



PRESIDENT'S *REPORT*

November 2023

Dear Harper College Community:

In honor of Veterans Day and Native American Heritage Month, I want to recognize our student and employee veterans and military-connected families for their tremendous service to our country. We honored them earlier this month on campus through our Wheels of Gratitude event, which you'll read about later in this report. I am grateful for their sacrifices and thankful that Harper College can serve them as they pursue their educational and career goals.

I am also energized by the incredible work we continue to do as a college. This month, our faculty engaged in two dialogue sessions on equity gaps at the department, course and program levels led by the Provost Leadership Team and supported by members of the Executive Cabinet. Our faculty are deeply committed to our students' success and meetings like these are evidence of that commitment. I was glad to see our faculty take time to examine data to find opportunities to strategically provide support that ultimately improves student success. I look forward to our continued collaboration to close equity gaps.

Recently, we were notified that we are again among the Top 150 community colleges in the nation under consideration for the \$1 million 2025 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. This is clearly a testament to what's happening in and out of the classroom in service of our students. Make no mistake, this is more than just an award; achieving a Top ranking or winning the Aspen Prize would be a clear signal that we have supported our students and community to accomplish incredible outcomes. That is why we continue to focus on the "You Matter, We Care" SOAR framework so we can remove barriers and close equity gaps for our students.

In addition to drafting our Aspen application, we are also working on our Recognition Report for the Illinois Community College Board. ICCB conducts recognition evaluations for community colleges on a five-year cycle. Both the Aspen application and ICCB recognition require many members of our teams to analyze our programs and services, evaluate data and draft narratives to tell our story in an accurate and compelling manner. I am grateful to all of you for your contributions to these efforts.

This week marks the beginning of International Education Week, and our team has numerous activities and events planned to include presentations from our Global Scholars and Social Justice Studies students, stories from students that have studied abroad, and film and discussion events covering a wide range of topics. With so much conflict happening around the globe, it is more important than ever that educational institutions provide a safe space for discussion and learning as we seek to learn about culture and global perspectives.

Our campus benefits from a vibrant arts community. Currently in our gallery, Milwaukee artist Angela Piehl has work on display in a show called Collaged Ecologies. And just last week, I was fortunate enough to sing a few

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bars with students and the legendary hip hop bassist Doug Wimbish! I am so glad that our liberal arts curriculum and programming brings learning and joy to our campus community. And speaking of joy, I want to wish each of you and your families a joyous Thanksgiving!



Academic Updates

By the Numbers

- Enrollment Services:
 - Our Salesforce Chatbot handled 52.6% (540) of the 1,026 chats received last month, while a live staff member answered 47.4% (486). The top three topics asked by contacts were “General course/Schedule information” (89), “How do I apply” (61), and “Password Issue” (61).
 - We sent over 20,000 outbound broadcast emails to current and prospective students via Salesforce, of which we saw a 65.3% open rate. The emails focused on messages from advisors and encouraging prospective students to apply.
 - The staff captured and processed student interactions in Salesforce, including over 1,500 emails/inquiry forms, 1,170 phone calls, and 550 in-person visits. The CRM has allowed us to share information between different departments seamlessly and improve the student experience.

Events

- Advising Services Resources to the Rescue Fair
 - The Advising Services team hosted its first annual Resources to the Rescue Fair to support students on campus. The event focused on connecting students with vital resources on campus and was held in the Avanté Concourse in October. The event supported the engagement of over 150 students, and students also provided insightful feedback on how resources can support their journey at Harper.
- Career and Technical Programs (CTP)
 - A Cook County Career Connector hiring event was held at the Learning and Career Center (LCC) in October with over 150 job seekers attending. The effort was supported by a myriad of Harper volunteers and featured government and private sector employers, a job search lab, professional headshots, and resource tables. Special thanks to CTP staff Jennifer Brennan, Bobbi Pineda, and Omar Sánchez who served on the organizing committee together with partners from the American Job Center in Wheeling and the Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership.
 - The LCC hosted an Abilities Job Fair with the American Job Center in October with support from Access and Disability Services with nearly 50 attendees.
 - At the beginning of November, the LCC celebrated Day of the Dead (Día de Los Muertos) with students featuring an altar (ofrenda), hot chocolate, and pan dulce.
- Enrollment Services
 - Admissions Outreach hosted their annual High School Open House earlier this month and welcomed 270 prospective students to campus with their families, in total almost 700 attendees.
- Liberal Arts
 - This month, Kevin Long, professor of theatre, will be hosting 150 high school theatre students from our District 214 high schools. "Theatre Day" will showcase Harper College's Theatre Department as students participate in workshops such as Shakespeare First Folio Technique, Stage Combat, Musical Theatre Dance, Acting for the Camera, Scenic Painting, Costume Design, Technical "On Your Feet" challenges, and Design 101.
- Student Engagement and the Center for Student Veterans and Military Connected Students hosted Wheels of Gratitude this month to honor and celebrate our students and employees who have served, or are currently serving, in the United States Military. This event included:
 - Free lunch and fast-pass lanes for our student and employee veterans and service members from one of six gourmet food trucks.
 - The Student Veteran Association (SVA) kicked off their second annual Toys for Tots drive with a Toy Ruck through campus.



- A formal presentation of the National Flag and Service Flags by Harper College's veteran and current service members, along with veterans from the Trickster Cultural Center.
 - A presentation of the Eagle Staff, recognized as the first flag of the Americas, and carried by Native American Veterans of the United States Armed Forces. The Trickster Cultural Center shared the importance of this first flag and the pivotal role Native Americans have played within the United States Military.
 - A traditional drum and dance performance by the Trickster Cultural Center.
- Student Engagement and Harper Wellness hosted the “What’s Your Green Flag?” Title IX event in October and had 180 attendees.

Highlights

- Division/Program Highlights
 - Enrollment Services: The Office of Student Financial Assistance has been busy this fall spreading the word on all things financial aid! The team has done 15 classroom presentations, three information tables, and eight campus events, with many more events on the schedule for spring. We love educating our students and helping ensure they have a solid plan to finance their education. Faculty, staff, as well as outside partners can easily request a financial aid expert at their event by filling out our [Request Form](#).
 - Student Engagement: Athletics
 - Harper Hawks are flying high with four championships in one week!
 - Men’s Soccer won the Region 4 DIII Soccer Championship against Joliet Junior College – 10/21/23.
 - Volleyball won the Region 4 Championship against College of DuPage – 10/25/23.
 - Women’s Cross Country repeated their Championship title – 10/28/23.
 - Men’s Cross Country reclaimed the #1 spot as Champions – 10/28/23.
 - The Hawks went on to win the District Championships in Volleyball (Great Lakes District) and Men’s Soccer (Midwest District)!
 - These four teams competed in the National Championships in their respective sports.
 - 11/8/23 – Men’s Soccer (Gastonia, NC): Lost to the #1 DIII team in the nation and played a consolation game the following day. They held this team scoreless but lost in overtime after missing a penalty kick (5-6).
 - 11/9/22 – Volleyball (Cedar Rapids, IA): Played the #9 team lost to them in four sets in the opening round. Played to be ranked in top ten and won all three games, in 3-0 match sweeps against the #16th, #7th, and #5th ranked teams! They are ranked #9th in the nation.
 - 11/11/23 – Men’s Cross Country (Huntsville, AL): Won the NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP!!!
 - 11/11/23 – Women’s Cross Country (Huntsville, AL): Repeat.... NATIONAL CHAMPIONS with Lilly Alberts coming in first place!
- Employee Highlights
 - Liberal Arts: LEAD Faculty fellow E-B Martinez Garcias was invited by Teachers College, Columbia University, to contribute to a publication on studio art education post-pandemic in 2022. Since then, he has been hard at work so that Harper College is represented in the work. The publication is now available, *Turning Points: Responsive Pedagogies in Studio Art Education*, from Teachers' College Press.
 - Student Engagement Coach’s Spotlight: Coach Bob Vilsoet will be inducted into the Class of 2023 – NJCAA Volleyball Coaches Association Hall of Fame! [See here for more information](#). Go Hawks!!



- Student Highlights
 - Career and Technical Programs: Nick Lemke, a recent graduate of the Harper College Culinary Arts program, was hired as the new pantry cook at the brand-new Cooper's Hawk being built in Algonquin.

Supporting the Strategic Plan

- Advising Services Harper Arc Program:
 - The Arc Program continues to provide opportunities to engage and support Arc Program members. A Financial Literacy Workshop was hosted by Crystal Loggins and the Office of Financial Aid and had an 89% registration rate for students who pre-registered for the event. Students were able to engage in activities pertaining to financial literacy and had an opportunity to learn about financial management.
 - In collaboration with the Registrar's Office, all Arc Program students will have priority registration for the spring 2024 semester. This will give students an opportunity to register sooner for classes and support meeting requirements for the program.
 - The Office of Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness shares that there has been a 62% completion rate of the Arc Program Intake Survey. This survey is used by advisors to best support each student's individual needs and for targeted advising for future semesters.

Advancement, Marketing and Communications

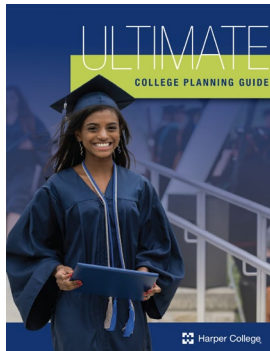
Advancement

- As of October 31, \$32,065,467.41 has been raised for the Inspire Scholarship Campaign. 1,544 donors have made gifts to the campaign, and 65 new scholarships have been created.
- As of November 6, the Foundation has awarded \$1,437,991 in scholarships to 872 students for the 2023-2024 academic year.
- The Foundation's Corporate Mentoring Program and Inspire Scholarship Campaign were recipients of CASE's 2023 Best of District V Awards.

Marketing Services



SOAR Mural



Ultimate College Planning Guide



FTIC (High School) Viewbook

- Recent projects completed by the Marketing Services team include the SOAR mural on Building C near the entrance to the campus center. The wall has already become an inspiration destination on campus. The team also recently completed the latest editions of the Ultimate College Planning Guide and the high school viewbook, along with the all-district spring enrollment postcard, spring radio campaign, apprenticeship week flyer, Fast Facts brochure, and the fall high school open house program.



Community Relations

- Harper's annual Experience Day included more than 22 Harper programs and 10 community partners hosting interactive activities for young students and families and over 60 Harper employees and students volunteered. Experience Day gives families the opportunity to experience Harper through fun and engaging activities. For many people this is their first experience with Harper. This year, more than 400 people attended the event. Thank you to all faculty, staff, and students that helped make this year a success.
- The second annual Trunk and Treat last month was a huge success. The event is a collaboration between Harper Police, Campus Recreation, and Community Relations. Area police departments, community organizations, college departments, student clubs, and Harper employees hosted trunks for more than 1,200 people. Families were also able to vote on their favorite trunk and enjoy hot chocolate and cider. Thank you to everyone who made this event a smash hit!

Media Relations

- The *Daily Herald*, *Journal & Topics* newspapers, and *Patch* published articles about Harper being one of the Top 150 colleges eligible for the 2025 Aspen Prize.
- *NIU Today* and *Spot on Illinois* ran pieces highlighting Harper's partnership with Northern Illinois University on a new Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program.
- The College Tour's website posted the full Harper College episode of the series as well as smaller clips focused on specific students and programs.
- The *Daily Herald*, *Journal & Topics* newspapers, and *Patch* ran preview stories about the Employer Summit that took place on Harper's campus in November.
- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* published preview pieces about Harper's annual Experience Day event.
- The *Daily Herald*, *Journal & Topics* newspapers, and *Patch* ran pieces in advance of the Harper College Ensemble Theatre Company's November production of *Big Fish*.
- The *Aurora Beacon News* and *Daily Herald* wrote articles about Harper alumnus and former football coach Dragan Teonic reaching 100 wins.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- The Office of DEI coordinated its first excursion for the new GLIDE (Guiding Learners to Intentionally Develop Efficacy) cohort of 40 mentees and 10 mentors. We were fortunate to have a committed group of faculty and staff join us to engage our students as we enjoyed dinner downtown and "It's a Wonderful World" at the Cadillac Palace Theater.
- Moe Arie Brown, licensed marriage and family therapist, presented two sessions for the Harper College Police Department and two Trans Ally training sessions for the campus. His sessions provided important education to help us provide more inclusive services and resources to the LGBTQ+ population with a focus on the trans population. Approximately 60 employees participated in his sessions.
- Our annual Diversity Symposium was held in October, with over 190 faculty and staff. This year's theme, "ANTI: Meeting at the Intersections of Oppressions," included opportunities to hear a range of thought-



provoking speakers, engage with colleagues over lunch, and process the day with facilitated or self-led reflection spaces.

- Esmeralda Guerrero Lopez organized a display in the Rotunda of Building D to acknowledge Día de Los Muertos, which is a two-day tradition during the first two days of November. It is celebrated in different parts of Latin America with a larger presence in Mexico. Día de Los Muertos is a time that helps the community remember the deceased and celebrate their memory. Altars (ofrendas) are built with essential elements, such as candles, photographs of loved ones, candy skulls, marigolds, bread of the dead, and confetti paper. Different student organizations and departments joined in building their own altars.
- Drs. Tamara Johnson and Ruth Williams were joined by a number of Harper faculty and staff at the Illinois Equity in Attainment (ILEA) annual summit. The summit afforded attendees the opportunity to connect with colleagues from other institutions and discuss student success and important issues impacting higher education.

Finance and Administrative Services

Facilities Management

- New Business and Social Sciences Center in Buildings I & J: The 2021 Campus Master Plan has identified the need to replace the Business and Social Science Center (Buildings I and J) with new and improved classrooms, laboratories, and offices to replace those existing in Buildings I and J and provide additional facilities for new and expanded programs. The Schematic Design Phase is scheduled to be completed in December and presented to the Board for approval early 2024.
- Emergency Services Training Center: The scope of work for the Emergency Services Training Center Study will include architectural and engineering services required for a new building. The Schematic Design Phase is scheduled to be completed in January 2024 and presented to the Board for approval in early 2024.
- Building B Central Steam Boiler Plant Upgrade Project: The scope of work for this project includes replacement of two high-pressure steam boilers (B-1 and B-2). It also includes upgrades of the controls, sanitary sewer, water services, and other required per the feasibility study. Construction continues, boilers have been delivered to the installing contractor and are scheduled to be installed in December.

Human Resources

- Digital Transformation: Human Resources has implemented four new processes in the Oracle Fusion system. Recruiting will replace the current Page Up and will function as the applicant tracking system. Journeys will provide an automated process for onboarding, mandated training, and orientation process. Learning will serve as the employee Learning Management System. Employees can track attendance at professional development, complete required training and explore training for self-development. Volunteering will provide a platform for employees to track volunteer work, volunteer opportunities across campus and tracking committee participation.

Information Technology

- The CIO and Technology Shared Governance Committee collaborated to create the IT Work Plan, a five-year IT digital transformation roadmap that aligns with the college's technology strategy.

Risk Management

- A tabletop top exercise was held with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) team. Training included establishing an EOC, emergency communications, and conducting a press briefing.



Legislative Affairs

- The college submitted an action alert through ACCT to Rep. Krishnamoorthi to support community college priorities in FY2024 appropriations bill.
- The November Veto Session concluded with no substantial legislative activity of note as it relates to higher education.
- The period for candidates to file their nominating petitions for the November 5, 2024 General Election is November 27 – December 4, 2023. At the state level, all 118 members of the House and 20 of 59 State Senators are up for election. At the federal level, all 17 congressional districts will be contested.

Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- In collaboration with the Student Success Division, our team enhanced the fall 2023 Differentiated Care Communication Plan by creating a new, targeted outreach focused on the Path for Success. More than 2,000 new, first time in college, degree-seeking students received a personalized status update on how they are performing against critical first semester momentum metrics. Students were encouraged to connect with their assigned advisor for questions surrounding their progress.
- The Office of Institutional Research has partnered with Student Engagement to administer the Trellis Financial Wellness Survey for the third time. More than 1,500 students, or 14% of those invited, have responded in just the first two weeks. Results from this survey have helped Harper College understand the financial needs of our students and to design programs and initiatives to help them overcome these challenges.

Strategic Alliances and Innovation

Grants Office

- In October, the Educational Foundation was awarded \$12,000 from the Gene Haas Foundation to continue their support for scholarships for CNC students and NIMS credentials.
- In November, the Innovation Accelerator hosted the Artificial Intelligence Business & Industry Leadership Team (BILT) Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) validation and prioritization meeting. Thirteen regional and national employers/industry professionals participated in the session, providing invaluable feedback to inform new program development.

Workforce Solutions

- Seven apprenticeship employer partners benefitted from Calumet Area Industrial Commission Grant totaling \$25,500 for the fall semester. The companies that received funding are Richard Wolf, D&W Fine Pack, Dynamax, Dexter Magnetic Technology, Arc-Tronics, Inc., Wieland Metals, and DB Schenker. The funds will help to support nine apprentices this semester.
- In the month of October, the Workforce Solutions Division participated in five small business expos: Palatine Chamber of Commerce, Schaumburg Business Association (x2), GOA/Business at the Ballpark, Village of Arlington Heights.



- At the beginning of this month, the Workforce Solutions division hosted its Annual Employer Summit, “Building Your Bench Strength; Elevating Your Game for a Winning Future.” This year's focus addressed the importance of building a culture of learning. Through our football-themed event, employers were provided with tools to assist them in the areas of Talent Retention, Knowledge Transfer and leveraging the competitive advantage that comes with “building your bench strength.” Our keynote speaker was Mr. Sam Acho, ESPN Analyst and veteran of the NFL football league. Our subject matter expert, Antonio Mannings provided our participants with tools for success both on and off the field. Harper faculty and staff served on a panel showcasing how Harper College is positioned and prepared to assist business and industry with finding solutions to their workforce challenges. With more than 100 registrants and over 60 in person attendees, the event resulted in 12 new employer connections.

