



January 2024

To the Harper College Community:

I am excited to see our faculty and students back on campus and energized for teaching and learning. And thanks to the efforts of our team and the strategic enrollment management plan, our spring enrollment continues to rebound as it did in the fall. As of January 16, total FTE (CE and credit) is 5,824.4, an increase of 4.5% from last spring; tuition-bearing FTE is 5,311.4, an increase of 6.1% from last spring; and headcount is 9,728, an increase of 3.2% from last spring. Our focus on retention efforts is contributing to these increases as well as our digital transformation work including our CRM and recent investment in Motimatic. Our targeted outreach to students who have stopped out is showing promising results. I am grateful for our teams that have placed a priority on helping our new students discover all that Harper has to offer while assisting our continuing and returning students in staying on their path for success at Harper. This holistic approach is key to reaching our enrollment goals.

With the Biden-Harris administration designating the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) an official regional innovation and technology hub in October 2023 to “catalyze investment in technologies critical to economic growth, national security, and job creation, and [to] help communities...become centers of innovation critical to American competitiveness” in 31 regions across the country*, Chancellor Juan Salgado of the City Colleges of Chicago and I have agreed for our teams to jointly develop a proposal entitled “From Community to Quantum.” This title signifies community colleges using our expertise in workforce development to lead this regional work and bring together 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. With the support of several members of the Executive Cabinet, Dr. Susanne Brock has been leading this effort in an accelerated fashion given the quick turnaround on proposal submissions to meet the multiple Bloch Tech Hub and U.S. Economic Development Administration deadlines. While the partner commitments are underway, we plan to work with our K12 NECSS high school districts, NIWC community colleges, P33, University of Chicago, UIUC, and educational entities in Wisconsin and Indiana within the Chicago MSA. I am proud of Dr. Brock and other members of the Harper team for meeting this pivotal moment to bring promising opportunities to transform our regional workforce and maintain our global competitiveness in these emerging tech fields.

Campus News . . .

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I was pleased to welcome Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi to Harper earlier this month as he hosted two events on campus, a workforce panel discussion as well as a meet and greet for his constituents. It is always a pleasure to host our elected officials, especially one such as Rep. Krishnamoorthi who continues to be one of Harper's, and community college's, top supporters in Washington, D.C. From the reauthorization of the Carl Perkins grant to his funding support for our aviation maintenance program, he understands how important community colleges are to their regional economies and helping our local families increase their economic mobility.

Happy New Year and welcome back for another spring semester.

[*White House Press Release](#)

Academic Updates

By the Numbers

- Enrollment Services
 - In December, One Stop processed 4,782 inbound contacts from in-person, phone, e-mail, and chat interactions. We also partnered with Student Success and the Advising Leadership team to complete a text campaign to 116 students within the 2021/2022 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Cohorts to reengage for credential completion. These students have progressed towards a credential ranging from 70-97% completed.
 - Lastly, we completed calling campaigns for additional IPEDS Cohorts and Outstanding Financial Aid Requirements for the spring semester. We completed 696 calls with a connection rate of 31% (215 students).
 - 513 Promise Students maintained their eligibility after the fall 2023 semester. This includes 186 students beginning their final semester which is the highest number of Promise Scholars retained to their final semester to date.
- Enrollment Services: Constituent Relationship Management
 - In December, we launched a pilot of our Salesforce predictive analytics tool that utilizes automated machine learning and data within the CRM to score the likelihood of students enrolling based on their interaction with us (e.g., email, phone, events).
 - Our Salesforce Chatbot handled 53% (544) of the 1,020 chats received last month, while a live staff member answered 47% (476). The top three topics asked by contacts were “Register for a class” (114), “General course/schedule information” (78), and “MyHarper” (58).
 - The staff captured and processed student interactions in Salesforce, including over 996 emails/inquiry forms, 1,310 phone calls, and 506 in-person visits.
 - We sent over 16,000 outbound broadcast emails to current and prospective students via Salesforce, of which we saw a 66% open rate. The emails focused on messages from advisors and encouraging prospective students to apply.
- Business and Social Science
 - This past fall semester, the Drone Program has experienced growth in Harper’s first student Drone Club. They are now currently mentoring and coaching 21 students who are learning to fly high.
- Hawks Care
 - In the month of December, 37 students accessed Hawks Care’s services, 37 meetings with the manager or resource specialist took place, and four students accessed the Career Closet. It is important to note that although we offer a Help Yourself Shelf, student usage is not tracked. Instead, staff observations lead to conversations with the manager or resource specialist to offer comprehensive support and resources.

Events

- Business and Social Science
 - A group of nine Harper professors embarked on a two-week journey to discover India on January 1. Two of the professors are from the Business and Social Science Division, Mukila Maittha from Geography and Rob Russ from Marketing. The trip is part of the Office of International Education’s (OIE) global region of focus, which is South Asia. This regional focus on South Asia, specifically India, is an initiative to organize our campus-wide internationalization endeavors in a three-year cycle. It includes faculty development, the study abroad trip to India, and engaging in campus activities when the group comes back from India. This group will visit locations such as Aurangabad, Mumbai, Kochi, and Munnar. You can follow the travelers at the OIE’s blog on their website and Instagram account.



- Everyday Entrepreneur Pitch Competition held in December was a success. This program provides access to experiential learning focusing on the development of a business model, a strategy for implementation, and the art of the pitch. Student presentations included:
 - Melanie Lobos and Emily Urueta-Hernandez: VidaGum - Piece of gum with vitamins and nutrients to fuel the body.
 - Isaac Tom Musumba: Empowered Education - A pay-per-use device that seamlessly integrates with VR technology.
 - Vincent Agüero: Master Necro Artist Collections - Selling handmade video game fandom stickers online.

Judges Azad Dhillon and John R. Dallas, Jr. announced Isaac Tom Musumba as the \$1,000 grant recipient and the other companies as \$500 grant recipients. All three companies will receive mentors beginning this month. A round of applause should be given to Professor Marie Lapidus for applying for and being awarded the National Association of Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE) grant and hosting this event at Harper.

- Career and Technical Programs
 - The Learning and Career Center (LCC) wrapped up 2023 with significant gatherings of community and students. In November, the annual Prospect Heights Police Department Thanksgiving Food Share provided holiday foods to 115 families, including Harper students, with a family-friendly event including a community resource fair, and a space to make crafts. In December, LCC hosted the Paths to College and Career Celebration where nearly 40 students and faculty were recognized for their dedication to a second successful year in Harper's Paths to College and Career Program, which allows adult learners to explore career change and advancement through intensive training courses and learning supports.
- Student Engagement
 - Checkpoint Day was held early December and allowed veteran and military-connected students the opportunity to ensure compliance in utilizing military educational benefits, provided a personalized review of their academic progress and goals, and assisted in minimizing gaps through campus resources. This impactful event featured 12 campus departments and representation from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital Community Outreach program and Veterans Integration To Academic Leadership (VITAL) program. Participating students praised the event for its ability to address and solve student issues on the spot and for the individualized approach in providing relevant information.
 - Harper College has once again received the distinction of being a military friendly campus, plus a silver ranking. A silver ranking military friendly school indicates that Harper College is among the top 20% of institutions serving and exceeding the standards in supporting veteran students.
- Harper Wellness
 - Last month, Harper Wellness hosted a lunch n' learn, Everything You Need to Know About Stress and How You Can Finally Relax. There were 22 students, staff, and faculty in attendance and the presenter shared strategies to cope with stress and prevent it.
 - Also, in December on two dates, Harper Wellness and Counseling Services hosted Refueling Stations to help refuel students during finals week and the week before. We had grab-n-go snacks, such as fruit, pastries, coffee, tea, and water. They were held in the Building D Rotunda and Building Z Avanté Concourse and well attended with approximately 100 students engaged with the refueling stations.
 - Four hundred Thrive Kits were created in collaboration between Harper Wellness and the Harper College Library. Three hundred forty were mailed out to students who signed up in advance, and the remaining 60 were given away at the refueling stations.

- Hawks Care
 - Hawks Care continues to host the Warm & Fuzzy Collection along with the Center for New Students and Orientation. The centers are collecting new, adult-sized winter accessories including hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves. Items can be dropped off at C104 and D204 now through January 31. Students will be able to pick up the winter accessories in D204 until supplies are exhausted.

Highlights

- Division/Program Highlights
 - Career and Technical Programs
 - Paths to College and Careers is funded by the Illinois Community College Board's Innovative Bridge and Transition Program grant and in December it was announced that the cross-disciplinary Harper team was awarded a \$400,000 grant for year three. Program development in 2024 will add an emphasis on student success for skilled immigrant newcomers, addressing their unique needs, and diverse points of entry to the college.
 - The start of a new year also means tax season is approaching, and the AARP Foundation's Tax-Aide program began training its regional volunteers at LCC in December. Over 70 Tax-Aide volunteers will support all residents in our region (no age or income restrictions), with LCC hosting a Tax-Aide site beginning in February.
 - Enrollment Services
 - The Financial Aid application and processes had the largest change in 40 years! The 2024/25 Free Application for Federal Student aid (FAFSA) was advertised to open December 31, 2023. The website was a soft launch, and the Department of Education is opening and closing it intermittently. The Financial Aid staff have been testing it since it opened so that we can understand what our students are experiencing. There were long delays and many people in waiting rooms for up to 30 minutes, but it appears to be improving slightly.

Below are the actions being taken in the immediate. We will continue to adjust as needed.

- Student facing offices are being updated regularly to best serve students.
- Training has been completed with the One Stop and will continue as this unfolds daily.
- Presentation to leadership and during opening week kick off.
- Staying in close contact with the high school counselors so that the community and Harper are informed and in alignment in messaging as much as possible.
- All student emails were sent.
- The Financial Aid webpage and Paying for College webpage are being updated as changes occur.
- Messaging is included on the TV monitors throughout the campus.
- Messaging is included on the marquee.
- Information shared on social media.
- Messaging on the student portal.

- Employee Highlights
 - Liberal Arts
 - Dr. Rebecca Scott, faculty in the Philosophy Department, won the American Philosophical Association (APA) prize for Teaching Philosophy this year. The APA is the discipline's largest professional association. We are so proud and glad to see her recognized on this scale. Learn more [here](#).



Advancement

- As of December 31, the Inspire Campaign has raised \$32,296,014 (108%) to goal. Two new scholarships were established in the Foundation: Douglas Crawford Peterson Memorial Scholarship and The Wise Williams Endowed Transfer Scholarship. This brings the total new donor-sponsored scholarships created since July 1, 2020, to sixty-nine. As of January 10, 2024, the Foundation has awarded \$1,528,001 in scholarships to 956 students for the 2023-2024 academic year.
- The HOPE Giving Circle hosted its winter event Charcuterie Made Easy this month. The event offered attendees the opportunity to learn more about the mission of HOPE, socialize with each other, and learn a fun new skill. Sixty guests attended the event, including HOPE members, HOPE scholarship students, prospects, and friends. Visit harpercollege.edu/hope to learn more.
- The Harper Professionals Advisors Committee will host its annual Economic Outlook on February 8, 2024. Kevin Depew, Chief Deputy Economist for RSM, is the keynote speaker. The event is free and donors, alumni, workforce partners, chambers, community members, and students are invited to attend.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Our end of the year celebration for Guiding Learners to Intentionally Develop Efficacy (GLIDE), coordinated by Esmeralda Guerra-Lopez and Monica Shirley, was a great success. After enjoying a hearty lunch, Dr. Tamara Johnson led a short meditation and a guided imagery exercise, which was followed by a surprise gingerbread house making contest. The teams took the contest very seriously, which was judged by faculty and staff. Each member of the two winning teams took home a mini gingerbread house kit for them to make on their own.
- The Leveraging Equity in Academia through Diversity (LEAD) Faculty Fellows successfully completed their first semester at Harper! We thank their deans, department chairs/coordinators, Diverse Relationships Engaged in Affirming Multiculturalism (DREAM) mentors, department/division mentors, colleagues who presented during their monthly professional development workshops, and everyone else who continues to help them feel welcomed and supported!
- Dr. Tamara Johnson was awarded the 2023 NASPA Region IV-E Community College Professional Award, which recognizes outstanding members who have demonstrated leadership and commitment to student affairs and NASPA. Since NASPA IV-E is not having an in-person conference this year, they asked each institution to create a video of their respective recipient receiving their awards on campus for them to post on social media. Special thanks to Dr. Markenya Williams for creating the following video: [Watch the award presentation](#). Congratulations, Dr. Johnson!
- Employee Resource Groups (ERGs):
 - Members of the DEI Office, ERG leaders, and representatives from the Harper College Police Department continue to meet regularly to discuss community matters and collaborations. Our most recent meeting to kick off the new semester was held at the beginning of this month.
 - Staff, Administrators and Faculty for Equality (SAFE)
 - The Office of Student Financial Assistance and the SAFE ERG collaborated to collect donations for the LGBTQ+ Center at Kenneth Young for the holiday season. Donations included handwritten cards with affirming language, personal items, and a monetary donation. The donations were delivered in December, and the center was overwhelmed by the generous donations!



- Learning About Abilities, Not Disabilities (LAND)
 - Jason Altmann moderated two sessions during the Spring 2024 Opening Week, titled Creating an Inclusive Environment for Your Colleagues with Disabilities with several members from LAND serving as panelists.

External Affairs

Communications

- The Communications Team led the planning for the Spring 2024 President's Collegewide Meeting in which Dr. Proctor kicked off the semester sharing key informational updates, recognizing students and employees, and always some fun. This year's meeting included a [video](#) featuring student Klara Carrera, whose efforts in the music production program at Harper have resulted in a job at the House of Blues.

Community Relations

- In December, Community Relations participated in the annual Barrington Giving Day winter event. More than 400 families attended. Outreach specialists Paige Coe and Paula Byrd hosted an information table as part of the community resource area. Families received information on Harper programs, services, and resources available to them.

Legislative Affairs

- Harper hosted Congressman Krishnamoorthi on campus twice in January. First, the Congressman hosted a panel discussion to discuss his "Opportunity to Compete" legislation, which would prevent employers from eliminating job seekers without bachelor's degrees for jobs that don't need them. Harper's Testing Center Manager Joe Scrima participated on the panel alongside local business leaders sharing the impact that Harper College's Credit for Prior Learning program can have on earning a credential as well as articulating professional experience that could be helpful in hiring. Later that evening, Rep. Krishnamoorthi also hosted a "meet and greet" event for constituents in Building A. At both events, the Congressman recognized the important contributions Harper makes on behalf of his district residents.

Marketing Services

- This past fall semester, the Marketing Services web team completed redevelopment of the Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) microsite (<https://www.harpercollege.edu/pro/index.php>). This resulted in improved user experience, including a more clearly communicated enrollment process and funding information. The project also dramatically improved organic (non-paid) Search Engine Optimization (SEO). From November 5 - December 30, the microsite saw a 76% increase in traffic from Google Search overall. When narrowed to unbranded queries (which don't contain the word "Harper"), clicks increased by 170%. Project team members included Patrick Kelly, Wesley Howard, and student web team members Aliah Felix and Jasmine Atienza.

Media Relations

- The *Daily Herald* and *Patch* published articles about how the Innovation Accelerator and Business & Industry Leadership Team (BILT) Councils are developing new degree programs.
- *Politico*, WCPT Radio, and *Journal & Topics* newspapers previewed Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi's panel discussion at Harper.
- The *Daily Herald*, *Journal & Topics* newspapers and *Patch* ran pieces previewing the Lifelong Learning Institute's open house.



- The *Chicago Reader* interviewed Harper student Amanda Heckler about her play being included in Pegasus Theatre Chicago's Young Playwrights Festival.
- *Daily Nous* announced that Associate Professor Rebecca Scott won the American Philosophical Association's 2023 Prize for Excellence in Philosophy Teaching.
- Author/Media critic Rick Kaempfer's blog posted that Harper Radio has seven finalists for the 2023-24 Intercollegiate Broadcast System Media Awards.
- The *Daily Herald's* 2023 year in review highlighted its coverage of the GLIDE mentorship program.

Finance and Administrative Services

Facilities Management

- The 2021 Campus Master Plan has identified the need to replace the Business and Social Sciences Buildings (Buildings I and J) with new and improved classrooms, laboratories, and offices to and provide additional facilities for new and expanded programs. The Schematic Design Phase has been completed and is scheduled to be presented to the Board this month.
- The scope of work for the Canning Center will include new facilities for the Campus Life/One Stop Admissions Center (Student Center) to provide one location for student services and related functions, facilities to support the Hospitality Program, and the University Center. Fifty percent construction documents (CD) set has been reviewed by the Capital Development Board (CDB) and comments have been distributed to the architect and owner. Project is on track to have one hundred percent CD submittal to the CDB in March 2024 with an anticipated groundbreaking in fall 2024.
- We are adding an approximately 50-seat capacity film screening room in Building E. The project includes replacing two of the existing air handling units that serve some E building classrooms. Construction is scheduled to be complete by August 2024.

Harper College Police

- Join us 3-5 p.m. Thursday, February 22, for a conversation designed to build trust between police officers and the community. The Ten Shared Principles was designed in partnership with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP) to foster communication, understanding, and connection with community members. Open to Harper faculty, staff, students, and administrators, this event is hosted by the Harper College Police Department, the NAACP, ILACP, and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. [RSVP](#) to attend.

Risk Management

- Insurance has been secured for the new aviation program that will be located at the Schaumburg Regional Airport.

Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness

- The Office of Institutional Research, in collaboration with Academic Affairs, leveraged the Lightcast database to generate market analysis reports for programs under review and to investigate occupations within each of the ten areas of interest.



- The Grades Dashboard was updated to reflect fall 2023 data. Compared to fall 2022, the overall course success rate increased by two percentage points to 74.6%, marking the highest rate achieved in the past five fall semesters and exceeding the pre-pandemic rate of fall 2019 by one percentage point. Notably, within the ten courses with the highest enrollment and historically lower success rates, the achievement rate rose by four percentage points to 71.1%.
- Progress on the FY2021-2024 Strategic Plan continues as we enter the final semester of the plan. Work this spring will focus on continued implementation of student focused initiatives, aimed at increasing student success and decreasing equity gaps. Additionally, efforts continue to create a sense of belonging for employees and students, increase awareness of Harper College, build a culture of inclusion, enhance relationships with partners, and increase flexible learning options for students.

Strategic Alliances and Innovation

Grants Office

- The Grants Office received notification of two new grant awards. First, S-STEM provides funding for STEM scholarships for low-income, academically talented students and to adapt, implement, and study effective evidence-based curricular and co-curricular activities that support recruitment, retention, transfer, student success, academic/career pathways, and graduation in STEM. This is a six-year grant for \$989,617. Second, we have received the Illinois Board of Higher Education Nursing School Grant for \$150,000. This supports student transition from the ADN awarded by Harper to a BSN or RN-BSN at a four-year institution.
- The Grants Office is involved with an initiative titled "From Community to Quantum" which is a collaborative effort with City Colleges of Chicago and other regional partners such as P33, University of Chicago and UIUC. This project is part of a larger initiative to transform the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area into a tier 1 technology and innovation hub and promote inclusive economic growth. Specifically, this project aims at transforming the quantum workforce through education and training. This regional project will address the need for a diverse, highly skilled Quantum Information Science and Technology (QIST) technician workforce, and centers community colleges as the fundamental workforce development core with pathways going back into middle and high schools and forward to universities and the workforce.

Workforce Solutions

- In CY 2023, 50.3% of clients (158/314) advised by the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Harper College were MBEs. This represents more than a 13% increase over 2022: 2023 (50.3%), 2022 (44.4%), 2021 (31%), 2020 (24%), 2019 (23%).

In Memoriam

- Aldona Fudala, a master pre-school teacher at the Early Childhood Laboratory School of Harper College for over 26 years, passed away in November 2023. A memorial bench and plaque were placed in the Early Childhood Laboratory School courtyard in her honor.

