



## NEWS RELEASE

Tri-State Development Summit  
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### **Iowa Governor, Broadband Expert and Agriculture Leader Among Summit Speakers**

Tri-State Development Summit Steering committee members have announced the names of some of the featured speakers and honored guests that will be presenting at the 9th Tri-State Development Summit on October 5th in Quincy, Illinois.

“We’re pleased with how this year’s line-up of speakers is shaping up,” said Steering Committee Member Jim Mentesti, president of the Great River Economic Development Foundation in Quincy, Illinois. “The caliber of individuals and the array of topics they will cover will make for an action-packed four hours.”

Among those speaking is Iowa Governor Terry Branstad. Iowa’s longest serving governor, Branstad’s hands-on, round-the-clock approach to economic development helped lead the state to record low unemployment rates in the 90s. He has remained committed to job creation, reducing the cost of government, increasing family incomes and excellence in education since his re-election in November 2010. Governor Branstad is no stranger to the Summit, having attended in 1997 when he joined then-Illinois Governor Jim Edgar on the stage.

Damon Porter, a leading authority on Broadband, will speak about his work as the Director of Missouri Broadband Now, a public-private initiative of multiple cooperative partners committed to expanding broadband accessibility in the State of Missouri. Governor Jay Nixon established MoBroadbandNow to facilitate the integration of broadband and information technology into state and local economies. Porter leads Missouri’s expansion of high and ultra high speed accessibility to many underserved and un-served communities. Broadband connectivity is a crucial element to Missouri (and the entire Tri-State Summit region) remaining globally competitive in the 21st century.

As Executive Director of the Soy Transportation Coalition (STC), Mike Steenhoek is responsible for communicating the initiative and the importance of transportation issues to soybean growers and processors; establishing and executing the organization’s strategic direction; and building collaborations with other effected industries. The Soy Transportation Coalition is an initiative established in 2007 and comprised of the United Soybean Board, the American Soybean Association, and eleven state soybean boards. STC exists to promote a cost effective, reliable, and competitive transportation system that serves the agriculture industry.

Steenhoek will speak about the impact of the Panama Canal expansion's impact on U.S. agriculture and deliver recommended action steps to ensure U.S. agriculture is able to fully benefit from the Panama Canal's expansion.

The mission of the Tri-State Summit is to bring together leaders in Southeast Iowa, Northeast Missouri and Western Illinois to define common issues; to develop an on-going dialogue to effectively address those issues; and to improve the quality of life of the entire tri-state region through economic development activities.

The 2011 Summit will take place in the Quincy Community Theatre which is located in the Oakley-Lindsay Center in downtown Quincy. The location for the bi-annual Summit rotates among all three states. The Summit consists of a four-hour agenda from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

2011 marks the 15<sup>th</sup> year of bringing tri-state leaders together. The Summit area consists of 35 counties. For more information about the 9<sup>th</sup> Tri-State Development Summit and to register online or download a mail-in registration form, visit the new [www.tristateofmind.org](http://www.tristateofmind.org).

