

## **President's Report**

**November 2013**

It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is next week! When Harper staff, faculty and students return from this holiday, final exams will be upon us and then BOOM, the semester is gone. The academic calendar has a rhythm, a pace and a mood that is unique. Those of us deeply embedded in academics find that this calendar guides our work. It provides us the opportunity to incrementally review the outcomes we seek, and review our efforts; all of which are directed toward the ongoing narrative of student success. Personally, I find that deeply rewarding and motivating, as I'm sure my colleagues do, as well.

Fall is cross-country running season for our athletes. I'm proud to inform you that our Men's team finished first in nationals in their Division and the Women finished sixth. We will honor their accomplishments at the Board meeting in December.

The enrollment period for this fall is about complete, thus we can report flat enrollment. We have seen a slight increase in the number of credits the students are attempting and a slight decrease in the overall headcount. We continue to experience declines in adult enrollment. Thus, groups have been established to address this challenge. Specifically, three working groups are working to better understand this trend and to recommend marketing, engagement and program/delivery options to address this decline.

On a brighter note, we continue to see the pay-off of our "stackable" credentials in the career and technical programs. We know that many of our students are now "earning and learning" credentials throughout their programs. It is because of these stackable credentials and a myriad of other innovative initiatives that we are 53% ahead of goal with respect to our completion agenda of 10,604. We need to continue our pace; the theme "FINISH" will continue to be our mantra.

November 1 marked the start-up of our new College-wide governance system. From early reports the roll-out went well, with committee and council chairs being selected and work agendas being developed. We look forward to this governance system maturing and aiding the entire employee community feeling more connected to the decision and policy making at the College. Many thanks go to the College-wide taskforce that developed this system and for their ongoing work to assure a smooth beginning.

We want to acknowledge the work of Trustee Bill Kelley at the recent ACCT conference in Seattle. Bill participated in three presentation panels and represented his fellow trustees in the ACCT Congress that convened during the meeting.

We also want to acknowledge Trustee Rita Canning for her recognition at the Wendell Jones Awards Breakfast earlier in October. Trustee Canning was recognized for her philanthropic work with WINGS.

Early in December, I will travel to Washington, DC for the initial meeting of the Advanced Manufacturing Partnership (AMP 2.0) Steering Committee organized by the Council of Economic Advisors Science and Technology Committee of the White House. This work is being coordinated by the Executive Office of the White House. I am delighted to report that our recommendations regarding individuals that would be good additions to the working committees have also been accepted and these individuals are already at work. Four of our suggestions, Dr. Maria Coons, Jim Nelson (Illinois Manufacturing Association), Marianne Stanke (Motorola Solutions) and Jennifer McNelly, (the Educational Center of the National Manufacturing Association), have each been assigned to various working groups under the AMP 2.0 umbrella. We are all proud to be involved and recognized for the work Harper has done in leading the manufacturing initiative in Illinois.

Reported below are notable activities and accomplishments that have occurred since my last report in September.

### **Student Success**

- After several years of planning for the changes to admission categories and associated testing requirements, we have now completed the first cycle of the new onboarding process, and our “final” numbers show a 10% increase in the number of applicants needing testing and orientation. As of the end of the first week of the fall semester, 2,674 students (387 summer + 2,287 fall) completed testing. That is 509 more students or a 24% increase when compared to last summer/fall. Starting testing earlier was key in being able to accommodate the increase in the number of testers; 477 summer/fall students were tested before April 22 this year while last year only 61 students tested during the same time period.
- This fall, the Center for New Students and Orientation launched two initiatives aimed at supporting students’ smooth transition. First, all new degree-seeking students will receive at least one ‘welcome call’ from an Orientation Leader during the Fall semester; so far, 1,325 calls have been made. And second, counselors, advisors and Orientation Leaders have ‘hit the pavement’ conducting ‘walkabouts’ to provide students with information about services and resources all across campus.
- Students of the Harper College Fashion Department made an impressive showing at the *NEXT GENERATION Fashion Design Challenge* Thursday, October 17, 2013 at Germania Place in Chicago. Competing against students from several Chicago universities and colleges, all five students from Harper College’s Fashion Department made it into the finals and placed in the top ten. Harper College student Myra Chung placed first in this event. Harper students Amela Bego, Meta McKinney, Courtney Batio, and Michelle Kreutner had strong showings. Harper Instructor, Pilar Saiki was a *NEXT GENERATION Fashion Design Challenge* Student Consultant & host committee member for this Fashion Week event.

- The Fall Job Fair sponsored by the Career Center on October 4 had 78 employers and 670 job seekers. Many employers were first-time participants, including manufacturing, health careers, and computer science representatives.
- At the PICU (Private Illinois Colleges and Universities) Transfer Fair on October 30, 281 students met with representatives from 37 colleges and universities. Student participation was up 19% from last year, and the number of institutions was up 28%.
- Students were actively involved on campus in October with 910 participants in leadership and government events, cultural arts events, intramurals and campus recreation. Some of the highlights include Harper students attending a national student government conference, a Leadership Challenge workshop on “Understanding Others,” a Leadership Chat with Steve Pemberton, Chief Diversity Officer and Vice President of Walgreens, a pumpkin carving contest, and a dance event for breast cancer awareness. Photos can be seen at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/103230032@N02/>
- The Men’s and Women’s Cross Country teams were both Region IV Champions this fall and traveled to Holyoke, Massachusetts to compete in the NJCAA National Championships. The Women’s Soccer team achieved Region IV Runners-up status as did the Volleyball team.
- Dean Mary Beth Ottinger was invited to serve as a panelist at the Newsmakers Forum sponsored by the Daily Herald Business Ledger on Thursday, October 4, 2013 at Harper College. The topics addressed by the panel were Manufacturing and International Business. A follow up article titled “Meeting the Needs of Business and Students” by Dr. Ottinger was published in the October 28 issue of the Business Ledger.
- Dr. Ashley Knight, Dean of Student Affairs, was recognized by NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education as the Region IV-East Outstanding Community College Professional. The region is made up of over 2,300 higher education student affairs professionals from 8 states in the upper Midwest.
- Laura Bennett, Student Conduct Officer, contributed a chapter to the recently-released book *A Faculty Guide to Disruptive and Dangerous Behavior in the Classroom* by Brian Van Brunt and W. Scott Lewis.
- After completing an extensive self-study and hosting a site visit by a three-member team of industry and education experts, the Graphic Arts Technology program at Harper College was awarded national accreditation beginning September 1, 2013. This program is among eleven associate and baccalaureate level, graphic communications-related programs nationwide to receive this distinction. A plaque recognizing the six-year accreditation was presented to Coordinator Patricia A. Bruner. The accreditation period was retroactive to September 1, 2013 and will continue through August 31, 2019.

### ***Human Resources***

- On Monday, November 11, Harper College honored the service of all U.S. military veterans. Harper employees who are veterans of the U.S. military were invited to join the Harper Administration for breakfast. Following the breakfast, faculty and staff were invited to attend a recognition program featuring two guest speakers. Bernie Bluestein, beloved current Harper student who served in WWII, and Daniel Alarik, former Harper student and entrepreneur who

served two tours of duty following the September 11, 2001 attack, were invited to share their stories.

- On Thursday, October 17, Harper College celebrated and recognized the efforts, contributions, and continued service of its employees as part of the third annual “Harvest Fest”, an employee appreciation event complete with music, food, and fun activities. The Admissions Processing Department is the proud recipient of the "Golden Ear of Corn" traveling trophy as the overall winner of the “Creative Use of Pumpkin Contest.”
- Roger Spayer served as a panelist for the presentation “The Role of Adjunct Faculty as Human Capital: The Coming Crisis” as part of the College and University Professional of Human Resources (CUPA) National Conference. The panel also included Sherri Hughes, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Marymount University; Joanne Kossuth, Vice-President of Operations, Olin College of Engineering; and David Van De Voort, Principal Consultant, Buck Consultants who served as the moderator. The panel’s focus and discussion explored the changing demands and implications of the use of adjunct faculty and the increasing role Human Resources must play to optimize the cost and return on investment of adjuncts as human capital.

## **Finance**

- Follett began operating the HarperStore on July 1, 2013, offering positions to all of the previous Harper employees. Alice Paul-Paese, the HarperStore Manager, and Ken Pegram, the Regional Manager, provided a status update at a recent Communications Council meeting. Some of the key transition milestones include:
  - Employed 17 student sales associates
  - Offered used, digital, and rental textbooks, as well as book buybacks, saving students \$349,857 vs. purchasing new texts
  - Implemented a Rent-A-Text Program with 526 titles, or 39% of total titles
  - Integrated with Harper Information Technology systems to support purchases through Financial Aid
  - Participated in campus events like Hullabaloo, the Student Job Fair, the One Book One Harper Program, and several book signings
  - Set up a Harper branded website for access to additional products

Reaching out to the campus has been a key focus area for Follett. They have met with the Deans, held training sessions for using their Online Adoption Tool, conducted course material orientation sessions for new adjuncts, and created a Bookstore Advisory Council with Harper employees.

- In February 2001, Harper acquired about 91% of the property located at 650 Higgins Road in Schaumburg, now known as the Harper Professional Center (HPC). Recently, one of the other owners at HPC put his unit up for sale. In October, the College closed on the purchase of this 1,005 square foot unit for \$160,000 as approved by the Board in June. This increases our ownership to about 94%. The space is contiguous with existing College space and will be converted into dedicated labs and testing facilities for a workforce certification center. The center will be used to administer exams leading to industry-recognized credentials. Some examples include MSSC’s Certified Production Technician, Prometric, Certiport, CompTIA, and Autodesk.

## ***Information Technology***

- Implementation of disaster recovery capabilities for the College's E-Business Suite (EBS) system (H/R, Finance, and Payroll modules) was completed. The disaster recovery technology includes using Oracle's Data Guard to create redundant databases and our networked storage to create duplicate EBS applications. As part of the project, we have created redundancy capabilities at the Northeast Center for the EBS modules.
- The project to convert the College's mobile application for the Android operating system to Mobile Central's (the College's mobile application provider) Mosaic platform was completed. The platform provides for greater levels of customer control and enhanced statistical reporting of the use of the mobile app.
- Multiple teams within IT performed load testing for the Banner student information system. This load testing simulates a large number of students logging into Banner to register for classes. This allows us to evaluate our systems to ensure we are prepared for the heavy usage associated with peak usage times, such as spring registration.
- The networks and server team coordinated and built a new server environment in preparation for the new employee portal. This portal, scheduled to launch in January, will utilize the new Microsoft SharePoint application development platform.
- A report of InZone Students who have completed a credit application and subsequently enrolled in college-level classes at Harper was developed.
- The integrated data exchange project with Follett was completed. This synchronizes book voucher and course information in the systems and enables accurate and timely servicing to our students.
- The network team activated a new Internet service from the Illinois Century Network (ICN). This connection primarily serves the public/student wireless network and effectively increased the maximum speed by approximately 560% on the ICN connection.
- Completed the project to automate the Accounts Payables payment process, providing online forms for both purchase order and non-purchase order payments.
- The project to upgrade the web-based interface of the College's resource scheduling system was completed. This provided fixes for system deficiencies and several enhancements.

## ***Physical Plant***

- Excavation and foundation work for the East Campus parking structure is underway. Precast panels are being fabricated. The project remains on schedule for fall 2014 delivery.
- Exterior masonry work is complete on the Building D Phase I addition. The building addition is expected to be fully enclosed before winter. The project remains on schedule for fall 2014 delivery.
- Programming and schematic design is underway for the Advanced Manufacturing Lab. Construction is scheduled to start immediately upon completion of Building H in fall 2014.

- Schematic design phase is complete for the One Stop/Student Center. Submittal of Schematic Design package to Capital Development Board (CDB) for final approval is pending reconciliation of current total project estimate versus original Campus Master Plan estimate.
- Construction is underway for the E106 restoration project. Restoration work is scheduled to be complete by end of winter break. Harper College's insurance company is subrogating the claim.
- Construction is progressing rapidly for Building H. The building, including additions, is expected to be fully enclosed before winter. The project remains on schedule for spring 2015 occupancy.
- The new vault and equipment were installed on the Oasis Fountain. Testing and training has been deferred until spring season start-up.
- Programming is underway for the West Campus Regional Chiller Plant/Generator, and Building A mechanical, electrical, and plumbing infrastructure work is also underway.

### ***Finance and Administrative Services***

- Ron Ally was a member of the Higher Learning Commission Accreditation team that visited Northeast Community College in Norfolk, Nebraska from October 21 - 23.
- Ron Ally was reappointed to the Little City Board of Directors for a second term effective until 2015.

### ***Advancement***

- The Educational Foundation reports a total of \$809,088 raised in the first four months of the new fiscal year. This includes \$241,102 in gifts from individuals, \$33,400 from businesses and corporations, \$51,175 from grants and other organizations, \$140,000 in new planned gift pledges, and \$343,411 in investment earnings. This represents 27% toward the total annual goal of \$3,010,000 for FY14.
- The Educational Foundation continues to bring Harper to the community through receptions hosted by Foundation members at their homes or businesses. Through these small groups, attendees can hear about the values of a Harper College education and have an opportunity to ask questions. In September, one of the receptions was held at the home of Georgeanna and Gregg Mehr. Future receptions are being planned to continue this outreach program through the Foundation.
- The Foundation staff welcomed new members. Associate Executive Director Heather Engel Zoldak returned to the Foundation to work in major gifts and planned gifts. Heather worked previously for the Harper College Educational Foundation from 2000 to 2008 in the Annual Fund program. Angela Vining joined the Foundation to work as the Scholarship and Special Projects Coordinator. Angela comes to us with experience in our new scholarship software – Academic Works. She comes to the Foundation from DePaul University where she held a similar position in their scholarship program.

- Campbell & Co. presented the results of the feasibility study completed in late summer. Results will help guide future endeavors of the Foundation. Possible projects and goals were presented during the interviews. The ones that received the most interest for philanthropic support were traditional scholarships, a School Counts/Promise scholarship program, STEM field programs, and a University Center program to invite four-year colleges to come to campus to teach the third and fourth year toward a student attaining their baccalaureate.
- The fifth annual “Distinguished Alumni” event was held October 30 in the Wojcik Center. Seven alumni were honored with a luncheon at Chicago Prime Steakhouse. Tours of the campus followed and the day culminated in a reception and program. Videos were shown of each recipient and the awards were presented. It was a very special evening and a highlight of the fall semester.
- A reception was held to thank donors for their generosity, to thank participants in the feasibility study, and to introduce new community members to Harper College. This reception was held before the opening night performance of “The Heiress.” About 75 attendees came for the reception where they heard a preview presentation about the performance from director Kevin Long.

### ***Planning and Institutional Effectiveness***

- Ongoing efforts to support Project Discover are in full swing. Project Discover is the combination of several student success-related projects which include: HarperMap, a newly designed student portal, and predictive analytics.
- Institutional Effectiveness has been soliciting volunteers that will be leading teams for the College’s next reaccreditation with the Higher Learning Commission. Two co-leads will lead overall accreditation activities. In addition, five sets of co-leads will direct the activities of the required criteria areas. Co-leads will consist of a faculty member and administrator.
- The Strategic Planning and Accountability Committee is beginning its work on the review of Harper’s current mission statement. This project connects to several initiatives including the College’s upcoming reaccreditation and the development of the next strategic plan.

### **Workforce and Economic Development**

- The Illinois Department of Transportation has awarded a grant to Harper College’s Continuing Education area to operate Motorcycle Licensure and Safety programming for Cook County. Previously, this work was done by the University of Illinois. Staff supporting this effort will be housed at the Harper Professional Center. Efforts are underway to locate a suitable warehouse to store and maintain motorcycles that are included with the grant.
- The Illinois Network for Advanced Manufacturing (INAM) office hosted a statewide meeting of the 21 Illinois community colleges involved in the \$13 million TAACCCT grant. Measurable results are being captured and the group is achieving and surpassing its targeted outcomes.
- The Workforce and Economic Development area sponsored a monthly meeting for under- and unemployed individuals at the Harper Professional Center. Over 80 individuals attended.

## **Marketing and Communications and Legislative Relations**

- CASE District V awarded Harper College a Bronze for our community report *5 Steps to Building a Twenty-First Century Community College*. We finished behind publications from Indiana University Library System (gold) and the University of Michigan (silver). CASE V includes two-year, four-year and graduate institutions in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.
- The Illinois General Assembly ended its fall veto session without passing pension reform. However, legislative leaders have told their members to be prepared to come back to Springfield on December 3<sup>rd</sup> to possibly consider new pension proposals. December 3<sup>rd</sup> is a significant date for political reasons. December 2<sup>nd</sup> is the deadline for potential primary challengers to file their nominating petitions. Lawmakers who don't have a primary challenger may be more amenable to voting yes on controversial legislation.
- Details of a new pension proposal have not been made public. However, it's believed one proposal involves cutting the annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to pension benefits to one-half the rate of inflation. It's currently set at an automatic 3 percent increase which is compounded. Another proposal would reduce the pension contribution that workers pay for their pensions as consideration for the COLA reduction. This consideration would be critical for the bill to survive in a likely challenge in court.
- The Community Relations Task Force will meet in late November and early December to consider the results of community surveys about Harper. The surveys include a large telephone survey of residents and employers, and smaller focus group sessions with eight stakeholder groups: mayors & village presidents, large employers, not-for-profit leaders, K-12 educators, higher education leaders, small business leaders, healthcare providers and state and federal elected officials. The results of the surveys will help guide the task force in its work of recommending new community outreach strategies.
- News articles about Harper that appeared in local media outlets recently include:
  - *Chicago Tribune* story on a \$1.2 million federal grant awarded to Harper for a new supply chain management program.
  - *Daily Herald* feature story on *Breaking Bad* star R.J. Mitte's visit to Harper.
  - *Daily Herald*, *Chicago Tribune* and *NBC News* coverage of the evacuation of Building M due to a bomb scare.
  - *Chicago Tribune* preview story on the upcoming theater production of "The Heiress."
  - *Trib Local* preview story about Harper's "College for a Day" event.

Finally, Cathy and I wish each of you a very Happy Thanksgiving. The College will close Wednesday, November 28 for a long Thanksgiving weekend. Cathy, the dogs and I will visit family in Virginia during Thanksgiving week and return with renewed spirit and energy for the semester's end. We feel blessed for all that we have and all that we have an opportunity to do. We are indeed thankful.

*Ken*