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Karen Kasich delivers speech in Spanish at Latino conference

By Lydia Coutre

Ohio First Lady Karen W. Kasich welcomed a large crowd to the Hyatt Regency Union Ballroom for the Ohio Diversity Latino Talent and Leadership Conference today.

"Buenos días y Bienvenidos Amigos Ohio-Hispano-Americanos."

Kasich earned applause and "wow"s from the crowd as she continued her entire speech in Spanish. The only word recognizable to non-Spanish speakers: Ohio.

Arquimides Segarra, girls water polo coach and substitute teacher in Worthington City Schools, said he was shocked when she began speaking Spanish.

"I was really impressed because you don't expect that the first lady of Ohio is going to make a speech in Spanish," Segarra said. "And it was pretty fluent."

Kasich said she has always had a special affinity for Hispanics. She likes the music and learned Spanish in college, and then picked it up again later through classes at Ohio State University and a tutor.

"I never get never get nervous before I speak to audiences, but yes speaking in a language that is not my own I was a little nervous," she said, laughing

The fourth annual Latino Talent and Leadership Conference drew more than last year's 700 attendees, estimated the event's founder and president Christina Villacinda. She said it's important to have leaders participate in the conference. Mayor Michael B. Coleman offered remarks earlier this morning.

Article continued here: <http://dispatchpolitics.dispatch.com/content/blogs/the-daily-briefing/2012/10/10-04-karen-kasich-spanish.html>

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