

# Summit focuses on business, education

By Toni Rocha Special to the Daily News | Posted: Thursday, August 27, 2015 4:00 pm

Dozens of Stateline Area community leaders gathered at the Garden Hotel and Conference Center in South Beloit Wednesday morning to share insights and network at the 8th annual Business and Education Summit.

Sponsored by Beloit College, the summit focused on the theme “Vision and Leadership,” emphasizing the importance of partnerships between the cities of Beloit and South Beloit with their respective school districts.

In her opening remarks, co-host Wisconsin State Rep. Amy Loudenberg, R-Canton, said “Supporting each other starts at the local level where we can focus on community decisions and create opportunities for every resident and all youth.”

Co-host Wisconsin State Rep. Mark Spreitzer, D-Beloit, commented that, as a former Beloit city council member, he participated in multiple meetings with the Beloit school district, recognizing the challenge and opportunities inherent in a close relationship.

“My mission is to tackle the ongoing need to ensure public safety, support neighborhoods and find ways to work within the local and state budget constraints we all face,” Spreitzer said.

Keynote speaker Lori Curtis Luther, Beloit city manager, told the attentive audience she has established three primary goals in her first few months on the job.

“I want to enhance leadership, engage the entire community and improve modern practices,” Luther said. “It is important as to how the city functions. We not only need to expand necessary concepts but also to work toward tangible results.”

As two of the region’s major employers, the City of Beloit and School District of Beloit, along with integral community organizations such as churches can work together to resolve problems and enrich the quality of life for everyone.



## Working together

(From left): State Rep. Mark Spreitzer, School District of Beloit Superintendent Tom Johnson, State Rep. Amy Loudenberg and Beloit City Manager Lori Curtis Luther attended the Business and Education Summit at the Garden Hotel in South Beloit Wednesday.

“By reducing crime and violence, and by recruiting and maintaining a connected workforce, plus engaging our youth by implementing technology, we will be more open to change,” Luther said. “All of us need to be ready for what’s next at all levels. I strongly believe it is my responsibility to make bold decisions so we can make Beloit a better place to live.”

She said partnerships are important in achieving any goal.

“Through thoughtful and purposeful action, we can share ideas and network across the community,” Luther said. “Let’s have that conversation and speak with one voice.”

For keynote speaker Dr. Tom Johnson, Beloit School District superintendent, five goals are vital to the area’s future.

“First, we need to foster a culture that honors each stakeholder, each resident and youth, to value where they each come from with a duty toward inclusiveness,” Johnson said. “We also must demand excellence and refute excuses, to do everything possible to innovate new opportunities, to make diversity an actionable word and to encourage human interaction.”

Conclusive to the summit, both cities and all school districts are committed to share in advancing the cause of the entire region, including purchasing and other cost-effective options, to attract and retain people and businesses vital to the community’s health, reach out to the disenfranchised and at-risk youth, and to provide as many options and opportunities for growth and stability as possible.