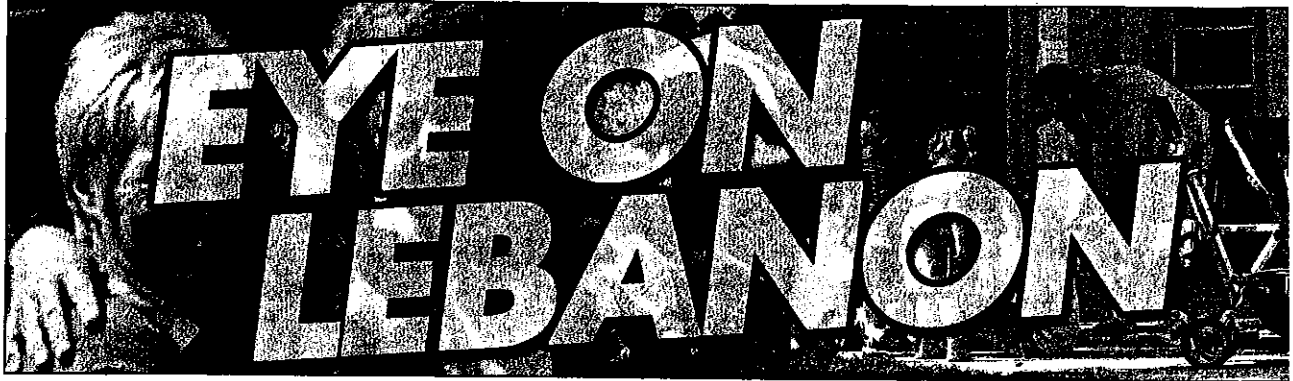


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## It's never too late to continue your education

*This column is one in an ongoing series of columns written by community leaders at the request of the Community Vision Committee, with the goal of providing a deeper knowledge of the many aspects of the city of Lebanon.*

**BY AUDRA POE**  
Executive Director of  
Boone County Learning  
Network

To remain competitive in light of these economic times, it is important to

improve productivity and adopt an innovative spirit. The most forward-thinking approach to solving problems and increasing competitiveness is to equip today's and tomorrow's citizens with the skills and attitudes for economic and civic success. In 2006 a group of community leaders came together to do just that and the Boone County Learning Network (BCLN) was formed.

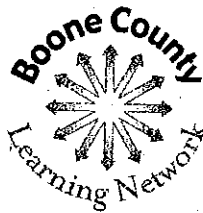
The mission of BCLN is to promote and coordinate post secondary, lifelong learning

and workforce development opportunities for those who live and work in Boone County. In 2009 BCLN served close to 1,000 individuals in a variety of ways including local instructor-led classes, on-site business training and adult literacy.

The Boone County Learning Network (BCLN) offers a wide variety of non credit classes in and around Boone County in addition to online learning opportunities. We provide connections to post secondary opportunities and act as a resource to local businesses seeking on-site job training. BCLN serves the community as a resource for education programs for residents, businesses, organizations and government agencies.

The Boone County Learning Network Program for Adult Literacy (P.A.L.) offers a free one-on-one tutoring program for adults who want help improving their literacy skills or learn

the English language. This program focuses on helping adults achieve "functional literacy," which allows them to carry out everyday tasks and communicate effectively. This is a special program of BCLN and is made possible through a grant from the



Community Foundation of Boone County.

Research links primary and secondary education to economic development and growth. This research recognizes people as a type of economic asset - "human capital" - and shows that increased investment in health, skills and knowledge provides future returns to the economy through increases in labor productivity.

Education increases workers' average earnings and productivity. It also reduces the incidence of social problems such as drug abuse, crime, welfare dependency and lack of access to medical

care, all of which can weigh heavily on the economy.

If you are interested in continuing your education or changing your career path, please join us at the Education and Career Opportunities Fair, hosted by the Boone County Learning Network and Boone Economic Development Corporation. The Boone County Education and Career Opportunities Fair will be held from 5 to 8 p.m.

Wednesday in the Witham Health Services Pavilion at

the Boone County 4-H Fairgrounds. This fair is and open to anyone interested in advancing their education, joining the military learning about apprenticeship programs and other opportunities.

*Audra Poe is the Executive Director of the Boone County Learning Network. For more information at the Boone County Learning Network please contact BCLN by phone at (317) 8657, (765) 481-1250 or the Web site at [www.boclearning.net](http://www.boclearning.net).*