

# **Durbin, Duckworth Announce \$1.3 Million Grant For National Louis University To Strengthen Teacher Diversity Preparation Programs**

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today announced that the Department of Education has awarded \$1,341,279 in Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Programs grants to National Louis University (NLU) in Chicago. NLU is among the first universities and

colleges to receive federal funds dedicated to the Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Programs. The federal funding will be used to implement three multi-pathway residency programs that are designed to increase the access, participation, and success of diverse, multilingual school paraprofessionals. The programs will incorporate culturally responsive teaching and learning standards, an evidence-based learning community, and multilingual supports for academic and licensure success.

“Investing in our educators is an investment in the next generation. As we look to recruit and train more diverse teachers to enter the profession, we must ensure that we are investing in communities of color and strengthening programs that recruit educators of color,” said Durbin. “I’ve supported funding for the Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Program grant, and I’m pleased to see National Louis University receive these funds to support teachers and communities of color.”

“America’s educators should reflect the diversity of its communities and working toward this goal enriches our education system, invests in our students and supports workforce development,” said Duckworth. “With this federal funding, National Louis University can keep working to eliminate employment barriers for the teachers of color and the multilingual educators of tomorrow.”

More than 50 percent of students in the United States are children of color, but fewer than one in five teachers are educators of color. Named for the first Black politician elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from west of the Mississippi River, the Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Program offers financial support to comprehensive, high-quality teacher preparation programs to address teacher shortages while strengthening the diversity of our teacher pipeline by recruiting educators of color. The program allocates grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs), and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).