

### **Teacher Quality Report**

The Task Force on Teacher Preparation and Initial Professional Development released its final report on March 22, 2004, entitled *Improving Results: Transforming the Teaching Profession in Illinois*. The Task Force was sponsored by the Civic Committee in partnership with the University of Illinois at Chicago and National-Louis University, with funding from the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

The Task Force was formed on the principle that high-quality teachers are the single most important variable in student success. The Civic Committee enlisted leaders in education, business, labor and government to serve on the Task Force in an effort to reflect the diversity of interests in public education today in Illinois. Arnold R. Weber, former President of the Civic Committee and President Emeritus of Northwestern University was the Task Force Chair; and Stanley O. Ikenberry, President Emeritus of the University of Illinois, served as Vice-Chair.

The objective of the group was to undertake a thorough examination of the broad professional conditions that are required to improve teacher quality, especially for economically disadvantaged areas. The Task Force sought to achieve consensus on the issues among the various interests represented. Understandably, not everyone was in full agreement on all points, but in the end everyone agreed on the broad vision for enhancing the teaching profession.

*Improving Results* sets forth a long-term strategy for improving the formal education, clinical training, support, and professional conditions for teachers. Similar improvements were accomplished in the past in medical education and business education, revolutionizing each profession. The quality of education is once again in the forefront of public debate in Illinois. Improvements in the quality and supply of the teacher workforce will be necessary in order to make serious progress in raising student achievement in the state.