

THE PHILANTHROPIC
MAGAZINE OF
HARPER COLLEGE

COMMUNITY

CATALYST

SPRING 2024



“If you want to *lift* yourself up,
lift up someone else.”

— Booker T. Washington

FROM THE DESK OF
BRENDA KNOX
HARPER COLLEGE EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION BOARD PRESIDENT



During the last four years, the Foundation has seen a significant increase in the number of students applying for Foundation scholarships. Thankfully, because of our generous donors, the number of scholarships offered by the Foundation has increased, and the number of scholarships awarded annually has grown.

Last year, the Foundation awarded nearly \$6 million in scholarships to over 1,800 students. For some students, these scholarship funds paid for tuition and fees; for others it helped with other expenses that align with attending a community college – transportation, gas, childcare and books.

We are thrilled with the increased support we can provide and know that it would not have happened without your generosity. Whether you have established your own scholarship or are making your first gift to add to an existing scholarship – we appreciate ALL our donors and are grateful that you have included Harper in your philanthropic plan.

We have also seen an increase in the volunteer activities of our alumni and business partners. The connections made through mentoring, alumni/student career development panels, leadership dinners and speaking to a class or student club play an immeasurable role in our students' success.

The impact that receiving a scholarship or connecting with a mentor has on our students is great. Scholarship recipients enroll in more classes each semester, earn higher grades and graduate faster. Students who are mentored learn skills that better prepare them for the workforce and make connections with potential future employers.

Your donations of time and treasure to the Harper College Educational Foundation help our students succeed and excel here at Harper. Every gift makes a difference and inspires our students to achieve their dreams.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda". The signature is fluid and cursive.

24: Average age of Harper student

12,949: Number of students taking credit classes (fall 2022)

57% of students work while attending Harper College (51% of students ages 25 and older work full-time)

52% of Harper students who self-identified as first generation

\$4,000: Average annual cost of tuition for a full-time student

\$5.8 million: Total awarded in 2022–2023 by the Foundation in scholarships, grants and awards

1,847: Number of students receiving a scholarship, grant or award

238: Total Foundation scholarship funds

13: New scholarship funds created by donors in 2022 – 2023

HARPER
by the **NUMBERS**
(2022-2023)



Representatives from IT Serve Alliance present a check to the Harper College Educational Foundation at the December 2023 Board of Directors meeting.

Donor Generosity Inspires New Scholarships

The Harper College Educational Foundation thanks the donors of these new scholarships for their generosity and for inspiring Harper students to realize their dreams.

Brandt Foundation Endowed Scholarship – The Brandt Foundation created this scholarship for adult students with financial need who require higher education to advance in their chosen careers.

Douglas Crawford Peterson Memorial Scholarship – June M. Peterson-Gleason and John Gleason created this scholarship for Theatre Arts and Audio-Visual Technology students in memory of June’s brother, Douglas Crawford Peterson, who worked for more than 19 years as the director of J Theater at Harper College.

ITServe Alliance Scholarship sponsored by Chicago Chapter & ITServe Alliance Scholarship sponsored by the AB2 Consulting Inc. by Vincent Berkman – ITServe Alliance created both current-use scholarships for STEM students with financial need and a preference for military-connected students.

Janet Trede Memorial Nursing Scholarship – This scholarship supporting second-year nursing students with financial need was created in memory of Janet Trede by her daughter, Lori A. Eschenbaum. Janet worked as an executive secretary at Harper College until her retirement in 1997.

Laura J. Brown Endowed Scholarship – This scholarship was created as a farewell gift for Laura Brown’s retirement. Laura wants to support working students enrolled in a minimum of nine credit hours, with at least a 2.5 GPA and with financial need.

Nancy Minich Benedict Interior Design Scholarship – This scholarship was created in memory of Nancy Minich Benedict by her sister, Sandra Minich. She created this scholarship to support students studying interior design.

Northwest Community Hospital Endowed Nursing Scholarship – The Northwest Community Hospital Foundation created this endowed scholarship for nursing students who are involved in community service and have financial need.

Patricia Mulcrone Memorial Scholarship – This scholarship was created in memory of Patricia Mulcrone by her daughter, Pamela Tichy and her husband Robert Tichy. Patricia worked at Harper for nearly twenty-seven years helping develop the Adult Educational Development Department. This scholarship will support adult students who have completed their GED or English Language Acquisition courses.

Tichy Family Scholarship – Pamela and Robert Tichy created this scholarship for degree-seeking students with a minimum 2.5 GPA and who have a learning disability or are adult students.

Tichy Family Second Chance Scholarship – Created to give students a second chance to pursue higher education. This scholarship will support students who are returning to college after attempting a degree or certificate program at a two-year or four-year institution but did not complete their program.

The Wise Williams Endowed Transfer Scholarship – Dr. Ruth Williams, Provost at Harper College, with her husband Don Williams created a scholarship as a gift for their parents. The scholarship will support Harper students who are transferring to a four-year college or university and have financial need.

(Scholarships created as of February 1, 2024)

Special Treat for Some Special Donors

It's not every day you get to meet a Pulitzer Prize winner. This March, the members of the Harper Heritage Society were treated to an evening with Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Beth Henley. The Harper Heritage Society is a distinction granted to those who plan to give to the Harper College Educational Foundation through their will or estate plan. Members of the Harper Heritage Society may elect to give to an existing fund or use their gift to create a new fund. To honor this kindness, the Harper College Educational Foundation hosted this special evening with Beth Henley.

Henley's visit is a credit to the extraordinary work Harper's faculty does to offer special opportunities to students. Director of Theatre, Kevin Long, has made outreach to esteemed playwrights a priority. Professor Long begins connecting with authors as the academic year's theatre schedule is finalized. The visit is made possible through Long's outreach and the Cultural Arts Lecture Fund through the Harper College Educational Foundation. This fund, created by the Knoff family, funds prominent lecturers at Harper College to interact directly with students.

Under Long's direction, the Harper Theatre Ensemble presented Henley's award-winning play, *Crimes of the Heart*, last March. During her time in residence, Henley led workshops for students, spoke on the production's opening night and made time for an intimate dinner with the Harper Heritage Society members.

The Foundation extended its gratitude to the Harper Heritage Society during an evening at Chicago Prime Italian restaurant, where they had a private audience with Henley. After dinner, the group watched Henley's work in action at the Saturday evening *Crimes of the Heart* performance. It was a special evening with the remarkable donors who decided to make Harper College part of their legacy.

To learn more about planned and estate gifts to Harper College, contact Kristyn Meyer at **847.925.6468** or email **kmeyer@harpercollege.edu**.



Harper Heritage Society

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Lynn Altfeld | Thomas A. and Carol M. Johnson |
| Anonymous | William and Jeanne Kelley |
| Lisa Kerkemeyer Ayers | Ann H. Kimberly |
| Martha Bell | Eric and Brenda Knox |
| Wendy Billington and Connie Norton | J. LeFevre |
| Erna Tripp Bringe and Bernard Bringe | Jeanne Pankanin |
| Catherine M. Brod | Jack and Linda Lloyd |
| Clayton and Sally Gardner | Henrietta N. Neeley |
| Thomas P. Gibbons | Michael and Laura Nejman |
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| Robert and Betsy Glorch | Jeffrey and Lauren Przybylo |
| Lesley and Richard Goldberg | Hazel M. Rilki |
| Peggy Gower | Robert K Scott |
| Shirley L. Gross-Moore | Gerald and Mary Smoller |
| Diane G. Hill | Clara Basch Stone and Michael Stone |
| Robin and Fran Hoffer | Jerald and Judith Thorson |
| Richard Hohol | Robin S. Turpin |
| Kris Howard-Jensen | MG Vancura |
| Mary Ann and Donald Jirak | Janet Zilkowski |

FROM THE DESK OF
HEATHER ZOLDAK, CFRE
HARPER COLLEGE EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER



Students come to Harper for a variety of reasons – as a part of their journey toward a bachelor’s degree, acquiring skills and training for a new career, or as a step on the path for better lives for themselves and their families. Whatever their motivation, we are here to help.

Almost twenty years ago, my husband, a veteran, enrolled at Harper College. As a working adult student, his journey at Harper was not without challenges, and Harper was there to help him in every step of his journey. Faculty, advisors and staff members provided support as he pursued his goals. While it was his hard work that ultimately led him to achieve his educational and career goals, there was a village supporting him along the way.

That is why I am so thrilled to be the next Chief Advancement Officer for the Harper College Educational Foundation. I am honored to work with a dedicated group of donors,

volunteers, faculty and staff, retirees, alumni and workforce partners who share a common goal of supporting Harper students. Your investments of time, talent and treasure help Harper students with their financial challenges, motivate them to continue on their path, validate their goals, and change lives.

Laura Brown retired in January after more than ten years of strategic, visionary leadership. I am thankful to her and all those who have been involved with the development and growth of the Foundation over the years. Thanks to your involvement, the Foundation continues to grow to best serve the needs of our students and the community. Working together, we will ensure that Harper students can achieve their dreams, transform their lives and enrich our community. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather".



HARPER HEART DAY

Helping Everyone Access Resources Together

The Fourth Annual Harper HEART Day is **April 17 and 18**. Harper’s super-sized day of giving spans 36 hours and boasts involvement from every arm of the Harper College community. The HEART in Harper HEART Day stands for Helping Everyone Access Resources Together. Our day of giving is an opportunity to support all things Harper — whether it’s student organizations, academic areas, scholarships or initiatives.

Each year, Harper’s student organizations participate in Harper HEART Day through the Competition for Good, in which they raise money to support their fellow students. Community members and alumni issue challenges to their friends and families—using their own donations to inspire others to give.

To get involved with Harper HEART Day or issue a challenge, please call **847.925.6490** or email **foundation@harpercollege.edu**. For a sneak peek of the causes participating in Harper HEART Day, use the QR code.



FROM THE DESK OF
DR. AVIS PROCTOR
 PRESIDENT OF HARPER COLLEGE



Earlier this year we discovered a signed copy of William Rainey Harper's final book, dedicated to his wife Ella on Feb. 21, 1905. This little surprise found hidden on a bookshelf was quickly delivered to our archives for safekeeping. I think often of our namesake and his innovative contributions to higher education more than a century ago with the founding of the nation's first public community college in Joliet.

We are living up to his spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation today at Harper College by providing pioneering solutions to transform lives and strengthen our communities. Recently, we received a National Science Foundation grant to develop workforce development programs in emerging technologies. Through partnerships with local workforce leaders and civic organizations, we are also creating programs in cybersecurity and cloud-based technology as well as aviation.

Last October, the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) was designated as an official regional innovation and technology hub. This is notable because we are collaborating with the City

Colleges of Chicago and partners across the Chicago MSA to develop the education and training pathways leading to a skilled quantum workforce in quantum information science and quantum-adjacent fields. Empowering individuals to pursue these careers also strengthens our national security and global competitiveness.

Through your partnership and support, we can help our students find their path for success to family-sustaining wages and generational change. As the community's college, we are prepared to meet the needs of our students and help the economic health of our community to SOAR. Your support is important as we do this work. Your involvement with our students, whether through financial support, mentorship, or access to workforce connections, removes barriers for our students and contributes to their success. Thank you for all you do in helping Harper College students.

INSPIRE BY THE NUMBERS

as of February 29, 2024

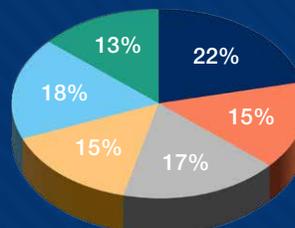
Campaign Fundraising Goal:
\$30,000,000

\$32,614,224
 total raised

109%
 percent to goal

71
 total new
 scholarships
 created

New scholarships inspired by:



Alumni | Businesses/Organizations | Faculty/Staff
 Community Members | Volunteers | Retirees



Inaugural DivIHN Scholarship recipients Asude C. and Miguel F. connect with Vice President of Client & Community Relationships at DivIHN Integration, Reggie Rush.

Going Above and Beyond for Harper Students

DivIHN Integration exemplifies what is possible when you invest in the community. This global IT Solutions company is based in Hoffman Estates and takes as its core purpose “Positively impacting lives, one interaction at a time.” When thinking about how to bring this mission beyond its client base, DivIHN Integration decided to invest in the next generation of community thought leaders. They did so by partnering with Harper College to support students financially and personally.

The company’s leadership started the DivIHN Scholarship through the Harper College Educational Foundation in 2023. The scholarship, which supports two students annually with tuition, fees and books at Harper College, was awarded for the first time this academic year. In December, DivIHN’s Vice President of Client & Community Relationships joined the Foundation’s Board of Directors to share what inspires him and his company to give back. In his remarks, Mr. Rush emphasized the importance of education, and he is proud to further DivIHN Integration’s mission by empowering students who may not have the funds to continue their education, saying, “After all, one day they will take care of us.”

Also speaking at the December meeting was one of the inaugural recipients of the DivIHN Scholarship, Asude C., who noted that the scholarship had a profound impact on her educational journey.

She attended a prominent business school in her home country of Turkey before her family moved to the United States two and a half years ago. While it was difficult for Asude and her family to leave behind their home and all they knew, they decided to pursue a better life in America. This scholarship demonstrates to Asude that the life they dreamed of is possible in their new home.

Beyond their generous financial investment in Harper students, DivIHN employees are also investing their time and knowledge. DivIHN Integration participated in the Foundation’s Corporate Mentorship program in Fall 2023. Company leadership nominated five employees to serve as mentors for Harper students aspiring to positions like theirs in the future. Each mentor held three virtual meetings with their student partner and worked to build students’ professional skills and confidence. Under their guidance, Harper College students gained insight beyond the classroom from industry professionals—an invaluable gift for anyone starting their professional journey. DivIHN Integration uplifts our community through generosity and setting the stage for a better future.

To learn more about starting a scholarship or getting involved with the Harper College Educational Foundation’s Corporate Mentorship Program, call **847.925.6490** or email **foundation@harpercollege.edu**.

Career Connections Program Brings Together Students with Alumni

Ushna Zamir's life changed at Harper College.

She enrolled in the fall of 2017 with an idea to pursue chemistry. During her first semester, she discovered that she wasn't connecting with her science courses but had quickly become passionate about her role on Harper's Speech and Debate Team. She wasn't the only one who noticed this.

"My professors said, 'You have a talent and interest in communications. There's a lot you can do with that,'" Ushna recalled.

Six-and-a-half years after Ushna began her career journey as an uncertain Harper freshman, she returned to campus in March as a confident HR professional and featured panelist during the college's Career Connections with Harper Alumni event. The two-day program kicked off with a day of panel discussions with Harper alumni leaders. The second day featured a Professional Leadership Dinner – held at Chicago Prime Italian, a restaurant owned by alumnus Andy-John Kalkounos – where students learned the art of networking, etiquette and professionalism with alumni.

This was the second annual Career Connections event. Both students and alumni spoke glowingly about events which invited a group of Harper alumni with a range of experiences and professions to interact with current students. One of those students was Sonia Ajakaiye, a 20-year-old Hoffman Estates resident enrolled in Harper's Nursing program.

"Harper might not be considered an elite school, but in meeting all of those alumni and speaking with them, you realize that you can do anything when you go to Harper," she said, before singling out her interactions with one of last year's panelists, Genevieve Frey-Moylan, who is the associate vice president of Heart Center Transformation at Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.

"She talked about how Harper prepares you for the workforce," Sonia said. "She took the time to give me advice and told me that if I ever had questions to email her. It made me feel good."



The feeling was mutual. Genevieve, who earned her associate degree in nursing at Harper in 2003 before completing her bachelor's in nursing and master's in nursing administration at DePaul University, was impressed to see the engagement from students during and after her panel discussion.

"Nobody gets where they're going without help," she said. "I feel like giving back is very important. This, for me, is giving back to a place that got me started on the path that has led to my professional and personal fulfillment. You can see someone who was in your shoes. It's rewarding."

Dexter Gardener, a Harper alumnus who participated in last year's Leadership Dinner, felt a similar responsibility in joining the Career Connections event. A 1999 Harper grad who was president of the college's Black Student Union during his time as a student, Dexter is now the pastor of Second Baptist Church in Palatine.

"I want to stay connected to the community I grew up in," he said. "There's a lot I did not know going to school. You can go to class and get the grades, but the networking piece – that's big. These relationships can be so important."

As an alumna who was part of this year's edition, Ushna was excited to meet students and share her relatively recent experience transitioning from education to career.

"I looked forward to seeing the passion of students and answering their questions, especially early career questions," she said. "Harper is an amazing institution. It's done so much for me, my development and my success. I am glad to be a resource for students."



2024 **Distinguished Alumni** Awards Call for Nominations

Honoring Exceptional Harper College Alumni

*Nominations are now open for the 2024 Distinguished Alumni Awards, including the award for Outstanding Recent Alumni.**

*Outstanding Recent Alumni Award honors alumni who have attended Harper College within the last 10 years.

Visit harpercollege.edu/alumni and click on Distinguished Alumni for the award criteria, nominating instructions and applications (self-nominations accepted).

Deadline is 5 p.m. (CST) May 13.

Questions?

CALL: 847.925.6701 | EMAIL: alumni@harpercollege.edu

 Harper College *Alumni*

To learn more:

VISIT: harpercollege.edu/alumni

Donor-Sponsored Scholarship Recipients

Students who receive a donor-sponsored scholarship through the Harper College Educational Foundation are a diverse group of students who have educational dreams and work hard to achieve their goals. Support from their scholarships allows them to enroll in more classes, focus more on their education and stay enrolled in school.



Frank and Minerva Solano Endowed Scholarship for First Generation Latino Students

Frank Solano's connection to Harper College started in July 1987, when he became the first Latino administrator in Harper's history as The Director of Financial Aid and Veteran's Affairs. Shortly after, he accepted the position of Director of Multicultural Affairs and served in that role until his retirement in 2002. During his tenure as Director of Multicultural Affairs, Frank founded the Multicultural Affairs Program, laying the groundwork for Harper's commitment to serving its diverse student body and community.

When Frank began his employment at Harper College, Hispanics made up about 5% of the students population. Today, with over 25% of Hispanics making up the student population, Harper has become a "Hispanic Serving Institution" (HSI) as defined in federal law. HSI is a recognition given by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU).

The Frank and Minerva Solano Scholarship Endowed Scholarship for First Generation Latino Students will support first-generation Latino students who have financial need. Frank says he created the scholarship, "in appreciation to Harper and to the Latino community that it serves." Originally created as an annual scholarship in 2021, Frank decided to endow the scholarship to ensure that it supports future generations of Harper College students.

Frank wants the recipients of his scholarship to know that both he and his wife, Minerva were first generation college students as they are. "We wish them all the success in the world."

"Thanks to this scholarship I will be able to work less and prioritize my classes next semester."

Perla T. R.

2022-2023 Frank and Minerva Solano Endowed Scholarship for First Generation Latino Students Recipient

"My hope for the recipients of this scholarship is that the financial assistance provided helps them in their pursuit of their educational goals."

Frank Solano

Scholarship Founder and Harper Retiree



Frank and Minerva Solano with their scholarship recipient, Perla T. R. (seated).

Hawks Care Lands Successfully in New Location

Hawks Care has officially moved into its new home. Hawks Care started in 2017 when two Harper staff members applied for funds through a Resource for Excellence Grant to address the high food and housing insecurity among Harper students. That \$4,000 grant from the Harper College Educational Foundation helped turn the Harper employees' vision into the Hawks Care Food Pantry. What began in a small closet in the Wojcik Conference Center has grown into a much larger enterprise.

With its new third-floor suite in the Duchossois Family Education Center, Hawks Care is larger than all previous locations combined.

The pantry is available to all Harper students for a shopping experience twice a month on a drop-in basis. Provisions include food products as well as hygienic items. The enlarged space also empowered the Hawks Care team to begin a professional clothing closet to help students in need prepare for interviews and workplaces. Beautifully refurbished, the Hawks Care suite now hosts the food and clothing pantries and the Hawks Care staff's workspaces; many of Harper's counselors have relocated their office spaces to the new site. This way, they can support students more holistically by ensuring they have the access and support they need to be successful.

In the seven years since that first Resource for Excellence Grant, the pantry has served hundreds of Harper students and has discovered the need for additional student support—and it did so through innovative partnerships. In collaboration with Lyft rideshare service, Harper students have an answer to transportation challenges through eight discounted rides to or from campus per month. When students were going hungry while on campus, second-generation Harper College Educational Foundation donors—the Cockrell Siblings—created an endowment to provide food-insecure students with gift cards, empowering them to get a meal on campus. For students facing urgent financial crises that



might cause them to leave college, the Richard L. Duchossois Emergency Fund is there to help them through their hardship. In the coming months, thanks to grant funding, Hawks Care will introduce support for students struggling with childcare needs. As Hawks Care's physical location has grown, so have its services. Thanks to the generosity of the Harper College community, fewer students will leave their educational dreams behind because of personal hardships.

To learn more about Hawks Care or how to support students' basic needs, call **847.925.6490** or foundation@harpercollege.edu

Thank you to our Business Champions

The Harper College Educational Foundation is grateful for the sponsorship support of our 2023-2024 Business Champions. To sponsor an event or learn more, email Kristyn Meyer at kmeyer@harpercollege.edu.

\$10,000+



\$7,500+



\$5,000+



\$2,500+



\$1,000+

- 20/10 Engineering
- Bradford Systems
- Combined Roofing Services LLC
- DeFranco Plumbing, Inc.
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- RESTORE

Sponsors secured as of March 1, 2024

Lifetime Giving Donor Recognition

Thank you to our donors whose lifetime giving has qualified them for recognition among our most generous supporters. The Lifetime Giving list reflects giving totals of \$10,000+ and is updated annually. Totals listed here are as of June 30, 2023.



\$1,000,000.00+

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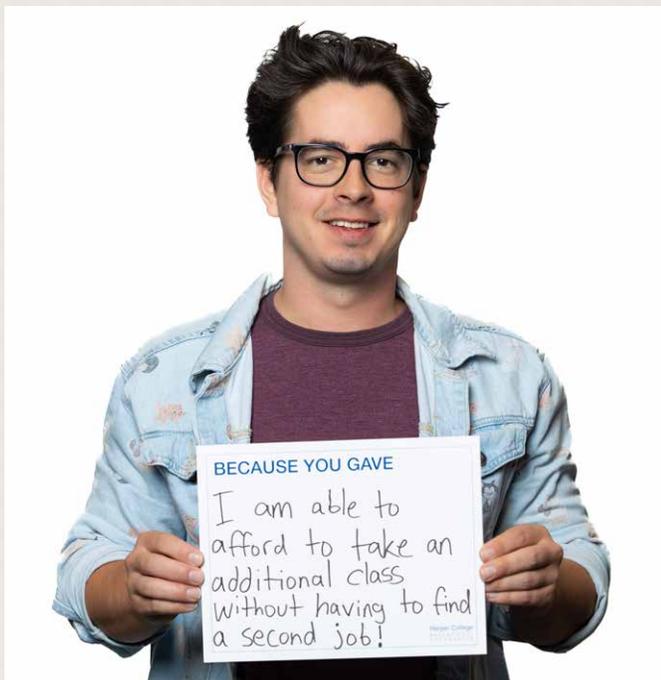
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\$10,000.00+

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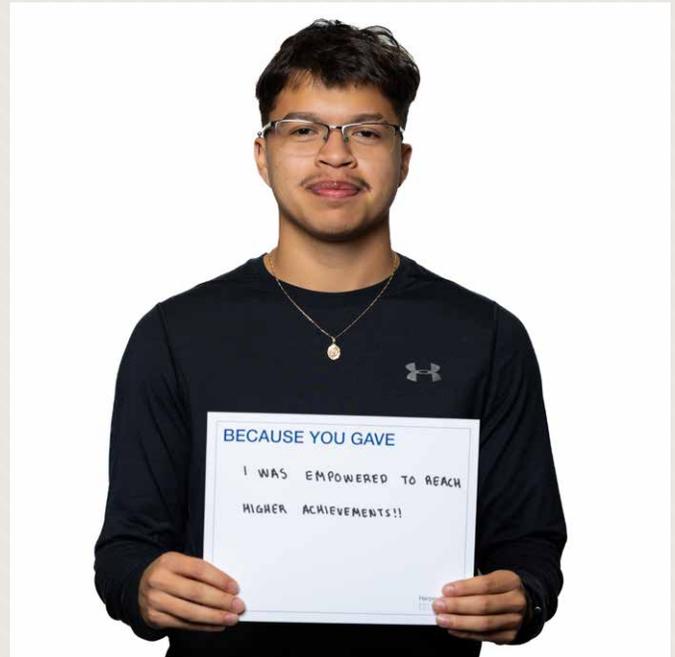
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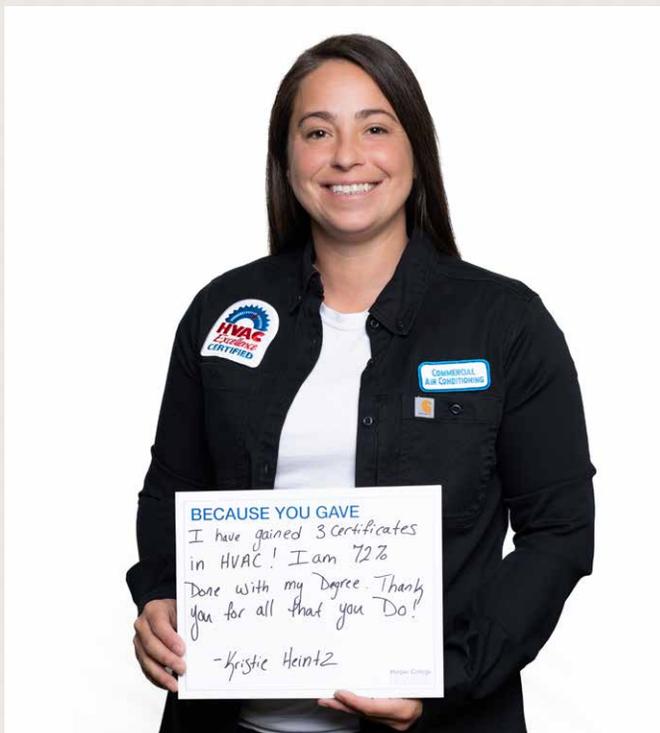
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Fiscal Year 2023 Financial Analysis

Your & Student Investment Success

BY THE NUMBERS
(July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)



1,847
students received
Foundation support



\$5,847,099
in annual total support
of scholarships, grants
and awards

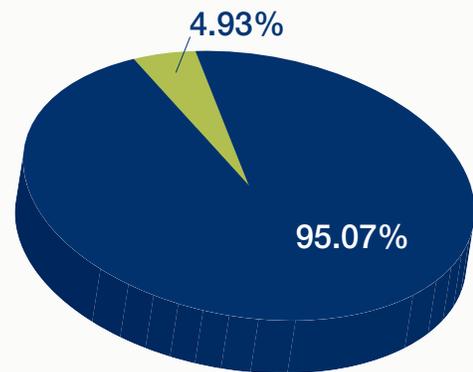


13
newly created funds



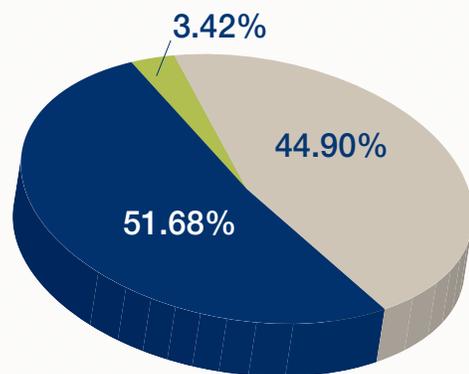
\$3,165
average
scholarship award

Allocation of Program Funds



■ Scholarships/Awards ■ Resource for Excellence Grants/Other Grants

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Questions? Contact Kristyn Meyer at kmeyer@harpercollege.edu or **847.925.6468**. Thank you for changing lives with your qualified charitable distribution.

PATRICK H. DOMINICK



New Educational Foundation Board Member

The Harper College Educational Foundation Welcomes New Board of Directors Member

The Harper College Educational Foundation welcomes **Patrick H. Dominick, CFTA**, to its Board of Directors. Mr. Dominick is a Certified Trust and Financial Advisor who serves as a Senior Vice President at the Northern Trust Company as well as the Senior Managing Director for Northern Trust's Barrington Financial Center. Mr. Dominick is also a trustee for the Northwest Community Hospital Foundation in Arlington Heights. He was a former board member and past president of the Northwest Suburban Estate Planning Council, a former board member of The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society-Chicago and Corporate Trustee of American Colleges of Illinois.

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35th Annual Golf Outing

Join us for the Harper College Educational Foundation's 35th Annual Golf Outing on **June 3, 2024**. We look forward to a beautiful day on the course at our new venue, The Club at Wynstone. Proceeds from this event support student scholarships and emerging educational initiatives at Harper College. Sponsorship opportunities are still available through **May 15, 2024**. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities or for advance registration, please contact Kristyn Meyer at **847.925.6468** or **kmeyer@harpercollege.edu**

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