

 <p>April 1: Manage Risk SBDC Free Business Training 11am April 5: MEDA Broadband Committee 2pm April 7: AmeriCorps for HUD Partners April 13: Leadership in Turbulent Times series begins April 13 – 14: Small Town and Rural Dev Conference April 14: NextGen Workforce Committee 1pm April 18 – 20: Gov's Conference Tourism and Rec April 19: MEDA Broadband Committee 2pm April 22: Business Model Canvas Training April 22: Industry Day PTAC event April 23: Peer Learning Network 9:30am April 28: NextGen Workforce Committee 1pm April 29: Cybersecurity April 30: Peer Learning Network 9:30am</p> <p>IEDC Training 2021 At-A-Glance</p>	 <p>May 10: MEDA Broadband Committee 2pm May 12: MEDA Annual Membership Meeting May 12: NextGen Workforce Committee 1pm May 18 – 19: MT Housing Conference May 24: MEDA Broadband Committee 2pm May 26: NextGen Workforce Committee 1pm May 28: Peer Learning Network 9:30am</p>  <p>June 7-11: SelectUSA Investment Summit June 10: Women Lead Central Montana June 9-11: Montana Young Professionals Summit June 29-30: MEDA Conference; more info soon!</p>
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MEDA – SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND SUMMER CONFERENCE

Not one, but two meetings! To provide more time for planning a very robust face-to-face conference, MEDA will hold its [Annual Meeting via Zoom, on May 12th](#). This will be a one-hour meeting to take care of MEDA business and to hear of MEDA committee and working group updates. Then, on June 29th and 30th, MEDA will hold a conference when we can meet face-to-face and dig deep into critical economic development issues. More information on both meetings will be available soon.

MEDA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ~ USING NDC OPPORTUNITY

The first quarter scholarship winners are: Jackie Haines, The Bridger District; Holly Carpenter, Headwaters RC&D; and Beth Epley, Eastern Plains EDC. All three award winners are taking advantage of the \$600 NDC training scholarship.



The second quarter round is now open. Apply today! Thanks to MT CARES Act and a partnership with [NDC](#), \$600 scholarships are available for MEDA members to engage in the excellent NDC courses. Additional details are on our website at: <https://www.medamembers.org/membership/scholarships>

MONTANA LEGISLATURE NO. 67

MEDA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MEDA Legislative Committee continues to meet each Wednesday morning at 7am. If you would like a current MEDA Bill List to see what is being tracked, please email [Gloria](#). A letter was sent to the House Appropriations Committee (and will be passed along to Senate Finance) regarding “The Beast” or [HB632](#). This is the bill that will determine appropriations for the American Rescue Plan Act. [Read MEDA’s letter here.](#)

[Link to see hearings scheduled for online audio/video for the day.](#)

[MEDA Legislative Policy and Principles](#)

MEDA MEMBER NEWS

We have three new members to MEDA. Welcome!



Luke Robinson, is the new Entrepreneur Development Specialist for MDOC Office of Indian Country Economic Development.



Teah Fuller, joined Adam Vauthier at Anaconda Local Development Corporation to serve as the Community Development Director.



Tyler Etzel, is the Senior Geologist for WGM Group.

REAL ID — Don’t Forget

Days are flying by...don’t forget that on October 1, 2021, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security will officially begin enforcing the REAL ID Act of 2005 at airports. This will require all Americans to present REAL ID-compliant identification to go through security. For specific information on Real ID in Montana, click [here](#).

MEDA WORKING GROUPS and COMMITTEES

All partners, including MEDA Members and Non-Members, are welcome to join a Working Group or Committee.

- **MEDA Value Added Ag Working Group** – A wish-list was developed by this group with dreams of improving Montana’s Value Added Ag opportunities. A special meeting was held March 23rd to share ideas with MT Dept. of Ag Director and Deputy Director, Mike Foster and Christy Clark. Follow this group’s progress on the [webpage](#). Paddy Fleming serves as Chair.



- **MEDA Community Review Working Group and Peer Learning Network** - This [working group](#) is blending with the new Peer Learning Network and will help strengthen community leadership across Montana. The Montana Peer Learning Network was formed as a result of the three-state Community Review Project. [To listen to the Space to Place presentation on March 26th](#), click the link. The next meeting will be held April 23rd at 9:30am. Each meeting there is a short presentation followed by Q & A from community leaders.
- **The MEDA CRDC Working Group** is meeting regularly and networking to share innovative ideas to sustain their organizations and businesses across the state. Paul Tuss serves as Chair.



Guess who?

- **MEDA Broadband Committee** was formed as a result of the NextGen report. This committee has become very active and dedicated throughout the Legislative session scheduling meetings as

needed to discuss legislation. [Webpage](#) Tracy McIntyre is serving as Chair. [Broadband Priorities](#)

- **MEDA Workforce Committee** was formed as a result of the NextGen report. Mary Craigle and Nicole Rush are Co-Chairs. Meetings are held Notes and [Webpage](#)
- **MEDA Remote Work Working Group** – This working group is collaborating to develop marketing and information to encourage remote workers to consider Montana and build a support network for teleworkers. Working with MSU Extension Community Developer Tara Mastel, great progress is being made. Anne Boothe serves as Chair. [Notes](#)



YOUR MEDA BOARD AT WORK

The MEDA Board held multiple meetings in March to keep on top of both state and federal policy issues. Several board members even threw in some weekend work hours to create a letter regarding HB632. It is imperative that MEDA is involved and at the table regarding incoming Federal funds via the American Rescue Plan Act. [Read MEDA's letter here.](#)

TOOLS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU

Check out the information below to learn of new tools and opportunities for you as you work in the field of Economic Development.

- ⇒ You are invited: [Introduction to AmeriCorps for HUD Community Partners webinar](#) on April 7 at 2pm MDT/3pm CDT. For those that may not be familiar, AmeriCorps provides people power to nonprofits, state, local and tribal governments to address critical local issues. During this training, we'll walk through a menu of AmeriCorps resources available to HUD community partners- from AmeriCorps VISTA members that can develop or expand wraparound services or write grants; to AmeriCorps NCCC which deploys teams of members for 12 weeks to be boots on ground completing facility renovations, building community gardens or supporting summer meals programs; there is something for everyone.
- ⇒ **The Harbinger Consultancy** is offering new online courses. harbingerconsult.com

SPRING 2021 ONLINE COURSES



TELL THE ECONOMIC STORY OF YOUR FARMLAND PROTECTION & LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS PROGRAMS WITHOUT HIRING AN ECONOMIST

Five 1-hour sessions: Apr. 9 - May 7, 2021.
Learn to paint a broad, research and data-based picture of the economic effects of your farmland protection and food system programs, and tell that story to support fundraising, partnerships and stronger community relationships.



DO-IT-YOURSELF VISITOR SURVEYS FOR PARKS, TRAILS, AND THE TOWNS THAT SERVE THEM

Three 1-hour sessions + optional Q&A session: Apr. 14-May 5, 2021. Get a handle on how locals and visitors use trails and parks—and what that means for your community—without breaking the bank or tearing your hair out.



ACTIVATING THE HEART OF RESILIENCE: HEARTMATH'S SCIENCE-BASED STRATEGIES FOR ADAPTING AND THRIVING

Six 1-hour sessions: April 10-May 15, 2021. FREE FOR TEACHERS & HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS. Learn Heartmath's science-based tools and strategies for reducing stress, feeling more energetic, sleeping soundly, being more resilient, adaptable and cool-headed—and becoming a stronger and better influence on those around you.

- ⇒ Montana World Trade Center is again organizing a Montana presence at the upcoming **Select USA Summit**. Due to the current global situation, the summit will be held virtually this year, June 7-11. <https://www.selectusasummit.us/> Select USA is an important forum for Montana as we continue to message about our place in the global community. Our virtual booth will feature our one-page documents highlight our key industries that easily explain the opportunities that exist in Montana. In addition, we will be creating and featuring a spotlight video on our state and two short industry highlight videos, per Select USA's virtual booth preset layout.

If you would like more information on this summit and our efforts, if you are interested in participating in the upcoming summit, or if you have information or assets that you feel are relevant to this project or would be a good addition to our presence, please contact Brigitta Miranda-Freer, Executive Director of the Montana World Trade Center at brigitta@mwtc.org.

Small Business Webinar Series 2021

Five Things to Do Today to Manage Risk in Your Company

Thursday, April 1, 2021

As part of renewed disaster preparedness awareness, all businesses must manage risk. And risk doesn't just include basic insurance on your company assets. Especially as companies grow, they take on additional risks through employees, contracts, partners, and especially related to the lingering impacts of COVID-19. This webinar will touch on three types of risk and five risk management strategies for growth-focused companies.

Register at
<https://mtsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/4817>

Hear experts provide an overview of small business development topics and phone in or type or chat questions or comments. We will follow-up with requests for additional information. All webinars are **free and open to the public at 11:00 AM** (for 30 min) and will be recorded and archived.

- Join the webinar live or access the recorded webinar and see additional resources at www.mtscommunitydevelopment.org/smallbusiness.html
- For questions, email jstuchmacher@montana.edu

Webinar Series Sponsors



Additional Support



Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Please contact jstuchmacher@montana.edu or (406) 994-6637.

The Montana State University Extension Service is an AFN/EO/AA/Title IX/Nebraska's Preference Employer and Provider of Educational Outreach.



Dena Johnson
Sales Executive
PayneWest Insurance

April 1, 2021 Five Things to Do Today to Manage Risk in Your Company

Presenter: Dena Johnson, Sales Executive, PayneWest Insurance

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[Registration](#)

⇒ Deadline is April 28th: Montana Department of Agriculture has posted a Request for Proposals for its **Food and Agriculture Development Center** program. Information on applying is at <https://funding.mt.gov/index.do>. Folks can reach out to Jim Auer, Grants Manager, 406.444.5424.



⇒ **Recording Available from Webinar on Rural Resilience and Economic Development**
Many rural regions and small metros were still recovering from the Great Recession when the COVID-19 pandemic struck last year. In places that had made progress, a lot of economic gains were wiped out as businesses closed, jobs disappeared, and entire industries reorganized. Now, as rural places seek to recover from these setbacks, communities are in a position to reset and create a strong foundation for the future, one rooted in resilience and creative ways of doing economic development. During the webinar "[Rural Resilience and Economic Development](#)" Don Macke of [e2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems](#) shared e2's insights into growing a more prosperous rural America rooted in 40 plus years of work. This webinar covered structural challenges and opportunities in small towns and rural communities, "Mega Trends" in rural development, a prosperity community development framework, how to build entrepreneur-led ecosystems, and much more. Click [here](#) to access the recording, slides, and additional resources. Contact Brett Schwartz at bschwartz@nado.org with any questions.

Revolving Fund Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that it is increasing funding limits for loans financed under the [Revolving Fund Program](#) to support water and wastewater infrastructure projects in rural America. This improvement is in accordance with provisions in the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill). In a final rule published today, USDA increased to \$200,000 the maximum loan amount in the Revolving Fund Program. The previous loan limit was \$100,000. This change will help expand access to safe, reliable drinking water, and sanitary sewage treatment for households in rural communities.

Read full announcement [here](#).



SSBCI: Implementation and Funding Issues

[Access to Capital](#) | [Economic Development](#)

This CRS report examines the SSBCI program and its implementation, including Treasury's response to initial program audits conducted by the U.S. Government Accountability Office and Treasury's Office of Inspector General. These initial audits suggest that SSBCI participants are generally complying with the statute's requirements but that some compliance problems exist.

GRANT RESOURCES

⇒ MEDA is a member of [GrantStation](#). Email [gloria](#) if you would like the username and password. Help GrantStation be the best it can be.

⇒ Check out this [grant source](#) from the University of Montana.

⇒ **MSU Extension** has a great list of grants!
<http://msucommunityresources.org/GrantOpportunities.html>

⇒ **USDA Value-Added Producer Grant Program**

The Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and marketing of new products. The goals of this program are to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities and increase producer income.

Grants are awarded through a national competition. Paper applications must be postmarked by May 4, 2021. Applications are permitted via Grants.gov and must be received by 11:59 p.m. EST on April 29, 2021. To learn more or apply for this grant, click [here](#).

⇒ **Tribal Tourism Digital Business Development Grant**

The Office of Indian Country Economic Development (OICED) is pleased to announce the new Tribal Tourism Digital Business Development Grant. This is a pilot grant program to help tourism-related entrepreneurs with digital assets to reach potential customers and convert them into sales. Eligible project categories include professional content development, website development, and virtual experiences. The maximum award is up to \$6,250 per applicant.

The application cycle is open **NOW** through **Friday, April 30**. For more information or to apply for this grant, [click here](#).

⇒ **Grant Opportunity: National Rural Transit Assistance Program Accepting Applications for Community Rides Funding**

The [Community Rides Grant Program](#) offers funding up to \$100,000 for projects that develop or strengthen transportation partnerships that improve social determinants of health in rural and tribal communities. Eligible applicants are current Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 recipients and subrecipients. The application portal opens **April 7, 2021**. All applications are due **May 10, 2021**. Informational webinars will be held at 2 p.m. ET on [March 23](#) and [April 15](#).



MDOC Spotlight: Montana Housing Conference



The Montana Housing Partnership Conference is a highly anticipated event for housing authorities, community development agencies and affordable housing developers in Montana.

This year's virtual conference will use the Whova platform, which offers features allowing for ease-of-use and networking among peers and sponsors. It also allows participants the opportunity to return to the platform to view content from sessions they may have missed.

The conference will include more than 20 session opportunities, with topics such as:

- Renters, Landlords and Eviction Prevention
- Homeownership Solutions
- Economic Development Approaches to Housing Affordability
- High Impact Multi-Family Development: LIHTC and Supportive Housing
- Messaging, Communications and Funder Relations
- State and Local Policy

There are two ways to register this year! Registration for an individual is \$150, or new this year, you can purchase a \$500 organization ticket to cover up to 10 of your staff or Board. With organization tickets, we will be in touch upon your purchase to gather individual information for each attendee in your organization. For information about scholarship opportunities, please contact [Katie Biggs](#). You won't want to miss this year's conference and be sure to register before April 9 to receive special conference swag in the mail.

REGISTER HERE

THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS MEDA MEMBERSHIP SPONSORS for 2021

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