



**Harper College**

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## **President's Letter – October 2009**

Fall semester is now fully underway. We have one last session to enroll students for as we approach the mid-term mark. To date our enrollment continues to grow with increases in both our overall full time equivalent (FTE) and head count. Our enrollment is currently 5% higher than this time last year with an FTE enrollment of 10,044 and a headcount of 16,650.

Even as we continue to enroll, we are recruiting for next fall's new class. On October 1 the College hosted an open house for perspective students that attracted more than 250 people. During the event, 56 students applied for admission to Harper.

As the semester rolls on we have a number of honors and awards to share with you:

- Nursing Professor Joanne Leski attended the national league for Nursing Education Summit, at which she was recognized as for receiving her nurse educators certification and for being an NLN Ambassador. She also served as Team Chairperson for the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) Site Visit to Shoreline Community College.
- Tom Thomson was presented the National AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability) Honor for Meritorious contribution. The award was in recognition of contributions to the field of Disability Services in Higher Education and for other work and volunteer efforts benefitting people with disabilities over the past 35 years, 29 of which have been at Harper.
- Sally Griffith was notified that she has completed her probationary term as a Consultant-Evaluator for the Higher Learning Commission, and that she was awarded a full status in the Peer Review Corps.

The cool weather is not impacting our latest construction project. The construction of the stairs between Buildings A and C is progressing. In a few weeks we will have a pathway that will give students a more direct access between their courses and services.

Academic programs and administrative departments continue to innovate and leverage technology for the good of our students.

- The Graphic Arts Program's new digital press (donated by Quantum Group) is up and running. It not only serves the program's students but is also being used by the College print shop.
- The Admissions Processing Department recently went live with a new document imaging system. They estimate over 21,000 documents a year will be stored in the system. The benefits include anywhere/anytime access to the electronic data which allows staff to serve students more efficiently. The system will be installed next in the Registrar's office.
- The Harper IT team recently launched a new self-service reset application where student can submit and reset their passwords, via the Web, eliminating the need to call the Help desk. The response from the students has been extremely positive. They say it's is quick and easy to use. More than 1200 passwords were successfully reset in the first three weeks of its availability.

The 2010 benefits renewal process has been completed. Most of the benefit plans were negotiated with multi-year rate locks resulting in a decrease in our medical insurance premiums. We are able to offer the same benefit plans at the same or slightly lower employee premiums (dependent upon the elected plan.) Our paperless open enrollment process will start on mid-November.

We have been very active again this month with campus events.

- October Job Fair included employers from 57 companies and 1,200 job seekers.
- The Ghost Hunters event is sold-out with over 1,500 tickets sold and leaving many more fans clamoring for seats.
- Lynn Marie Smith, who was featured on The Oprah Winfrey show, spoke to more than 450 Harper students at two lectures on drug prevention.

Due to budget problems PACE is considering cutting or reducing service on two bus lines that serve Harper. A public hearing on the proposed service reductions will be held Monday, October 19 at PACE headquarters in Arlington Heights. A group of Harper students and faculty members are planning to attend. Additionally, we are working to identify students to illustrate how the cuts will impact the students who need public transportation the most. We are also working with our legislators.

An update on Officer Hernandez is that he is alert but still in the ICU as of this writing. I will keep the Board apprised of his condition.

There are several Engagement Week events that I think will be of interest to you:

Monday, November 9

Jane Oates, the Assistant Secretary of Employment and Training Administration in the US Department of Labor will be the keynote speaker on *Preparing the Global Workforce: The Community College Past-Present-Future* symposium.

12:00 VIP Lunch in the Wojcik Dining Room

1:00-2:00 Keynote address, followed by a panelist Q & A, and a reception for all symposium attendees at 3:30.

Tuesday, November 10

Debra Bragg, Professor of Educational Organization & Leadership at the University of Illinois will be the keynote speaker on *The Nexus of Student Success: the Community College Past-Present-Future* symposium.

Debra Bragg's research focuses on transition to college by youth and adults, especially student populations that have not attended college historically.

3:30 Wojcik Amphitheatre

7:00 Distinguished Alumni Reception

Thursday, November 12

12:30 registration, 1:00 VIP lunch in the Wojcik Dining Room

3:30 Procession and Installation Ceremony, M building

5:00 Community Reception

Friday, November 13

Theatre Reception and performance of *"The Diary of Anne Frank"*

6:00 Reception in the Performing Arts Center lobby

8:00 Performance in the Performing Arts Center Theatre

That's all for now. Things are progressing nicely and we are looking forward to an inspirational eventful November.