

Ferraro hailed as rights pioneer

Dem VP hopeful also shows political savvy in 1st area visit

By Kathy Parriah
Staff writer

U.S. Rep. Dennis Hertel has always told his three daughters they can be

anything they want when they grow up. But the Democratic congressman from Harper Woods didn't entirely believe that until "one magic night" when his party nominated U.S. Rep. Geraldine Ferraro for vice president.

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"Now for the first time any child born in America can dream about becoming president," Hertel proudly told a crowd of 3,000 waiting to hear Ferraro Tuesday in Adlai Stevenson High School, Sterling Heights.

Introducing the first woman vice presidential candidate, Michigan Lt. Gov. Martha Griffiths called her the person who "did more for the rights of women than had been done in 130 years."

"Every woman stands taller because of Geraldine Ferraro," said the former suburban congresswoman.

MAKING HER FIRST visit to the tri-county area, the New York representative was greeted by a standing room only crowd.

Packed into the gym were supporters of all ages, including government students from Utica's four public high schools.

Another 700 people heard the speech over four monitors set up in the smaller school auditorium. But the turnout was so large that some backers were forced to wait outside in the rain for a glimpse of the blonde candidate.

"I wish I could bottle that enthusiasm and take you all over the country with me," said Ferraro, whose talk was interrupted several times by yells of "Gerry, Gerry."

Given the traditional present for politicians — a school jersey — the candidate delighted the crowd by pulling it on over her plaid dress and pearls.

Noting that the pollsters say the Mondale-Ferraro team is behind, she jokingly took her own "scientific poll."

"Are we going to win in November?" she asked with a smile.

When the Democratic crowd shouted "Yes," she cracked a Tigertown joke: "Bless you boys — and girls."

ALTHOUGH EXPECTED to speak on education, the former teacher only briefly touched the topic.

Charging that the Reagan administration doesn't value education, she said the Democratic team intends to "launch a major new initiative on education."

While pledging to keep domestic spending down, Mondale has said he would make education one of his top funding priorities. The presidential candidate has said he would increase



Carrying signs and wearing broad smiles, supporters gathered outside Stevenson High School to wait for a glimpse of the Democratic vice

presidential candidate, hailed as the opener of new horizons for women.

funds for student loan assistance and teacher training.

"I tell Ronald Reagan sending a teacher into outer space won't help put our children through college," Ferraro said, referring to the president's proposal to put a teacher on a space flight to emphasize the importance of education.

"Let's help teachers here on earth," she criticized the administration's defense spending, and what she sees as lack of concern about unemployment, environmental issues, civil rights and human needs.

"This administration has a calculator where its heart should be, and that calculator has a double standard," charged Ferraro.

AS SHE DOES in every state, the 49-year-old Democratic candidate met privately with women leaders to discuss their concerns.

For a half hour, Ferraro informally talked with female politicians and leaders of groups like the National Or-

ganization of Women (NOW), Michigan Federation of Teachers, Michigan Women's Commission, the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Cheering as the candidate walked into the school's faculty lounge, the invited guests sang "Ferraro, Ferraro, you're only a vote away" in the tune of the song "Tomorrow."

ON THE AGENDA were topics like child care, the nuclear freeze and getting more women out to vote. Some participants urged the candidate to

give a major speech just on women's issues.

Others urged her to be an active vice president, not just a "silent" one.

But while it was billed as a strategy session, many participants just came to show support for the first woman vice presidential candidate.

"Campaigning is hard business, real tough," said Vivian Smargon, a Franklin attorney challenging U.S. Rep. William Broomfield, R-Birmingham.

"And candidates need a little stroking."

Michigan Lt. Gov. Martha Griffiths said the Democratic vice presidential candidate 'did more for the rights of women than had been done in 130 years' . . . Every woman stands taller because of Geraldine Ferraro.'



DAVID FRANK

Democratic vice presidential hopeful Geraldine Ferraro slipped into a Stevenson High School jersey and made herself at home as she blasted the Reagan Administration in an appearance at the Sterling Heights school.



Vivian Smargon (left), a Franklin attorney who is challenging incumbent William S. Broomfield for the 18th District seat in

Congress, was one of a group who met with Ferraro to discuss women's issues in a meeting closed to the press.

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