

President's Report

September 2013

The fall semester is off to a good start. As we complete the third week of the term, we are pleased to report that the traffic situation has eased and parking is beginning to settle into a predictable pattern. Our temporary parking arrangement has assisted a great deal and staff has been very helpful in using outer parking areas to assist our students. In many ways, a parking shortage is a good situation to have—but it won't be that way for long!

This fall our enrollment is flat. We have one more registration period in the term with "late start" sections. Our expectation is that we will meet budgeted revenue in the tuition and fees category. A fuller report on enrollment will be offered in the November President's Report.

We were looking forward to seeing firsthand how students would respond to our new bookstore vendor—Follett. I personally walked through the store several times during the rush and witnessed excellent customer service, many new merchandising products, and a very professional atmosphere. All former Harper Bookstore staff are now employed Follett. The transition has gone well.

Next week (the week of September 16) the Harper Leadership Institute will be launched. We are looking forward to beginning this important initiative and also looking forward to introducing this first cohort to the Board at a pre-Board meeting dinner on September 18. This likely will become an annual tradition. Kudos to Dr. Mark Mrozinski and the entire planning team for developing a superb agenda for the intensive residential experience the participants will experience. We will share with the Board the agenda for those four days and I believe you will agree it is aligned nicely with issues and opportunities facing community colleges today.

Our last two focus sessions with local community leaders will be concluded the week of September 23 as we spend some facilitated time with our area health care providers and then State elected officials. We anticipate a report from the consultant facilitating the sessions in early October and will be bringing the taskforce back together later that month to begin to develop a plan for our overall community relations effort. We have rich data sets from our community survey and from these focus groups. We will be looking for themes that we can align with the College's operational and strategic goals as we determine a more intentional and disciplined community engagement strategy going forward.

As one might expect there has been a flurry of activity associated with the Fall Semester opening as reported below.

Student Success

- The Testing Center has experienced a nearly 15% increase in new student testing compared to this same time last year (2,422). This increase is the direct result of the change to requiring degree-seeking students to assess upon entry rather than mandatory assessment based on first semester full-time status. Center for New Students and Orientation experienced a 7% increase in students served during summer Orientation (3,075 total).
- The REACH Summer Bridge Program worked with 103 students for two weeks at the end of the summer to help acclimate and brush-up skills of students who tested into two or more developmental courses. Students retested at the end of the program with positive results. Highlights include:
 - 34% of the students tested into a higher level course in math
 - 50% of the students tested into a higher level course in English
 - 48% of the students tested into a higher level course in reading
- This year Harper College has 100 international students from 30 countries. We welcomed 34 new international students this fall. Five of the new students came directly to Harper after graduating from high schools in our district. The photo shows several of the new students gathering at international student orientation.



- At the request of the Office of International Programs in the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Harper College hosted a group of nine Chinese administrators on August 27th as part of a "Higher Education in the USA" program for EdD students from Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan, China (they are adult students in the program at Huazhong, but are administrators at various institutions across China). As part of the program, they are visiting various colleges and universities in Illinois to learn how they operate, services provided to students, and the management of administration. Dr. Richard F. Johnson gave a presentation on U.S. community colleges as

well as specifically sharing Harper College's story. Ms. Areeba Afzal, a Harper student, gave the guests a tour of the facilities.



- The Office of Student Involvement coordinated Fall 2013 Welcome Week (8/26 – 8/29) activities that included:
 - Welcome Week Tables in buildings J, L and Avante. 81 Administrators and staff volunteered to sit at the tables and answer questions from new students yielding contact with 2,270 students; an 18% increase from last year's number of 1,928.
 - Wednesday Student Involvement & Student Organizations Open House. Over 50 students visited the Office of Student Involvement to sign interest forms and get more information regarding Intramurals and Student Leadership programs.
 - Thursday Student Development-sponsored Ice Cream Social, featuring the Harper College Jazz Lab. Over 300 students stopped by to receive ice-cream.
- Harper College was selected as a Starfish 360 Award Winner for our work with Project Success (Early Alert). As a winner, Harper will receive \$1,000 that will be used to award a \$50 spring semester tuition credit to 20 students who are flagged for concern through our Early Alert program, follow through to develop a success plan with their counselor, and demonstrate the highest semester grade point averages at end of the fall semester. This program was piloted through the Completion goal team as part of the College's Strategic Plan and was recently institutionalized this past spring.
- The Kimball Hill Family Deaf Institute, a program of Access & Disability Services, was nominated for Best College and Best Event at the biennial Deaf Illinois Awards. We won the Best Event category for the annual DeaFest. The Deaf Institute has won multiple awards since the biennial Deaf Illinois Awards started in 2007.

Physical Plant

- Work was completed on the sloped metal roof replacement at Buildings E, L, and P prior to the start of the semester, with the exception of the north slope of Building E. That portion has been postponed until next summer due to the need to perform further structural analysis on the existing conditions. An atypical design detail with the ceiling in E106 has been identified

and resolved. E106 will remain off line until the start of the spring 2014 semester so the room can be fully restored. Fall 2013 classes scheduled for this room were relocated.

- Work was completed to the addition of interim parking spaces and the relocated hammer/discus throw area prior to the start of the semester and was required to offset parking spaces that were not available due to ongoing east campus construction work. Lot 1 gained 138 additional spaces on the west side, and 30 parallel parking spaces were added along a currently unused portion of Kris Howard Drive. Additionally, a new staging area has been constructed at the former hammer/discus throw area for trades vehicles and materials so they do not take up parking normally reserved for students, faculty, and staff on campus. A new hammer/discus throw area has been constructed immediately west of the existing softball field. As a result, the College has more parking available than in past years.
- Construction continues to move along swiftly on all Campus Master Plan projects. Building D foundations are near completion for the east side addition, and structural steel work should be starting soon. Building H demolition is near completion, along with masonry restoration work. New punched window openings can be seen on the north elevation and the opening for the new two-story clerestory atrium has been cut out of the existing roof structure. The new east campus parking structure project will break ground in mid-September. All of these projects remain on schedule for completion before or during the Fall 2014 semester. Work is also moving along quite well with regard to the new One-Stop/Student Center project. The schematic design phase is complete and currently being presented for approval to the College and then to the Capital Development Board. The design development phase will occur next and continue through the balance of 2013, which upon approval, will initiate the architects to start construction documents.

Information Technology

- Completed the development of a new employee onboarding form in the E-Business Suite system. The new form consolidates many disparate documents and processes into one location for onboarding a new employee. The requestor now has one place to go to obtain necessary access to systems, keys, a computer, and other resources a new employee requires.
- Completed the project to convert student records stored on microfilm and paper to an electronic form. The information was converted to electronic files, stored on Information Technology's file systems, and was organized such that it can be quickly referenced by an authorized College employee.
- Partnered with Marketing to complete the project to provide a dashboard view of the progress towards the College's Institutional Effectiveness Measures targets. The dashboard provides the progress towards achieving the objective of each measure, and drilldown capability where additional information can be found for each measure.
- Completed the project to convert the database technology of the College's student information system to WebLogic, Oracle's strategic platform for managing large-scale Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems like Banner.
- During July, the Servers and Network team upgraded 105 servers with software updates from Microsoft and HP. To speed the response to any major system outage, the Servers and Networks team deployed off-site system monitoring tools. These tools automatically notify the team in the event of any problem that limits access to our critical systems such as the Banner

Student Information System, Oracle E-Business System, as well as student and employee portals.

Workforce and Economic Development

- The quarterly meeting of the Northern Illinois Workforce Coalition was hosted at Harper College. Attendees from nine community colleges and five workforce boards reviewed the new ATIM grant awarded to the Metro Boards of Chicago. In addition, Bob Parzy provided information on the recommendation made by the Job Placement Task Force.
- A grant application was submitted so that Harper College could serve as a training provider for the ATIM grant. The Colleges was awarded the funds and the final contract is being negotiated with the Metro Boards of Chicago.
- Continuing Education is assisting with the shared governance training sessions that are required as part of the launch for the newly revised shared governance system. Three offerings are available: Member Training, Chair Training and a Member-Plus Training option.
- Three new cohorts were started in the Fast Track program: Business Administration AAS, Supply Chain certificate and Human Resources Certificate. Students completed a mandatory orientation session that included student and faculty panels.

Advancement

- The foundation reports a total of \$365,338 raised in the first month of the new fiscal year. This includes \$27,335 in gifts from individuals, \$9,000 in gifts from businesses and corporations, \$48,525 from grants and other organizations, \$3,888 in in-kind gifts, \$140,000 in new planned gift pledges, and \$136,590 in investment earnings. This represents 12% toward the total annual goal of \$3,010,000 for FY14.
- Foundation activities include a prospective donor reception co-hosted by foundation board members Kathy Gilmer and Sam Oliver and their spouses at the Gilmer home. Fifteen people attended the event and included new prospective donors, distinguished alumni, foundation board members and staff and Drs. Ken and Cathy Ender. President Ender spoke about initiatives and achievements at Harper College and answered questions from guests.
- Campbell & Co. completed twenty six interviews as part of the Feasibility Study commissioned to gauge awareness and interest in supporting programs and projects at Harper College. Individuals and business leaders were interviewed. A complete report is expected in mid to late September.

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- Champion Team and Goal Leaders meetings were held to summarize key accomplishments from FY 13 and discuss upcoming FY 14 projects.
- Special questions were finalized for the PACE survey which will be given to faculty, staff and administration this fiscal year. The PACE survey represents one of three key research studies conducted by the College.

Communications

- The Illinois General Assembly's fall veto session takes place from October 22-24 and November 5-7. Issues that are likely to come up include pensions, gay marriage and proposals to alter the recently passed concealed carry gun legislation. Passing legislation during the veto session can be difficult since any bill with an immediate effective date needs a super majority to pass the House and the Senate.
- Illinois House Republicans have elected a new leader. Representative Jim Durkin of Western Springs replaces Tom Cross who is stepping down from his long-time leadership post to run for Illinois Treasurer.
- Political candidates have begun circulating their nominating petitions for the spring primary elections. The General Primary election takes place on Tuesday, March 18, 2014.
- Some the news articles that appeared in local media outlets this month include:
 - A story on Harper's new diversity initiatives in the *Daily Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune*
 - A story about Harper's efforts to address achievement gaps among high risk student populations in the *Chicago Tribune*
 - A feature story on Harper College's Studio V Artist Carol Thomas of Schaumburg in *Palatine Patch*
 - A feature story on the Harper play "Driving Miss Daisy" in *Trib Local*
 - A feature article on Dr. Ender and Harper's high school partnerships in the magazine *Quintessential Barrington*.

Finally, a special thanks goes to the Board for reserving the evening of October 26 and the morning of October 27 to engage in a Board retreat to examine how we can be even more effective with our leadership and stewardship of William Rainey Harper College. Thank you, all.

We're off to a great start!

Ken