



## **MEDA BEAR WORKING GROUP CONFERENCE CALL**

**DECEMBER 2, 2013 1:00pm – 2:00pm**

**On the call:** Karyl Tobel, MDOC; Dave Labor, Helena Job Service; Nancy Faroni, MDOC; Deborah Demarais, MDOC; Amy Gault, Bozeman Job Service; Jim Davison, ALDC; Mike Jackson, Mora McCarthy, John Balsam, Kalispell Job Service; George Palmer, Angie McDonald, Missoula Job Service; Brian Obert, MBAC; Pam Haxby-Cote, Julie Jaksha- Headwaters RC&D; Pam Watson, Chris Wilhelm, MDLI; Dale Mahugh, NorthWestern Energy; Marie Mahugh, Lake County Community Development; Teresa McNight, MSU Innovation Campus; Todd Erickson, Lake County Job Service; and Mike and Gloria O'Rourke, BEAR.

### **1. Introductions and Background**

Following introductions, Gloria shared a brief background of the purpose for the MEDA BEAR Working Group which is to guide the statewide Montana BEAR Program.

### **2. IWT Update – Chris Wilhelm**

Chris reported on IWT data from this year to date:

- 148 applications have been received with 132 approved for funding.
- 297 workers have been trained
- \$234,000 granted with \$312,000 remaining.

### **3. MDOC Training Discussion**

Karyl Tobel said the Montana Department of Commerce is interested in improving communications with BEAR Teams as several MDOC programs are a great fit for BEAR customers. The idea is to learn more about MDOC programs as well as MDLI programs that could complement each other and further assist BEAR customers.

After a brief discussion, each BEAR Team is to send Karyl the date and time of their regular meeting. MDOC staff will then arrange to meet with each BEAR Team. Chris Wilhelm and Pam Watson will be kept in the loop so that they can provide IWT Training with the teams as well. Those on the call were very enthusiastic about the training opportunity.

### **4. ExecutivePulse – Input and Usage**

Gloria encouraged ExecutivePulse users to go back in and enter data under the Metrics icon so that hours worked, jobs created; public/private investment and other information could be recorded. Mike Jackson summed up learning ExecutivePulse best: you just have to use it! Some mentioned to go back into the Metrics Survey after completing the company information can be challenging to do. Gloria reminded those on the call that ExecutivePulse support is available 24/7 and is excellent.

### **5. Sharing of Challenges and Successes**

- Amy Gault reported for the Bozeman Team. Working in partnership with Northern Rocky Mountain EDD, two teams have formed with the goal of conducting 50 interviews for the year. Currently 45 have been conducted. The second part of the Bozeman BEAR Team is called

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TOPS and stands for Team of Professionals. The members of this time provide a high level of professional expertise for a company and work on a contract basis.

- George Palmer and Angie McDonald reported the Missoula Team works with Missoula Economic Partnership and meets every other week on Tuesday mornings.
- Mike Jackson provided an update on the Kalispell Team. Chris Parson is no longer with the SBDC and serves as Vice President for the Kalispell Chamber. In addition, John Balsam has become the SBDC Director for Kalispell. Mike said these transitions have been very positive for the Kalispell BEAR Team.
- Marie Mahugh and Todd Erickson reported Lake County BEAR Team meets monthly. In reaching out to businesses they find that about 50% are interested and the other half are reluctant to become involved in a government program.

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