This National Consortium, designed to develop strategies for assisting men of color to succeed in college, was attended by more than 140 community college representatives from across the country. As we enter our new strategic planning cycle, we believe that our association with M2C3 will be instrumental in helping us to meet our strategic directions of inclusion, engagement and achievement.
- The Office of Diversity & Inclusion, in collaboration with Human Resources, hosted a number of feedback sessions aimed at identifying learning goals and outcomes for the design of a Diversity & Inclusion Education workshop experience for our campus. These feedback sessions resulted in the development of a 'pilot' workshop that was attended earlier this summer by 22 Harper employees from across the campus. Feedback from the pilot workshop will be utilized in determining a vendor and a Diversity & inclusion education/training plan for Harper employees.

Media, Community and Legislative Relations

- Community Relations hosted a scavenger hunt for 100 children who are members of the Palatine Opportunity Center's I COMPETE program. Each group visited 7 different departments on campus including Library Services, Student Involvement, Admissions, Linguistics, Career and

Technical Programs, Nursing, and the box office.

- The Harper Theatre and Music departments were featured in the Prospect Heights Library's summer reading display through a partnership with Community Relations. Throughout the month of July, library patrons could view different musical instruments from the Harper's music department and costume pieces from the theatre department's past productions. The display also promoted the upcoming performances for the 2015-16 season.
- Governor Bruce Rauner signed Senate Bill 806 (known as the Articulation Bill) which will ease transfer and grant junior status for community college graduates who attend state universities. Harper Provost Judy Marwick and her fellow community college Chief Academic Officers have worked on this bill for several years. The bill's two chief sponsors were both Harper legislators – Representative Fred Crespo in the House and Senator Dan Kotowski in the Senate.
- Below are some of the Harper-related stories in the news over the past several weeks:
 - The *Daily Herald* ran an article and photos about Harper's new Geographic Information Systems degree and certificate program, which launches this fall. Students in Harper's Adelante summer bridge program were featured.
 - Harper Instructor Pieranna Fanella was the *Daily Herald's* Chef of the Week. In addition to the article, photographer Patrick Kunzer did a video of her cooking.
 - *Chicago Tribune* reporter Karen Ann Cullotta wrote an article about Harper Instructor Michael Stark and his family. Stark, who teaches American Sign Language, his wife and their two children are deaf. They're featured in an upcoming documentary, "Louder than Words," which follows their decision to have their two young children provided with cochlear implant surgery.
 - The *Daily Herald* ran an article about archeologists attempting to unearth treasures in various Cook County sites. Harper Associate Professor Patricia Hamlen offered her expertise in the article.
 - The *Daily Herald* ran an article about Harper's new entrepreneurship degree and certificate program.
 - The *Daily Herald* ran an article about the academic success of Harper's women's track and field team.

Over the next three weeks, our enrollment picture will become clearer and the financial impact known. We plan to adjust, accordingly. Likewise, the College's strategic plan will be poised for final presentation and adoption by the Board. We will work to assure the plan has been thoroughly vetted college-wide. It is an important plan and its outcomes are critical to our future and the future of our current and future students

Cathy and I will spend Labor Day on the mountain in Virginia. Enjoy the summer weather while it lasts!

Ken