Dec 4: **Fixing Broken Politics**
Dec 4-7: MACo Elected Officials Training
Dec 6: NADO: Improve your CEDS
Dec 7: Small Business Webinar – Your Story 11am
Dec 14: RTA Working Group Call 9am
Dec 15: Innovation and Economic Prosperity
Dec 19: RLF Working Group Call 10am

SAVE THE DATE for Rockin’ it Rural: Thriving in Small Town Montana! Mark your calendar now to join us in Dillon, April 26-27 for the MEDA Spring Conference. Your hosts: Headwaters RC&D and Beaverhead Development

**MEDA MAP NEEDS YOUR PROJECT!**
Our project map looks skimpy – please add a success story to document your project. [Easy to fill out form](#)

**MEDA and PARTNERS ROLLING WITH RIPPLE EFFECTS MAPPING**
As you may have heard, Montana is part of a three state grant project with Idaho and Wyoming to analyze and improve Resource Team Assessments. One phase of the grant involves returning to some of the 48 communities
who had assessments, and conduct Ripple Effects Mapping (REM). REM is a fun, energizing, and positive process which demonstrates the impact an assessment had on a community. Dr. Lori Higgins, University of Idaho, helped create the REM process and shared it with the communities of Lockwood, Laurel, and Ronan on November 29\textsuperscript{th} and 30\textsuperscript{th}. A new webpage has been added to the MEDA site so that you can track REM results in Montana. More news: each community that holds REM can apply for a $1,000 grant!
MDOC PROGRAMS AND PARTNERS
It was learned that sufficient applications have been received to fully allocate both BSTF Planning Grant Funds and Worker Training Grant Funds. No new proposals are being accepted until July 2018. Funding is still available for Job Creation Grants.

MEDA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE
The MEDA office will soon be sending 2018 Membership invoices out. Although we still have a month to go before year end, many thanks to each and every MEDA member for making a difference to Montana’s economic development in 2017.

MEDA WORKING GROUPS UPDATE

- **MEDA RLF Working Group**— If you work with Revolving Loan Funds you will want to participate in this working group as participants discuss, learn and share their day-to-day tasks with RLFs. The next RLF meeting is set for December 19th. [Notes]

- **MEDA Resource Team Assessment Working Group** — The next meeting will be December 14th at 9am. An update will be provided on the three state grant that is reviewing and improving Resource Team Assessments. [Notes from the call] Learn more about MEDA’s assessments [here].

MEDA Rick Jones Memorial Scholarship Update
Anne Boothe, Scholarship Committee Chair, will soon be announcing the MEDA Scholarship Schedule for 2018. Stay tuned!

MEDA BOARD AT WORK
MEDA Board Members testified during the Special Legislative Session. Thanks to Jason Rittal, Brian Obert, and Steve Arveschoug for supporting MEDA.

**Take the Membership Survey!**

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.

*Harnessing the Power of Data to Improve Your CEDS*

Accessing, interpreting, and incorporating the right data are some of the most important tasks in writing an effective and compelling CEDS. Join the NADO Research Foundation and the BlastPoint team on Wednesday, December 6 from 2 - 3 ET for a free webinar that will explore how big companies think about data and how you can adapt these approaches to improve your CEDS and policy development work - no technical training required!
Register for the Small Business Webinar – it is free!

Small Business Webinar Series

Developing your story: a foundation for funding

Thur. December 7, 11 a.m.

Your story is the foundation for your business and will be your pitch to generate funding. We will explore ways to effectively use your story to fund a new business idea (via crowdfunding, perhaps?), develop networks that may lead to business venture partnerships, and determine if funding is a good fit for your project. Numbers and anecdotes are key characters, but your story will drive your success.

Four experts provide a curriculum of small business development topics and people to ask typical questions or comments. This will follow-up with support for additional information. All webinars are FREE and open to the public at 12 a.m. The Webinar link will be recorded and archived.

- Join the webinar by accessing the recorded webinar and additional resources, go to: www.msucommunitydevelopment.org/smallbusiness.html
- For questions, email: prc@mtstate.edu

Webinar series sponsored by:

Small Business Development Centers (Montana Department of Commerce and U.S. Small Business Administration)

Additional support by:

SBA
MEDA
GF
GF

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

⇒ Check out the updated website from MSU Extension and their great list of grants! http://msucommunityresources.org/GrantOpportunities.html

⇒ IWT Update: Incumbent Worker Training Grant applications may be accepted once again on January 2nd. As before, IWT can only fund prospective training or in other words, that which is in the future. The new rules will require businesses to apply at least 20 days prior to the date training begins. Be sure to check the website for start-up date and details at http://iwt.mt.gov

⇒ USDA Community Development Grants

⇒ MEDA is a member of GrantStation. Email gloria if you would like the username and password.

⇒ Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) – Applications being accepted now.

January 24, 2018 for electronic applications; January 31, 2017 for paper applications

The objective of this grant program is to assist viable Independent Producers, Agricultural Producer Groups, Farmer and Rancher Cooperatives, and Majority-Controlled Producer-Based Businesses in starting or expanding value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of Value-Added Agricultural Products. Links to program information, including APPLICATION TOOLKITS and the Federal Register Notice are found at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants/mt

Economic Outlook Series Website

The Future of Higher Education in Montana

43rd Annual Economic Outlook Seminar

Higher education is a future-oriented business – educating and preparing the leaders of tomorrow. But what is the fate for colleges and universities themselves? In an economy that increasingly rewards knowledge and expertise, the need to adapt and grow a competitive, skilled, and education-oriented workforce has never been greater. The ‘Future of Higher Education in Montana’ Seminar examines the question of how Montana’s higher education system remains vital at all levels of education and work.

This keynote – the Future of Higher Education in Montana – will be presented by Robert Nyman, who was the Montana University System Board of Regents. He is president of Quailtree in Bozeman and was president of Lewis & Clark (2011). He serves on the EMPLOYER adversity board of the state of Montana. His selection for the role of speaker reflects the strong connection between Montana’s higher education system and the business community. that evidenced in the modern economic landscape, according to Nyman.

The 2018 Economic Outlook Seminar will highlight the latest economic trends for local, state, and national economies, including health care, real estate, housing, agriculture, manufacturing, travel products and services.

The Economic Outlook Seminar will be held across the state from January 25th – March 2nd 2018. The seminar begins all across the state at 11 a.m.

REGISTER NOW AT www.economicoutlookseminar.com

December 2017.doc