

Preface

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UNIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY

Over the last two years, business, government and education leaders in Wisconsin have focused on building a regional strategic plan for economic development. Led by the University of Wisconsin System and Board of Regents, Wisconsin Economic Summits were held in 2000 and 2001, drawing more than 900 leaders from business, labour, government, education and the non-profit sectors together to consider Wisconsin's economic condition and establish a collaborative vision. The Summits served as a turning-point in thinking about the future direction of Wisconsin's economy. Although a coordinated, vibrant and realistic business plan for economic development is yet to be developed, the work of the Summits is continued by various regional groups. The agenda for growth includes initiatives to attract, develop and retain Wisconsin's workforce, preserve Wisconsin's economic backbone, expand the biotechnology/biomedical sector, identify and develop other significant industry clusters, build public/private partnerships, and develop other regional solutions. Lessons learned from neighbouring states and our multinational network of academic scholars will contribute to the success of Wisconsin's regional economic development.

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has a significant role in strengthening Wisconsin's place in the emerging global marketplace. Drawing on its unique strengths as a premier urban research university, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has an institutional commitment to serve Milwaukee and Wisconsin by providing a wide range of research and service expertise and by maintaining strong and dynamic partnerships with the various communities and organisations in the region. The scholarly and business perspectives of participants in the L'institute Workshop as reflected in this volume are excellent examples of the wide range of research and service contributions of this university to local economic development. The work of L'institute complements and contributes to the existing and ongoing focus on Wisconsin economic development. The volume also contributes in a meaningful way to broader issues of urban and regional prosperity in a globalised economy.