

APRIL 13, 2004

**SCHAKOWSKY TELLS OAKTON COLLEGE STUDENTS THAT THEY CAN HELP
MAKE HIGHER EDUCATION
A NATIONAL PRIORITY**

DES PLAINES, IL - During a speech at Oakton Community College today, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) told hundreds of students that they can succeed in making higher education a national priority once again by actively participating in the political process.

[With the rising cost of college tuition](#) , Schakowsky said that students can make their voices heard against [proposed cuts in President Bush's budget](#) to successful programs that have helped millions of students realize their dreams of a college education. For example, the President's budget cuts \$316 million from traditional vocational education programs and will spend \$66 million less on funding for vocational education and community colleges.

Schakowsky added that she continues to work to pass critical legislation in Congress that would provide students with access to affordable higher education. Some of these bills include:

- H.R. 3180, the College Opportunity for All Act. The bill would drastically simplify student aid, double the amount of the maximum Pell Grant and remove several unfair financial burdens on students.

- H.R. 3519, the College Affordability and Accountability Act. The bill would encourage colleges and universities to keep tuition costs down.

- H.R. 1684, the Student Adjustment Act, known as the DREAM Act in the Senate. The bill would make it possible for students under 21 years old, who have been in this country for at least five years and want to go on to secondary education, to receive legal permanent residency so they can become eligible for public financial assistance for

college

In addition to discussing issues dealing with higher education, Schakowsky answered questions about Iraq, the 9/11 Commission, and the PATRIOT Act.

Oakton enrolls about 10,000 students in its credit program per semester and about 11,000 continuing education and non-credit students. Seventy-four percent of the students attend the school on a part-time basis and the average student age is 30.