

# Women pushed for top jobs

## Report laments missed opportunities

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A strong commitment from senior management, and access to a deep talent pool, are among the things needed for Wisconsin companies to add more women to their boards and executive positions, a group of business leaders said Monday.

Those comments came from members of a panel who discussed the findings of a new report on the number of female directors and executives among Wisconsin's 50

largest publicly traded companies.

The report, "Missed Opportunities in Corporate Leadership," finds that women hold 12.3% of the director seats in those companies. That compares with 10.8% in 2005, the report from Milwaukee Women Inc. says.

Women held 12.3% of executive officer positions in the companies, compared with 11% in 2005.

"A lot of progress is being made. But a lot of opportunities are being missed as well," said Jeff Joerres, chairman, chief executive officer and president of Manpower Inc. "We cannot be considered a

world-class place to do business unless we fix this."

Joerres later joined three executives — John Daniels, chairman of the Quarles & Brady law firm, Paul Beideman, chairman and CEO of Associated Banc-Corp, and Tina Chang, CEO of SysLogic Inc., an information technology services company — to discuss the report. They spoke before an audience of about 300 at the Italian Community Center during a luncheon meeting hosted by the Greater Milwaukee Committee, a civic organization.

The addition of female and minority executives and directors helps a business solve

problems more effectively by considering different views, Daniels said.

Chang said a diverse approach also gave businesses a chance to find talented people it might otherwise miss.

"We don't have enough discussion on how this is good for our business," said Chang, who called herself "a product of affirmative action."

Daniels and Beideman also said that retaining such employees can be easier if they feel comfortable to improve their skills.

"The risk is not giving people the potential to grow," Beideman said.