

President's Report

September 2015

We had quite an eventful week! U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan visited the College last week. Thanks to the efforts of many, the visit was heartfelt, memorable, and flawless. During the visit, the Secretary announced the College was awarded a \$2.5 million dollar grant to support "Apprenticeships on Demand" in the Insurance, IT, and Manufacturing sectors. The Secretary also praised the Harper Promise Scholarship Program and touted it as a national model for demonstrating how "universal" post-secondary education can be provided to high school graduates willing to work hard to meet benchmarks. Both of these programs demonstrate the "community-based" efforts of our College as both require the active participation and leadership from schools, businesses, and college leaders to make them possible. This is a glimpse of the emerging public education model in our country. William Rainey Harper, our namesake, continues to inspire us with his visionary thinking as we work to develop the 21st Century community college model.

We want to give a special thanks to Vince and Pat Foglia who made a \$1 million investment in our Promise Scholarship Program. They are investing in the future workforce of our community. We so appreciate the Foglia Foundation making such a significant investment. We will soon be developing a special recognition for Vince and Pat and will be inviting them to campus for the unveiling of the "Foglia Center for Nursing and Allied Health." More to come on this event later in the fall.

Over the last two weeks, our enrollment situation has improved considerably. We believe the College will end the semester between flat and 2.5% down in FTE. We most likely will be flat in student headcount. This simply means that we have about the same number of students attending as last year; however, they are taking fewer credit hours. Statewide, the entire community college system is projected to be down in enrollment, as will community colleges across the nation. My personal and professional belief is that there is considerable room for enrollment growth through enhanced persistence and retention, and our new strategic plan is the vehicle we must use to enhance student success while also increasing enrollment through persistence and retention. The directions: **Inclusion** (First Year Seminar, faculty coaching of students, and intensive outreach to high risk students), **Engagement** (Harper Map, degree plans and pathways, early intervention through faculty engagement and predictive analytics), and **Achievement** (improved retention and persistence rates, and higher graduation rates) will have a significant contribution to our enrollment picture. We must strive to benchmark ourselves to the highest achieving community colleges in the nation and develop the strategies that will provide outcomes as good as or better than theirs. Our new strategic plan will provide a road map for the next four years to seek those enhanced outcomes for our students.

Later this week, we will launch the third cohort of the Harper Leadership Institute (HLI). We have 33 members of our College employee community (faculty and staff) beginning their yearlong involvement in the program. Dean Kim Chavis will be leading the program this year replacing Dr. Mark Mrozinski, who developed and led the program for two years. Kim will lead the program in the next two years and has already tweaked the format and agenda to include her unique signature. I'm excited to participate in HLI later this week.

On September 18, we will host Dr. Davis Jenkins, one of the co-authors of *Redesigning America's Community Colleges*. Dr. Jenkins will be joined by Dr. Arlen Garcia, a faculty member from Miami Dade College, in a daylong symposium exploring the text. We are looking forward to learning more from them as we continue to understand the utilization of academic plans and pathways as an important tool for our student's success. I, along with a group of faculty, and Dr. Quirk-Bailey, have planned this symposium and we anticipate about 95 of our colleagues will join us for the discussion.

There has been a ton of other activity on the campus during this last month. These are described in detail below:

Student Success

- The One Stop Center completed its first summer at Harper. The One Stop Team fielded more than 10,000 inquiries between May-August 2015. This included more than 7,500 students and families who visited the One Stop Center in-person. Over 75% of student inquiries are related to financial aid and payment. The One Stop Center also led a calling project with Blackboard Services that reached out to continuing students to engage them in registering for fall 2015 classes. This resulted in a 17% enrollment conversion by ensuring students were able to select classes, have financial aid questions answered, and make payment in time for start of classes.
- Over 180 new students came to campus on Saturday, August 22 – the final Saturday before classes began – to take part in a new opportunity to get involved in campus life and leadership at Harper. The event, entitled “Involve Yourself: Start Here” and sponsored by the Office of Student Involvement, included three separate, professionally-facilitated activities that helped to break the ice and build community among those who were brand-new to Harper. Current student leaders and officers of student organizations were on-hand to help welcome our new students.
- A variety of annual opening events were held to welcome students back to fall semester classes. While these events will continue over the first several weeks of classes, our “Weeks of Welcome” (or “WoW”) have attracted participation from nearly 4,000 students. These annual events included WoW Information/Hospitality Tables, an Intramural Sports Expo, the inaugural Student Activities Board (SAB) Coffeehouse Series, and the annual Harper Hullabaloo (student organization outdoor information fair.)
- The Center for New Student Orientation, with help from Marketing Services, will soon launch a new short video series on the external web to support adult students who are concerned about placement testing, career direction, making the most of prior credit, and financial aid resources. The first video, still in the editing stages, is about testing and is titled, “Be Confident about Placement Testing.”
- Ben Sandholm, a fourth semester nursing student, was recognized by Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital's Dr. Christy and nursing administration for providing exemplary care to a patient in critical condition. Ben was caring for a patient in the Emergency Department as part of his clinical course.

- All seats were filled for the first class of the Harper College Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) certificate program. This one-year program prepares ARRT registered radiologic technologists to become entry-level MRI technologists.
- The Transition Autism Program (Project TAP) had its first “Kick Off Dinner” on September 1 for students in the program, their parents and peer mentors. Project TAP is designed to meet the specific needs of college-able students on the Autism Spectrum with the transition from high school to college. This grant-funded program provides peer mentoring, specialized advising and support, social skills work, and a parent support component. During the event, Stacey Watson and Michele DeCanio gave a brief presentation about TAP and mentees had the opportunity to interact with their mentors. The dinner was successful with 60 people in attendance.
- The Dual Credit Orientation was held on Thursday, August 27 in the PAC. Approximately 170 students attended the orientation. More than 230 students are taking dual credit courses at Harper this fall and this event gave them and their parents a chance to hear from former dual credit students, collect their textbooks, and find classrooms.
- Jennifer Smith, nursing faculty, spoke to the Advisory Board for The Illinois Center for Nursing, Illinois Department for Professional Regulation, on September 9. Her presentation focused on her research proposal to explore new graduate nurse resilience, which was submitted as part of her application for the Illinois Board of Higher Education FY15 Nurse Educator Fellowship, which she was awarded.
- Jose A. Vital, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Program Coordinator, was chosen to judge the 2015 International Apprenticeship Contest at Washtenaw Community College. To judge this week-long event hosted by the United Association (UA) of Journeymen and Apprentices, the UA relies on a group of industry leaders who provide their expertise in a variety of disciplines. The most talented apprentices from across the country compete in this contest.
- Doug Spiwak, Director of Athletics and Fitness, was invited to speak at Elk Grove High School. He addressed the athletic teams and their parents regarding the relationship between participation in sports, persistence in academics, and success in life.

Facilities Management

- The main sanitary line serving Building A has partially collapsed, but is still functioning and being monitored daily. Engineers are developing several options to repair and/or replace this line which is planned for the semester break. This work will require dining services and restrooms to be temporarily closed.
- Steel erection is nearing completion for our new Advanced Manufacturing Lab. The project remains on schedule and on budget.
- Design and construction agreements have been tailored into a “master template” format to substantially reduce attorney review costs for capital projects.
- Owner Representation workshops are being developed for staff to ensure the College’s best interests continue to be met. Topics include, but are not limited to, developing productive owner/architect and owner/contractor relationships, effective negotiating, team building, understanding State and College procurement policy, ADA, legal, and environmental health and safety responsibilities.

Information Technology

- The start of the semester always involves a great deal of additional IT support. During the first weeks of the semester, the Information Technology staff assisted 106 faculty with one-on-one support in their first class sessions using the new digital multimedia classroom technology that was installed over the summer. The Technical Services team coordinated with Access and Disability Services to provide computers and network connectivity for remote captioning services where a sign language interpreter provides interpreting services from a remote site through a video connection to the Harper classroom. Sixteen rooms were prepared for this service providing a more reliable method for our hearing challenged students to understand and learn in the classroom environment. A number of technology moves took place in support of relocating staff offices and student technology areas. These included remodel projects for C207, X246, F233, and completion of several classrooms and offices at the Harper College Learning and Career Center in Prospect Heights.
- The Enterprise Systems team completed the upgrade of the student portal to the most current version. By doing so, we continue to receive optimal support services from Ellucian, the software provider, and we have successfully mitigated several operational and functional issues.
- The Information Technology team, partnering with Ledgeview, our support entity, completed the implementation of a significant upgrade to the Microsoft Dynamics CRM system used by Harper College for Business, the Job Placement Resource Center, Admissions Outreach, and others. The CRM provides client management tools, as well as capabilities to support students who engage with the College through our business partners and other means.
- The Enterprise Systems team completed the project to upgrade the Oracle databases used by our ERP systems (Banner for students and E-Business Suite for HR, Finance and Payroll), our operational data store for College-wide reporting, and our scheduling systems (Resource 25.) The project required key Information Technology personnel, as well as the College user community to test the new software before it was put into production.

Human Resources

- Effective October 1, 2015, Harper will begin offering College employees two new employee paid voluntary benefit plans: a vision plan provided through VSP and an identity theft protection plan offered through LifeLock. Employee benefits are a critical factor in recruiting and retaining good employees. This will fill a gap in coverage to our employees as the current health plans offer limited vision discounts and identity theft protection was previously not provided. Both of these benefit plans are voluntary and, therefore, are employee-paid.

Finance and Administrative Services

- Harper College is a member of the State Universities Retirement System of Illinois (SURS) pension program. Each member employer is required to report employee data and earnings to SURS, which are then used to calculate the actuarial pension liabilities and expenses of the program. SURS hired an external audit firm to perform field testing at employer sites to verify the accuracy of their reported data. On August 18, 2015, an audit was performed at Harper to reconcile earnings to payroll and accounting records, and verify a sample of covered versus non-covered employees and the related withholdings. The audit found no exceptions with Harper's reported SURS data.

Advancement

- 100% of fall scholarship allocations have been awarded. Additional awards will be made throughout the semester for faculty awards, and achievement awards such as art awards, and faculty selected awards. We will open up the Spring Semester scholarships in January 2016.
- On October 28, Harper College will hold its 2015 Distinguished Alumni Awards, an annual event saluting former students for outstanding career and community achievements. Including this year's recipients, a total of 48 Distinguished Alumni have been honored thus far. This year's honorees include:
 - Laurie Turpin-Soderholm
 - Joseph Quinn
 - Renee Spacapan
 - Richard Parlier
 - Vladimir Goncharoff

The event, which is free and open to the public, takes place from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, October 28, in the Wojcik Conference Center. It will begin with a reception followed by the awards ceremony.

- To date the Foundation has raised over \$7,000,000 for the Promise Scholarship Campaign toward the \$10,000,000 goal. Most recently a \$1,000,000 pledge was received from the Foglia Foundation.

Marketing Services

- In collaboration with the Center for New Students and other campus offices, Marketing Services has re-launched the Parents' Blog for parents of current and prospective Harper students. Additional resources for parents and families include the Ultimate College Planning Guide and the Parent E-Newsletter. The links are listed below:
 - Parents Blog: <http://goforward.harpercollege.edu/start/parent/futureparent/index.php>
 - College Planning Guide: <http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/69253222#/69253222/1>
 - E-Newsletters: http://goforward.harpercollege.edu/about/community/subscribe_eneews.php
- Working with Enrollment Services, a number of initiatives are underway to communicate the availability of late start classes beginning the weeks of September 21 and October 19. The initiatives include messaging to people who have inquired for fall but not applied, and applied but not registered, along with campaigns to current students, people who are financial-aid eligible, and 60,000+ community members interested in education via a *Daily Herald* e-news collaboration.
- District 214 junior Marco Mendoza completed a one-week micro internship on Friday, August 21. Marco shadowed members of the graphic arts, web, marketing specialist and print teams. Matt Nelson, Publishing Services supervisor, also took Matt on a campus tour and introduced him to representatives of Harper's Center for New Students and Graphic Arts Technology program.

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- The Learning Assessment (LA) Committee has been leading the general education outcomes assessment efforts of the College. The general education outcomes describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are expected to develop through the general education requirements of any degree program. In spring 2015, the Committee led a campus-wide General Education Assessment project to evaluate students' abilities to "accurately use credible and reliable sources." Results were collected from a variety of disciplines in relation to three performance areas: topical relationship of sources, quality and authority of sources, and accuracy of citations. Students performed well on all rubric areas and showed improvement as they gained additional credits at Harper. Additionally, the LA Committee led a campus conversation on refining the general education learning outcomes to better align outcomes with the general education curriculum, respond to faculty feedback, increase the usefulness of assessment results, and reflect best practices in assessment.

Workforce and Strategic Alliances

- The Workforce and Economic Development area, in collaboration with the Grants Office, was awarded a \$2.5 million federal grant to support apprentices in manufacturing, insurance, and information technology. In addition, Harper is a strategic partner on another apprenticeship grant awarded to the Illinois' Manufacturers Association Educational Foundation.
- Continuing Education will be conferring digital badges in October. Badges are an emerging digital credential that allows for transparency and portability of competencies, two things that employers often criticize in traditional credentials. Harper is partnering with Pearson VUE to deliver digital badges to our noncredit students and is one of a handful of community colleges moving aggressively into digital credentials. Harper's badging system uses Mozilla's open source badging framework to increase the universality and ubiquity of the technology. Harper is planning to engage students and employers in a conversation regarding the value of digital credentials and their role in workforce development.

Diversity and Inclusion

- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee has confirmed Steve Pemberton, Walgreen Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion and the first Chief Diversity Officer for the 113 year old company, as the keynote speaker for the October 30 Diversity Symposium. The fall symposium will focus on issues of domestic and global diversity. Following the keynote address, Mr. Pemberton will moderate a panel discussion where Dr. Michael Armato and Dr. Jeanine Ntahirageza (both from Northeastern Illinois University), and Dr. Maria Krysan (from University of Illinois at Chicago) will serve as guests. Each of these speakers will focus on distinct aspects of domestic and global diversity and serve as the catalyst for a college-wide discussion on Diversity & Inclusion at Harper. All Harper employees and Board members are invited to attend this event which will run from 9 AM to noon.

Media, Community and Legislative Relations

- U.S. Representative Tammy Duckworth (IL-08) joined Representatives of Northrop Grumman to tour Harper's advanced manufacturing program and highlight the need to train more students for jobs in advanced manufacturing. Harper partnered with Northrop Grumman to train workers for openings in their high-tech manufacturing facility in Rolling Meadows, IL. Company officials worked with Harper to design a series of coursework specific to their needs. Northrop Grumman also provided paid internships to students to combine classroom learning with work experience. Four students will complete the program this fall and the company has asked for seven additional students to enter the program this year.
- This week, State Representative Tom Morrison will join a panel discussion on the future of Illinois community colleges as part of the Harper Leadership Institute. The panel will include Dr. Ender, Dr. James Applegate, Executive Director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and Dr. Charlotte Warren, President of Lincoln Land Community College. Dr. Warren is also the incoming president of the Illinois Council of Community College Presidents.
- Community Relations hosted a table at the District 59 Back to School Family Meet and Greet on August 22. The event was held at Oasis Mobile Home Park. Over 150 families attended and received information about Promise, the Harper Library, the Dental Clinic, and the ESL/GED program. Other organizations in attendance included the Elk Grove Police and Fire Departments, District 214, and the Girl Scouts.
- Community Relations Manager Amie Granger visited Eisenhower Junior High School on August 25 to discuss college readiness and the Promise Program with more than 300 8th grade students.
- Kathy Bruce hosted a Harper table at the Euclid Elementary Open House on September 3. Euclid is Kathy's Ambassador school. She distributed information to students and families about Promise and other Harper community services as well as promoted the Ambassador program and Harper's partnership with Euclid.
- The *Daily Herald* ran a front-page article about U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's visit to Harper to recognize the College's Promise Scholarship Program, promote private-public partnerships and advocate for free tuition at community colleges nationwide. Reporter Erin Hegarty mentioned the announcement that Vince and Pat Foglia have made a \$1 million investment in Promise. She also writes: "...as Harper's program is used as a model for community colleges across the country, Duncan says the implications will span more than just access to college. 'The goal is not just educational attainment, it's really to end poverty,' he said."
- The *Chicago Tribune* also covered Secretary Duncan's visit, and *Politico* included an item in its daily roundup of education news.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about U.S. Representative Tammy Duckworth and Northrop Grumman executives coming to campus to tour Harper's manufacturing facilities and highlight the need to train more students for jobs in advanced manufacturing.
- The *Daily Herald*, *TribLocal* and *Patch* ran articles about Harper's new Community Health Worker program.

- Harper was a prominent subject in the *Daily Herald's* special section "Progress 2015: What's Driving the Suburbs' Rebirth." It included items about the College's Promise Program, the future advanced manufacturing lab and the Education and Work Center in Hanover Park.
- Reuters, the international news agency, ran a feature article, "U.S. manufacturers prevail upon parents to hire in-demand kids," and interviewed manufacturing student Christian Reyes. Reyes interned at Felsomat, was hired and is now completing his degree. The article was distributed worldwide, so it was picked up by media outlets such as *cnbc.com*.
- The *Daily Herald* put a spotlight on Harper's partnership with One Million Degrees, a Chicago-based nonprofit organization that helps low-income, highly motivated community college students achieve success in school, work and life. The article "Positive Impact" illustrated the critical relationship between an OMD scholar and his or her coach. Highlighting the power of that pairing are scholar Viviane Motta de Mello, who moved to the U.S. two years ago, and mentor Georgeanna Mehr, President of Hoffman Estates Community Bank.
- The *Daily Herald*, *TribLocal* and *Patch* ran articles about the summer Fast Track graduation. The focus was on the inspiring story of new grad Lina Loncar, who works full time, is a devoted mother to two young children, and has a husband who travels extensively for work. Loncar said that if she could succeed in the program despite those challenges, anyone can.
- *Pioneer Press* reporter Todd Shields visited the Crime Scene Investigation class held during the InZone summer enrichment camp. He followed 11- to 14-year-olds as they processed a mock murder scene in the new Career and Technical Education Center's crime lab.

As I close this report, it is important to note that our next Board meeting will be held in November, as the Board will be attending the annual ACCT conference in October. Important work will be done between now and then as we begin to develop the infrastructure to operationalize our new strategic plan, as well as moving to certainty on the detailed program for M Building. It is not coincidental that both the strategic plan and the M Building proposal have been complex and time consuming. In both cases, they mark a considerable change in historical patterns of thinking and doing at an institution of higher education. In the former, the new strategic plan focuses on "scale" never attempted before with respect to student success; and, in the latter, M Building recognizes that partnerships and leverage will be necessary to obtain results that our institution is unable to achieve on its own.

These projects do not conform to the typical operational models the institution is accustomed to. This should, in my view, be expected and in some ways celebrated as it marks a realization that the future will be different from the past. It is imperative that we scale outcomes pertaining to student success to levels we have never before reached. This is a good thing.

Ken