

## ASHLEY DEARBORN

We, the Members of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, extend our deep appreciation and esteem to Ashley Dearborn for her dedicated service to postsecondary students in Illinois and her contributions to the Board as its nontraditional student representative.

Having served as a student commissioner for the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, Ashley has been a strong and effective voice on issues of affordability and keeping student costs at the forefront of Board deliberations. Her knowledge, experience, and example have brought an important perspective in helping to deepen understanding of the financial pressures faced by college students.

As a nontraditional student representative, Ashley has enlightened Board members to the special challenges that confront adult learners at colleges and universities, and the critical need for higher education to better serve nontraditional students who make up an increasing presence in postsecondary education.

We applaud Ashley's impressive roster of accomplishments, both educationally and in public service. Ashley attended Wilbur Wright College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago, and is now a student at Northwestern University. She exhibits a commitment to her academic goals in Fine and Performing Arts and Political Science. She was selected as one of the first class of Illinois Scholars at City Colleges and also named a 2005 Kerrane Scholar.

Her leadership and public service activities have been equally noteworthy. At Wright College, Ashley served as president of the Student Government Association and the Music Club. An activist in student and community affairs, Ashley joined the effort to end a faculty strike at City Colleges. She also has been involved in community issues, particularly in housing and youth issues, as well as a strong advocate for citizen participation in government and public affairs. Ashley served two terms as an Americorps member and in June 2005 received a fellowship to the Salzburg International Studies Program where she studied worldwide immigration issues. She was among 16 college-age women to participate in a mock legislative hearing during the annual NEW Leadership Illinois program in Chicago in 2008. And she was one of 35 women honored by Women Employed as "Champions for Change." She also was chosen to serve on the Illinois Advisory Team for the National Governors Association Policy Academy on The Civic Engagement of Older Adults.

Ashley has been an activist in higher education policymaking as well. She was a panelist at the Higher Education Summit in 2007, representing student perspectives on affordability. She also has played a prominent role in the development of the *Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success*.

We will miss Ashley's reasoned but persistent voice, her valuable insights, and her spirit of public service, and we wish her well in her future endeavors.

*The Illinois Board of Higher Education  
June 2, 2009*