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Chamber honors businesses, individuals with awards

Clint Wolf

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BELOIT—Community members, businesses and volunteers were honored with awards during the 93rd Annual Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce Online Annual Meeting held Tuesday.

Award recipients were presented with awards before Tuesday and video of them accepting the awards were shown during the online meeting. Award recipients were:

The Ken Hendricks Community Spirit Award presented to Jeffrey Klett.

Klett has been known for his community involvement, volunteering his time and skills to make Beloit a better place. He has served on the School District of Beloit Board of Education and served two terms as president. He also has served as chair of the Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation, as executive vice president of the Beloit Snappers, on the board of Rock County 5.0, on the fundraising committee of the Stateline Boys and Girls Club and on many other boards and committees for community organizations.

Large Business of the Year presented to Geronimo Hospitality Group.

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Geronimo Hospitality was founded in 2013 and today employs more than 600 people. It has provided memorable experiences for locals and travelers through its nine successful, award winning properties. Its properties include the Beloit Club, Truk't Restaurant, Blue Collar Coffee Co., Hotel Goodwin, Velvet Buffalo, Ironworks Golf Lab, Lucy's #7 Burger Bar, Merrill and Houston Steak Joint, Eclipse Event Center and more.

Small Business of the Year presented to Walnut Creek Apparel and Gifts.

The family owned business has been in operation in the Beloit area since 1980, starting out as a wholesale woodshop in South Beloit. It has since expanded to include a successful custom awards business as well as acquiring an existing business and growing to a second location in downtown Beloit. The business offers screen printing and embroidered apparel, laser engraved gifts, awards, promotional items and more.

"Elly" Environmental Leadership Award presented to Alliant Energy.

Alliant energy has been doing business in the Beloit area for more than 90 years and today it employs 1,800 people in Wisconsin. The company's Clean Energy Blueprint is a roadmap to accelerate the organization's transition to renewable energy.

The company's newest site includes a designed one-half mile nature trail pedestrian and bike loop including a future educational energy lab.

The company restored 67 acres of former agricultural land to native prairie habitat to enhance wildlife and local ecosystem around the plant's footprint. And, they significantly reduced use of chemical herbicides and pesticides by bringing a goat herd to the site to eliminate invasive species.

This company is committed to eliminating all existing coal from its energy mix and reducing carbon dioxide emissions 80% by 2050.

The Paulette Christensen Ambassador of the Year Award presented to Graham Wilson.

Wilson is a champion of the Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce and embodies its mission. He is always willing to step up, lend a hand and volunteer in any way possible as well as offering to provide his workplace as a location for our monthly Ambassador meetings. He has

attended virtually every event put on by the Chamber including many ribbon cuttings, grant check presentations, and has participated in our member retention program as well as serving on our Membership Committee and Ambassador Executive Committee.

Rising Professional of the Year Award presented to Erin Clausen.

Clausen has been a member of the Rising Professionals since 2016. This person served on the RP Board of Directors for four years, was the Chair of the Marketing Committee for two years, designed and launched rpbeloit.com, created and branded the RP logo, and was always willing to step up to contribute and volunteer for the organization with joy.

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