



PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

November 2024

Dear Harper College Community:

We are near the halfway point of our strategic planning process—*Participate. Discover. Focus.* I hope you have participated in our dialogue sessions and are planning to attend a data summit. You can also view [strategic planning materials](#) on HIP and provide feedback there as well. At our last strategic dialogue session, The Changing Landscape of Community, our panel discussed how the demographics of our community are changing and so are their needs, which means Harper will also need to continue adapting our programs and services to help our students and community thrive in an evolving landscape. Thanks to Amie Granger, community relations manager, and Executive Cabinet members Heather Zoldak, chief advancement officer, and Jeff Julian, chief of staff/VP of external affairs, for planning the session. Our next strategic plan will guide the critical work of helping our students SOAR on their Path for Success while furthering our role as a convener in the communities we serve. I value your participation and input, and I want to thank Vice President Darlene Schlenbecker and our Strategic Planning and Accountability Shared Governance Committee for leading this process.

As some of you have shared with me, it is important to acknowledge what has been a stressful election season and recognize that some members of our community are fearful – for their safety, for their human and civil rights, and for the future. We will continue to strengthen our Culture of Care and work to understand concerns and provide support as we are able. Serving as the Public Policy and Governmental Relations Committee Chair for AACC, I will continue to advocate for the needs of Harper and other community colleges as we meet this month regarding our legislative priorities and regulations that may change with shifts on Capitol Hill. I want to reaffirm that we will remain focused on our mission of lifting up students and transforming lives and our community. We live out this mission daily in providing an outstanding education, building our next Strategic Plan, improving success outcomes, strengthening our learning and work environments, and demonstrating a Culture of Care and inclusion for each and every person on our campuses. At the start of the fall semester, I shared a [message](#) with students and employees about living our core values, supporting each other and fostering an environment of respect and civil discourse. I challenge everyone to not allow that commitment to falter. We will remain steadfast in continuing this vital work. We are in this together, and we will move forward together.

Last month, I joined Trustees Johnson, Kelley, Mundt and Student Trustee Lei, along with Provost Dr. Ruth Williams and Jeff Julian, at the ACCT Leadership Congress in Seattle. Once again, Harper led on the national stage as Chair Kelley, Dr. Williams and I provided an overview of Harper's Innovation Accelerator to a packed room, while Chair Kelley presented on trustee support for innovation as part of a panel discussion with his fellow trustees led by New America. Additionally, Harper team members participated in a two-day discussion on emerging community college partnership opportunities between the U.S. and India. I always come back invigorated by what we have learned and how it will strengthen Harper and our sector on several dimensions including student success, academic excellence and relevance, and technological innovations, to name a few.

This week we celebrate Veterans' Day and extend our appreciation for their service and sacrifices for our country. We are proud to have recently received Gold Status as a military-friendly institution in serving our



student veterans and their families with excellence. November is also Native American Heritage Month and our Student Engagement team is hosting the Trickster Cultural Center for a drum and dance demonstration. It is important that we honor and recognize the contributions of those whose land on which Harper College now sits.

Finally, we lost a Harper College icon recently with the passing of longtime supporter and trustee emeritus Dick Kolze. As we drive around campus on Kolze Lane, we have a daily reminder of his twelve years of dedicated service on our Board of Trustees, including four years as Board Chair. We are profoundly grateful that Dick made Harper an important part of his service to our community. He will be missed.



Academic Updates

By the Numbers

- Academic Support Center (ASC)
 - Through week 10 of the fall 2024 term, the ASC has logged 7,758 student visits, over two thousand more than this time last year.
 - In week 10 alone, the ASC logged 1,027 visits, a 31% increase from the same time last year.
 - Through the end of October, the ASC has conducted 52 presentations for courses, organizations, and student clubs, including workshops, tours, and class visits. The ASC has also participated in five campus-wide events this fall.
- Counseling Services
 - Counseling Services held 66 appointments in the month of October to support student mental health and academic success.
 - The Counseling Services manager held two therapeutic process groups for students as a part of Harper's civic engagement plan.
- Enrollment Services
 - Our chatbot efficiently handled 59% (530) of the total 892 chats received, while live staff managed the remaining chats (41%). The most common topics included "Course Schedule" (80 inquiries), "Health Science Classes" (76 inquiries), and "Registering for a Class" (50 inquiries).
 - Our staff effectively supported a high volume of cases, calls, and in-person visits, maintaining smooth operations across multiple communication channels. The team processed over 3,000 CRM cases, including emails and forms, managed 2,037 calls, and assisted with 1,594 in-person visits across Admissions Outreach, Cultural Center, One Stop, Testing Center, and the Veteran's Center.
 - We sent more than 47,000 broadcast emails to students and clients, which included invitations to Health Careers information sessions and reminders for current students to prepare for spring registration.
- Resources for Learning
 - Library building traffic: In October, 21,388 patrons visited the library.
 - Semester loan technology: The library checked out 48 library Chromebooks, 29 graphing calculators, and 20 Wi-Fi hotspots to students in October.
 - Adult Education Development (AED) Chromebook distribution: The library facilitated the checkout of 110 AED Chromebooks for AED students at the main campus, Learning and Career Center (LCC), and Education and Work Center (EWC) locations during October.

Events

- Career and Technical Programs
 - The Graphic Arts Design and Technology (GRA) program hosted its annual GRA BOOST event in October. There were over 250 high school students in attendance from 14 different local high schools. The students went through nine rotations of content in GRA. The sessions included Illustration, Packaging, Digital Press, Bindery, Industry Discussions, Tours of Harper Campus, GRA Logo Game, Photography, and Photoshop.
- Counseling Services
 - In partnership with Barrington Youth & Family Services, Counseling Services will host a three-part Conversations with a Counselor series to promote student mental health and well-being. Special thanks to the Hawks Care Resource Center and Cultural Center for generously providing space to host this series.



- Enrollment Services
 - In September, Admissions Outreach in collaboration with the Project Assistance, Surpassing Obstacles (PASO) committee hosted our second annual Harper Fiesta. Ninety-three students attended with their families (315 attendees total). Compared to last year, we had a 22% increase in student participants.
 - In late October, Admissions Outreach welcomed 316 prospective students (784 people total!) and their families to campus during our annual High School Open House. This year, we included an early access event for dual credit seniors and had a University Center Corner during the fair portion of the event. Both saw a lot of engagement as well!
 - Transfer: In early October, Harper hosted the Private Illinois Colleges and Universities Fair which included 30 partner institutions from across the state. Each school had the opportunity to inform students of the benefits of attending their school, along with updating our advising staff with important information related to their school.
 - University Center (UC): Also in October, the University Center hosted a UC Transfer Fair which included representatives from each of our four partner institutions. Over 70 students stopped by and engaged with our partners, learning about the process to complete their bachelor's degree while remaining here on Harper's campus.

- Harper Wellness
 - Harper Wellness collaborated with Campus Recreation and the Kinesiology Department to host the Fall Fitness Assessments. Students from the Kinesiology program were able to get hands-on practice with over 25 participants while the participants received a free fitness assessment and body composition check, in addition to consultations with a personal trainer and nutrition consultation.
 - Harper Wellness hosted the "What's Your Green Flag?" event in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, in collaboration with campus and community partners such as WINGS, Northwest CASA, and the Women's Program. Over 100 students learned about bystander intervention skills and services available to them as it relates to interpersonal violence.
 - Harper Wellness and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) finished up their four-week Table Talk Dinner Series, which was aimed at bringing together students to help bridge differences and have authentic conversations over dinner. Over 30 students participated in the Table Talk Dinner Series.

- Start Smart & Learning Communities
 - The Harper planning committee finalized preparations to host the National Learning Communities Conference at Loew's Chicago O'Hare Hotel in Rosemont. The conference welcomed attendees from over 45 different two-year and four-year colleges and universities, including approximately 90 administrators and staff, and 60 faculty members who work with learning communities on their campuses. Nineteen Harper faculty, staff, and administrators volunteered at the event. Among them, two presented a pre-conference session, and 10 led various breakout sessions, showcasing the exceptional work Harper does in the realm of learning communities.

- Student Engagement
 - Fall Fest: The Student Engagement Team, Community Relations, and the Office of the President express sincere gratitude to all participants and supporters for the successful execution of the 4th Annual Fall Fest. The event drew approximately 2,500 students and employees, all coming together to celebrate the autumn season and our Harper community. This beautiful event featured a picturesque autumnal Harper backdrop and 1,600 pumpkins, all of which found a home! Students and employees were treated to custom Harper College Fall Fest stadium cups with root beer floats, pizza, popcorn, caramel apples, and veggie cups. Additionally, the event featured pumpkin carving and painting, a student and employee drawing for a variety of gift baskets, a musical performer, and a student trick-or-treat activity to teach students about financial literacy sponsored by the Campus Wellbeing Collective.

We would like to thank the Chemistry Club for showcasing their explosive pumpkin experiment, the Environmental Club for collecting and composting the pumpkin carving waste, and our student veterans for building the festival themed food stands.

A student shared at the event, "I am so lucky to go to Harper because I know other community colleges aren't providing this type of experience. I feel so lucky. Thank you for giving me and everyone else these experiences." This reflects the collaboration and excellence Harper College strives to create.

This year's Fall Fest proved to be a celebration not only of the season but of Harper College's enduring commitment to fostering respect, collaboration, and excellence in all student and employee engagement endeavors. Thank you to the over 60 employees who provided event support to make Fall Fest possible!

- Oktoberfest: Guten Tag! German Club, Student Engagement, and the Office of International Education hosted Oktoberfest in October. This event was a showcase of German culture and traditions, including Bavarian pretzels, Apfelschorle, traditional songs and dance, a stein holding competition and more! The German Club would like to thank everyone that attended and highlight the upcoming 2025 study abroad trip to Munich.

Highlights

- Division/Program Highlights

- Academic Advising, One Million Degrees (OMD), and the Center for New Students and Orientation
 - Academic Advising, OMD, and the Center for New students and Orientation have completed career and educational planning classroom presentations in 22 Start Smart, First Year Seminar (FYS), and English courses this fall.

- Athletics

The Women's Cross-Country team earned the Regional Championship for the third time securing the overall team regional championship with just five runners. They look to continue their success at the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Cross Country National Championships in Richmond VA in November. They are led by Coach Jim Macnider, who also brought home his 10th Coach of the Year recognition! #GoHawks!



- Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa (PTK)
 - Last month, we held a welcome reception for new PTK members. The reception was well attended and gave new members the opportunity to meet the advisors and student officer board and learn more about the opportunities provided by Harper's PTK chapter.



- We brought eight PTK students to the Illinois Regional Leadership Conference at Elgin Community College in October. The students attended keynotes and breakout sessions, and they also delivered a presentation on the mutually beneficial connections between Harper's Phi Phi Chapter and the Honors Program.
 - In October, we volunteered at GiGi Fest in support of GiGi's Playhouse in Hoffman Estates, an achievement center for individuals with Down Syndrome.
 - Also in October, we volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, working to complete the build of a single-family home in Carpentersville.
 - Honors/PTK collaborated with Harper's International Club to hold a panel discussion at the weekly Honors meeting late last month. The discussion covered student experiences, the importance of a multicultural education, diversity at Harper, and more.
- Office of International Education
 - At the start of November, we concluded another International Education Week celebration. This year was marked by collaboration. We started the week by partnering with the World Languages Department and student volunteers for an engaging "Speed Language Exchange," highlighting the languages we teach at Harper. Celebration calls for music, and esteemed violinist Linda Veleckis, guitarist, and Harper Music Department faculty member Peter Aglinskis brought us music from around the world.

Students were the stars in two other events: Capstone/Distinctions Project Presentations and a Student Panel with Honors and International Students discussing diversity, learning, and community engagement.

In addition to also collaborating with the DEI Office for Dia de Los Muertos and with the library for a book display and craft focused on global perspectives, we finished our week hosting a senior foreign service officer sharing with students about her career representing the US abroad and career opportunities with the State Department.

This week's events are a way to expose students to global topics and intercultural differences without leaving our campus, and we hope to continue to include even more collaborations in the future.

- Office of International Education and virtual exchange: For four sessions during the month of November, faculty director of international education Dr. Richard Johnson will lead a group of international colleagues on a journey to explore virtual exchange, or Collaborative Online International/Intercultural Learning (COIL). The workshops will discuss best practices in virtual exchange and how to integrate innovative methods into a variety of curricula. The four modules use a design-thinking methodology to develop the essential elements of a successful virtual exchange: ideate, design, test, and implement. Each session will produce a vital component of the virtual exchange course. By spring semester, we hope to have a cohort of faculty ready to infuse their courses with virtual exchange.
- Start Smart & Learning Communities
 - The Interdisciplinary Programs Office continues to work to increase student success by collaborating with those focusing on the Path to Success and with Areas of Interest (AOI) chairs to increase opportunities for students to complete their Start Smart course.
 - At the Destination Harper event for high school students last month, both Learning Communities and Start Smart will be represented to share with future Harper students and parents the opportunities available at Harper in these areas, and how these opportunities support the success of our Harper students.

- The Interdisciplinary Programs Office is working with Advising and other areas on campus to promote the learning community options available for students in the spring 2025 semester. There will be learning community faculty participating in the upcoming “Registration Rally” event on November 19 to encourage students to register early and promote the various opportunities available at Harper including learning communities.
- Employee Highlights
 - Business and Social Science
 - Dr. Yolonda Barnes, dean of business and social science, recently completed the 2024 AACC John E. Roueche Future Leaders Institute, a prestigious three-day seminar designed for emerging community college leaders. This intensive three-day program, rooted in the AACC Competencies for Community College Leaders, is tailored to equip participants with the skills and insights necessary to navigate the challenges of higher education leadership. The institute covered critical areas such as student success, institutional transformation, and fiscal planning—key elements for fostering impactful leadership. During the program, Dr. Barnes had the opportunity to refine her leadership skills, engage in thought-provoking discussions with seasoned professionals, and build a valuable network of peers from across the country. Dr. Barnes’ participation in this program further strengthens her commitment to advancing the mission and success of Harper College.
 - Career and Technical Programs
 - Carol Carlson-Nofsinger, coordinator of legal studies, attended the annual American Association for Paralegal Educators (AAfPE) Conference in Arlington, Virginia in October, and she earned an AAfPE Micro-Credential Badge for teaching.
 - Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa (PTK)
 - Professors John Garcia and Alicia Tomasian both received the honor of Outstanding Officer from the Illinois Region of Phi Theta Kappa for the 2023-2024 academic year. They were nominated by students in our PTK chapter.
- Student Highlights
 - Business and Social Science
 - Last month, 17 Harper College students earned their Illinois Gateways Early Childhood Level Two credential. These students completed four evening courses with support from the Adult Education Department. This marks the first successful cohort to complete this credential bilingually with students receiving instruction in both Spanish and English. Early Childhood instructor Nydia Burgo and Adult Education instructor Claudia Lopez Heinrich worked together to tailor the program to meet the students’ needs. Graduate Rosa Perez stated, "Having finished up my classes opened up a world of opportunities for me, another goal accomplished in my journey, but above all, showing my daughters that the sky is the limit!"

Guided by the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE), our goal was to serve the needs of the incumbent early childhood workforce to advance racial equity while meeting the needs of employers by streamlining, coordinating, and improving the accessibility of degree completion pathways for upskilling and the sustained expansion of educational pipelines at Illinois institutions of higher education. Statewide, 31% of those working in early childhood education identify as Hispanic. Many of those had not previously had access to higher education because of a language barrier. By offering these initial credentials bilingually, we bridged this gap and provided a springboard for future educational endeavors.

This program was generously funded by Harper College's Resource for Excellence Grant and ECACE. Graduate Nelson Javier Acosta summarized, "We are grateful to the people of Harper College who were a big support in reaching our first significant goal in the United States. This is a foundational step in achieving a better future for our lives and families."



- Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa (PTK)
 - The PTK Officer Team for the 2023-2024 academic year received an Outstanding Officer Team Award from the Illinois Region of Phi Theta Kappa. Members of the team still active in the chapter include Sonia Ajakaiye, Yosephine Lee, Priyanka Saroya, and Preye Indiamawe.

Advancement

- In 2025, the HOPE Giving Circle will celebrate its 10th year of awarding scholarships for students at Harper College. To mark the occasion, HOPE launched an ambitious "10 for 10" campaign to award 10 scholarships to deserving students for the 10th anniversary. Each will be a \$10,000 scholarship that students can use at Harper and at their transfer institution. Over the past decade, HOPE awarded \$320,000 to 32 students with 160 donors having supported the scholarship fund.
- Over 100 alumni and friends gathered to honor the 2024 Distinguished Alumni award recipients in October. Since the launch of the program in 2008, 92 alumni have been selected for this honor. The recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Scholarship is announced each year at the ceremony. This year's recipient is Devon Freitag, who is working toward her nursing degree. Distinguished Alumni contributed over \$38,000 for the scholarship since 2017.
- As of October 30, the Foundation has awarded \$1,392,090 to 917 students for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- This year, Latine Heritage Month was celebrated in full swing with a vibrant series of events dedicated to honoring the rich cultures, contributions, and community spirit of the Latine population. From September 15 to October 15, students, faculty, staff, alumni, and local community members came together to participate



in meaningful discussions, captivating performances, and community-building activities, all aimed at fostering appreciation and understanding of Latine heritage. More specifically, the month included:

- Chocolate, Conchas y Chismes where students connected with Latine faculty and staff while indulging in hot chocolate, conchitas and Latine dance classes.
 - Posters and virtual bios of Latine employees were hung around the D Rotunda circle as a visual celebration of our Latine employees.
 - Drag Lotería combined traditional Mexican lotería with a drag show, celebrating Latine and LGBTQ+ cultures.
 - Latinos Unidos Alumni Reunion which strengthened bonds between current students and alumni and opportunities for Latinos Unidos alumni to reconnect with each other and the campus. This event was successfully co-sponsored by the Office of DEI, Alumni Relations, and Latinos Unidos.
 - The 25th Annual Sabor Latino show was an engaging celebration of Latine music, dance, vendors, and sweets. The event featured performances that highlighted traditional and contemporary Latine dance performances representing different cultures within the Latine community.
 - We concluded with a spectacular display for Dia de los Muertos. This involved community ofrendas installed by the Office of DEI, Latinos Unidos, International Students Club, Hispanic Serving Institution program, Student Government Association, PRIDE, and the Office of International Education.
- In October, Harper College hosted its fourth Annual LGBTQ+ Pride Festival, drawing over 200 attendees. This vibrant event featured student drag performances, a rally, and a variety of entertainers, all centered around the theme “Vote with Pride.” This year’s focus was on educating the LGBTQ+ community and encouraging voter participation. Held on the quad, this festival showcased more than 30 tables with engaging activities and information from local LGBTQ groups, the Cook County Department of Public Health, Harper’s student support offices, and various clubs. The festival was a collaborative effort involving the Office of DEI, Student Engagement, Wellness, and the staff, administrators, and faculty for Equality (SAFE) Employee Resource Group, alongside the Pride Club and the Trans Tea Time program.
 - Last month we hosted our annual Diversity Symposium, which welcomed 160 attendees, including students, faculty, and staff. This event featured keynote addresses by authors Tracie McMillan and Dr. Bobby J. Smith. A new edition of this year’s symposium was a dedicated student track, where student leaders engaged in discussions, sharing their thoughts and experiences with presenters.

External Affairs

Communications

- The Communications team pitched, secured placement, and/or helped facilitate 11 articles that appeared in local and national media publications. Media mentions include:
 - *Community College Daily*, the *Daily Herald* and *Patch* published stories about the Paths to College and Career Program and the students it has helped at Harper’s Learning and Career Center. Achieving the Dream’s November newsletter also highlighted this story.
 - The *Daily Herald* wrote an article focused on the success of the Education and Work Center as a preview for the center’s 10th anniversary celebration. The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* also ran post-event reports with information about the celebration and its speakers.
 - The ICCTA listserv, *Daily Herald* and *Journal & Topics* published obituaries for Dick Kolze, who served on Harper’s Board of Trustees for 12 years and was named a trustee emeritus in 2005.
 - *ARY News*, a Pakistani news channel, covered the Pakistan Consulate General Chicago’s visit to the International Students Club.
 - The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* previewed this year’s Experience Day.
 - A *Daily Herald* photographer wrote an essay reflecting on the excitement of attending Harper’s Eclipse event earlier this year.

- *Patch* previewed Harper's third Strategic Dialogue Session about the future landscape of the community.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* ran recaps of the Faith & Blue event co-hosted by the Harper College Police Department and Harper's Campus Crusade for Christ.
- The *Born Primitive* podcast featured an interview with Harper alum Clay Guida, who spoke about his time as a student-athlete.

Community Relations

- The annual Experience Day was held early this month. Families participated in activities in math, biology, physical science and engineering, astronomy, law enforcement, fire science, graphic design, manufacturing and metal fabrication, and HVAC. Harper programs also hosted information tables including AED, AI/Cybersecurity, campus recreation, risk management, diagnostic medical sonography, and physical therapist assistant. Community partners, libraries, police, and fire departments also participated to provide a unique and engaging experience. Thank you to all volunteers and activity leaders that made the event possible.
- The third annual Harper Trunk or Treat was a huge success. Almost 2,000 people attended the event late last month. More than 40 vehicles participated including area police and fire departments, Harper programs, employees and students, community organizations and community members. The new [Harper Haunted Hospital](#) hosted by the Health Careers Division was a hit! Families also enjoyed music, hot chocolate, and cider. The annual event is a collaboration between Harper police, campus recreation and community relations. A very special thank you to Officer Melissa Harrah for all her hard work and leadership. Thank you to everyone that participated and helped make the event a success.

Legislative Affairs

- Harper College joined other Illinois community colleges in sharing messages with state elected officials about the importance of the PATH grant, dual credit and the Workforce Equity Initiative in advance of the Veto, "Lame duck" and spring 2025 legislative sessions. Using social media and direct appeals to legislators, the messaging effort is a collaboration between the Illinois Community College Marketing Collaborative and the newly formed Illinois Council of Community College Presidents Legislative Committee, co-chaired by Jeff Julian.
- Director of Student Financial Assistance Laura McGee participated in a conversation with State Rep. Tracy Katz Muhl and representatives from Oakton College, where they discussed the recent issues with FAFSA and the importance of ensuring MAP grant resources are available to community college students.
- The results of the November 2024 General Election are in, and there are no changes to Harper's state and federal representation with the outcome of one race yet to be determined.
 - At the Congressional level, U.S. Representatives Raja Krishnamoorthi, Mike Quigley, Delia Ramirez, Jan Schakowsky, and Brad Schneider were all reelected to two-year terms.
 - At the State Senate level, State Senator Mark Walker was reelected for a two-year term to the post he was appointed to by Governor Pritzker when former State Senator Ann Gillespie left the statehouse to join Pritzker's administration.
 - At the State Representative level, State Representatives Canty, Didech, Grasse, Katz Muhl, Moeller, Sanalidro, and Syed were reelected to two-year terms. Only the race between incumbent State Rep. Martin McLaughlin and challenger Maria Peterson remains too close to call.



Marketing Services

- Marketing Services recently completed the installation of the SOAR wall design outside of the President's Office on the third floor of the Wojcik Conference Center. The design is part of the continuing campaign to socialize and raise awareness of the College's SOAR student success framework.



- Marketing Services also recently completed three important enrollment marketing publications: the Cybersecurity brochure, FTIC (high school) view book, and the Paying for College brochure.

Finance and Administrative Services

Human Resources

- Human Resources processed another successful open enrollment benefits period for all eligible employees. While we had no changes to the benefits offered, we did see an increase to the premium costs for 2025.
- Early this month, Human Resources hosted a newly designed SOAR orientation for 20 employees around campus. The new program includes a welcome from Dr. Proctor and the campus experts on risk management, police and safety, diversity, equity and inclusion, Title IX, shared governance, and human resources. We will hold these sessions quarterly.
- In November, Human Resources and Student Engagement co-hosted a Veteran's Day Recognition event for student and employee veterans. Veterans were provided with a free lunch and a recognition project spotlighted our veterans across campus.

Information Technology (IT)

- In recognition of Cybersecurity Awareness Month, IT implemented several key initiatives in October:
 - Launched cybersecurity awareness training for students, which received positive feedback from the student trustee during his address to the Board of Trustees last month.
 - Released the annual cybersecurity training program for employees.
 - Collaborated with the Grants Department to host a cybersecurity awareness presentation featuring an FBI-CISA agent and the CTO of Trellix.
 - Conducted two cybersecurity tabletop exercises within IT and participated in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) tabletop exercise focused on a cyber threat scenario.



Risk Management

- The Department of Risk Management and IT conducted a Cyber Breach Functional Training Exercise (FTX) last month. The exercise involved three modules over 2.5 hours and was in line with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) best practices. The exercise involved the activation of IT's Incident Response Team and the Campus Emergency Operations Center Team (CEOC), due to an infiltration of the college's network and the loss of personal data. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), Cybersecurity Annex A was implemented by the CEOC, and IT initiated the Security Incident Response Plan (SIRP). The exercise tested our emergency communications, the ability to identify and shutdown impacted networks, and the ability to provide public information and warning.
- Fire evacuation training was conducted across campus in October. All buildings and fire alarm systems were evaluated, and assistance was provided by the Palatine Fire Department.

Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- In spring 2024, Harper College administered three surveys to gain a comprehensive understanding of student and faculty perspectives on engagement, learning, and campus experiences. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) gathered insights from students about their perceptions of institutional practices and behaviors that support learning and retention. Alongside the CCSSE, the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement was administered to faculty and staff to capture their views on student engagement and their activities both inside and outside the classroom. Additionally, the Race/Ethnicity Pilot Survey focused on gathering information about student experiences related to racism, inclusion, and belonging. The Office of Institutional Research is leading the campus community in reviewing the results of all three surveys to identify strategies to enhance student engagement and foster positive experiences throughout the college.
- The Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Division, in partnership with IT, successfully transitioned to a new Starfish Student Survey system, enabling Harper to move from a single survey to multiple tailored versions for diverse student groups. This upgrade required significant collaboration and partnership with IT to reconfigure data in the college's reporting database, setting the foundation for a more comprehensive understanding of student needs across various cohorts.
- The strategic plan dialogue session, *The Changing Landscape of the Community*, was held in October and was attended by nearly 100 staff, faculty, and community members. Attendees heard from panelists regarding the rapidly evolving employment landscape. Discussion topics included exploring the transforming demographics, economic trends, and social dynamics shaping our community college district. Attendees considered who will be a part of the communities Harper serves in the next decade, what programs and services they will need, and which organizations the college will identify as partners.

Workforce Solutions

- Harper College was named an Apprenticeship Ambassador by the Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship last month. Ambassadors are recognized for their commitment to modernizing, diversifying, and expanding Registered Apprenticeships to support the success of American workers, employers, and communities across the country.
- Last month, Besa Sadiku, manager of workforce initiatives, held an apprenticeship training session for Minnesota State College Southeast. The Director of Apprenticeships and Dual Training and the Dean of



Trade and Industry attended the training. The session focused on sharing Harper College's Apprenticeship Program structure and processes, as well as strategies for effectively running and managing the programs.

- IGNITE Medical Resort was welcomed as a new employer partner, and apprentices will participate in the Registered Practical Nursing Program. This partnership will also help Harper advance its operational goal of engaging with strategic partners in health careers.
- The Job Placement Resource Center, Access and Disability Services, and Student Development collaborated to deliver a presentation during the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium in October. Workforce Coordinator Annie Sylvester, Access Advocate Anita Rehberg, and Professor DuBoi McCarty presented on "Empowering Students through Social Capital". The session focused on the importance of helping students make connections and build their social capital. Over 35 faculty, staff, and administrators attended, and the presenters received great feedback.
- Wojcik Conference Center's external revenue for August through October has increased 139% over the same time period last year. This increase in sales is yet another example of how much Harper's community values our conference center as a vital resource.

In Memoriam

- Harper College mourns the passing of Richard "Dick" Kolze on October 21, 2024, at 94. A former Harper Board of Trustees chair, Dick was a tireless advocate for technology in education and established the Timothy A. Kolze Memorial Endowment Scholarship. His contributions to Harper and its students will be deeply missed.

