

News

From the Illinois House of Representatives

For Immediate Release
February 2010

Representative Constance A. "Connie" Howard
217-782-6476

LEGISLATORS HELP WOMEN PURSUING A SECOND CHANCE

(Springfield) The Conference of Women Legislators (COWL) a not-for-profit organization and a bipartisan coalition of women legislators in the Illinois General Assembly, announce their 2010-2011 Scholarship Award Program. COWL created the scholarship program as part of its mission to promote economic independence, community service and leadership development. Scholarship committee members include Representatives Constance A. "Connie" Howard (D-Chicago), Maria Antonia "Toni" Berrios (D-Chicago), Naomi Jakobsson (D-Champaign), Linda Chapa LaVia (D-Kane), Sandra M. Pihos (R-Glen Ellyn), Karen A. Yarbrough (D-Maywood), and Senator Pamela J. Althoff (R-McHenry).. Howard, Chairwoman of the committee, announced that scholarships of \$2500 each will be awarded. These college scholarships are aimed at helping women who are earning their college degrees, later in life in some cases.

"One of the gaps in the state college aid programs is assistance for mature women who may have had their education interrupted by plans to start a family or who never had a chance to start college until later in life. These non-traditional students don't fit neatly into any programs," Howard said. "Rather than pass a law to create a new grant, we started raising money to fund scholarships on our own. This scholarship program has made a difference in the lives of many women by enabling them to achieve their educational dreams."

Scholarship applicants are required to enroll in an Illinois accredited college or university for a minimum of seven credit hours to qualify, making the scholarships available to a part-time student. In addition to academic achievement the scholarship committee also considered volunteer or paid community service work that benefited women in transition. Applications must be postmarked by April 9, 2010. Awardees will be notified of the decisions by May 7, 2010. Scholarship applications may be downloaded from the COWL website at www.cowlil.com.

The majority of the charitable funds raised by the group come from annual fundraisers, such as "Capitol Capers" and "Dancing with the Capitol Stars", featuring performances by lawmakers from around the state.