



PRESIDENT'S *UPDATE*

January 2020

Dear Harper College Community:

As spring semester begins, I am pleased to report that we are working hard on behalf of our students both in the classroom and in other ways to ensure they are successful in their studies and as they prepare for their careers.

We kicked off the spring semester at our All Campus meeting with the theme of “We are Harper: Better Together,” which featured examples of collaboration across departments and divisions, including a wonderful video showcasing our composting efforts. It was also a privilege to recognize our colleagues for living our Core Values through the Points of Pride program. I awarded several Harper Hawks Soar coins that include our Core Values of Respect, Integrity, Collaboration, and Excellence for service to our students and colleagues. Please take the time to acknowledge your co-workers through our [Points of Pride](#) program in HIP, and we’ll be announcing other ways we’ll recognize employees in April thanks to the work of our HR and Wellness Committee.

Dr. Pearl Ratunil, our Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Inclusion, has returned to teaching so I have created a new executive-level position of Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This position will help us continue our focus on this important work, while deepening our efforts in the area of equity. I have appointed Dr. Claudia Mercado as Interim Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. As part of these changes, Bob Parzy will serve as Interim Assistant Provost of Enrollment Services, and Sue Skora will serve as Interim Senior Director of Enrollment Services. Sonia Jawnyj, administrative assistant, will support the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Enrollment Services Division. The college will conduct a national search to fill this new vice president position permanently.

Campus News . . .

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Our work on the next strategic plan continues as our Strategic Planning and Accountability Committee evaluates feedback and input in preparation for the Strategic Planning Conference in February. Our draft emerging themes are equity, partnerships/community outreach, professional development and teaching and learning. Register [online](#) in HIP to attend the conference on a first-come, first-served basis.

Finally, our Student Success Initiatives Review Committee has approved five proposals to help our students from funds remaining from our previous strategic plan. We have approved more than \$300,000 in funding to help nearly 900 students with the projects supporting scholarships in One Million Degrees and Early Childcare, funding for Hawks Care, finish line micro-grants, and an equity in technology loaner program for laptops, graphing calculators and WiFi access. Our students are our top priority and these projects demonstrate our commitment.

Student Success

- The Office of International Education has been awarded the 2020 IIE Andrew Heiskell Award in the “Internationalizing the Community College” category for its Global Region of Focus Initiative. Established in 2001 by the Institute of International Education (IIE), the Heiskell Award honors “the most innovative and successful models for internationalization of campuses, study abroad, and international partnership programs in practice today” and includes a \$1,000 monetary prize. With this award, the Office of International Education celebrates its second national recognition in the last two years for its innovative approach to comprehensive campus internationalization of the community college.
- Over winter break, two Harper College faculty participated in separate seminars with the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) and affiliated Research Centers. Associate Professor Mukila Maitha of the Geography Department traveled to India for a seminar entitled “Exploring Urban Sustainability through India’s Cities,” which was jointly sponsored with the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS). Assistant Professor Michael Bentley of the Humanities Department participated in a seminar in Senegal sponsored by the West African Research Center entitled “Diversity, Religion and Migration in West Africa.” During the spring semester, these two faculty members will share the fruits of their experiences and knowledge with the campus community. The CAORC is a private not-for-profit federation of independent overseas research centers that promote international scholarship through fellowships, grants, and faculty development opportunities. To support community colleges, CAORC offers fully-funded overseas seminars that help faculty and administrators gain first-hand experience needed to develop and improve global curricula.
- Two Harper Graphic Arts students, Ekaterina Sverkunova and Ikumi Takahara, placed second and third, respectively, in the Ravinia Competition, an international contest open to students and professionals to design and illustrate a summer poster for this music festival. These posters create the seasonal brand for the Festival for the 2020 season.

Finance and Administrative Services

Facilities Management

- The scope of work for the Building F Renovation Projects includes renovations to rooms F311 and F362 into group study rooms, conversion of room F129 into an anatomy study room, and installation of privacy film in various locations. Construction has begun and is scheduled to be completed by April 30, 2020.

Advancement, Marketing and Communications

Advancement

- The HOPE Giving Circle hosted its winter event in early January. The theme, “An Introduction to Mindfulness,” allowed the 45 guests in attendance to tap into tactics for bringing mindful practices into their everyday lives. Guests also heard from several scholarship students who shared updates on their school year and plans for the future. The HOPE Giving Circle at Harper College brings together influential women of diverse backgrounds with a common goal of supporting women in achieving their educational goals and empowering them to reach their full potential. Since inception in 2015, HOPE has raised more than

\$157,000 to support the HOPE Scholarship at Harper. Ten female students have received \$10,000 scholarships which they can use in their final year at Harper or at their four-year transfer institution.

Grants Office

- In December 2019, the college was awarded an ICCB grant of \$85,359 for the FY20 Innovative Bridge and Transition Program. This grant provides funding to create and support bridge and transition programs to prepare adult learners to enter into postsecondary education pathways that lead to employment. The focus of this grant is to create an integrated education and training-model program for the community health worker.
- In December 2019, the Foundation received a \$50,000 grant from the Rivers Casino Foundation to fund scholarships for veteran and military-connected students. This new scholarship provides financial assistance with tuition and fees for two semesters for up to 10 veterans and military-connected students enrolled on a full- or part-time basis and will also fund 20 \$500 textbook and supplies scholarships.

Marketing Services

- Website:
 - Migrated approximately 1,000 pages into new design template
 - Relaunched several sites with shorter, easier-to-remember, more search-friendly URLs (ESL, Campus Recreation/Building M, LCC, Get Started: International Students, JPRC, Honors, Academic Support)
 - Created and published home page carousel for Spring Registration, Adaptive Sports Day, Happy Holidays video, Fast Track Info Sessions, One Stop Saturday.

Legislative Affairs

- In late December, Governor J.B. Pritzker told media that his legislative priorities for the spring 2020 legislative session include “tackling” pensions, early child education, criminal justice reform and health care.
- More than 250 new laws went into effect January 1. Notable bills include: Public colleges must make information on mental health and suicide prevention resources readily accessible to students; every baby born in Illinois will receive \$50 in a 529-style investment account to help pay for future community college, university or trade school expenses; transgender students ineligible for federal financial aid and students who are not U.S. citizens are both eligible to receive state financial aid through the Monetary Award Program; and Illinois became the 11th state to legalize recreational cannabis use.

Upcoming key dates include the following:

- January 19: Senate convenes to elect new Senate President
- January 28: 2020 Spring Session convenes
- January 29: Governor’s State of the State Address
- February 19: Governor’s Budget Address
- March 17: Primary Election

Media Relations

- *Community College Daily* ran a commentary article about tackling equity, diversity and success for all students and employees that highlights several Harper initiatives including the Diversity Faculty Fellow Program, the Diversity Symposium, Diversity and Inclusion Dialogue Workshops, Employee Resource



Groups and the Social Justice Leadership Certificate. The *Illinois Community College Trustees Association* distributed the article on its listserv.

- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about leading global security company Northrop Grumman's tradition of hiring Harper interns and alumni.
- A *Daily Herald* article about how community colleges are supporting low-income African American and Latinx students focused on Harper's efforts through initiatives including One Million Degrees, Summer Scholars and the Latino Summit. *Community College Daily* and *ICCTA* ran the article.
- The *Daily Herald* ran an article about Harper seeking volunteers for the sonography program's ultrasounds.
- The *Journal-Courier* ran an article about the Illinois Board of Higher Education appointing Jason Altmann to a Disability Services Advisory Committee, which is charged with evaluating policies and practices in higher education.
- A *National Association of Colleges and Employers* article about apprenticeship programs explored how Harper's programs are providing workers with advanced skills that meet specific employer needs.
- *Patch* ran an article about Harper offering free safety awareness courses with the support of a federal grant.
- The *Chicago Tribune* ran an article about Harper alumnus Christian Koshaba opening an Arlington Heights fitness club that caters to veterans and doubles as a local American Legion Post.
- *Daily Herald* columnist Burt Constable featured Harper alumnus David Gordon, who studied under Professor Emerita Mary Jo Willis and spent a long reign as Medieval Times' king. He continues to work as a professional actor.
- *Northwest Indiana Business Magazine* ran an article about Harper adjunct faculty member Peter Aglinskas' film noir and lecture series, which he'll present at the Brauer Museum of Art at Valparaiso University.

Institutional Planning and Strategic Alliances

- In December 2019, the Outcomes Assessment Office engaged seven former Harper Leadership Institute participants in an opportunity to become focus group facilitators. A consultant provided half-day training to prepare these individuals to conduct a variety of focus groups. Facilitators will conduct focus groups with students, faculty, and staff and the resulting analyses will be used to make informed decisions regarding college initiatives.
- The 2019-2020 Fact Book has been released. The Fact Book is a one-stop resource designed to provide the answer to commonly asked questions about Harper College and the Harper district.

Workforce Solutions

- The Job Placement Resource Center will be launching the Spring Student Employee Excellence Development (SEED) Workshops. These eight workshops are designed for professional development for our student aides and those who attend four sessions will get a certificate of completion.

- After the success of the 4-week 2019 InZone Junior Explorers pilot program, the program will be expanded to a 10-week program this summer. This will match the session dates of traditional InZone summer camp. We look forward to working with this group of young students, ages 6-8 years, all summer.

Promise

- Three-hundred-and-four Promise Scholars met all of their criteria during the fall semester to maintain the Promise Scholarship and will continue into the Spring 2020 term. Two early high school graduates will also begin as Promise Scholars in spring 2020.