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MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR FEBRUARY 2015

IMPACT

Partnerships that Work
MEDA Montana Economic Developers Association



Legislators dropped by for lunch.



High tables were perfect for conversations.



Chris Wilhelm shares about IWTG.

MEDA Day in the Rotunda

MEDA, MT Dept. of Commerce, Governor's Office of Economic Development, MT Dept. of Agriculture, and MT Dept. of Labor pulled together and definitely made an impact during MEDA Rotunda Day, on January 14th. The theme was "IMPACT – Partnerships that Work" with the goal of demonstrating effectiveness, success, and funding needs of economic development organizations by telling the story of how they use key economic development programs to build Montana's economy. The luncheon was a great success with many display table visits and opportunities to network with Legislators; Copperline Pasties and Amy's Custom Cake Cookies were a hit. The luncheon was paid for by MEDA member donations in exchange for table space and/or slide show entries. The IMPACT slideshow featured economic development organizations, economic development programs used, and business success stories. View the IMPACT [SlideShow](#). Special thanks to the MEDA Rotunda Committee for their hard work: Rick Edwards, Julie Foster, Karyl Tobel, Billie Lee, Jason Rittal, Davey Madison, John Rogers, Andy Shirtliff, Doug Mitchell, and Sarah Converse.

64TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE – What you can do today!

The MEDA Legislative Committee requested that the MEDA Bills List appear once per week on the [MEDA Legislative tab](#) on the MEDA website. The membership is welcome to join the Wednesday; 7:00am calls, and learn of any action items regarding bills of interest to MEDA. For the first time, the Governor's Budget includes a 25% increase in the statutory economic development programs or \$275,000 increase per year in the biennium. The budget also includes a \$3.75 million increase in Board of Research and Commercialization funds. Watch your email inbox for Legislative Alerts throughout the session.

If you are in support of the budget increase for the "2019" Economic Development Programs, please contact the members of these committees: House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on General

Government, House Appropriations Committee, and the Senate Finance Committee. At some point, all legislators will need to be contacted prior to the vote. Helpful Links:

[Leadership Roster](#)

[House Committees](#)

[Senate Committees](#)

[Legislative Roster](#)

PARTNERS MEETING II

As part of MEDA's Rotunda Day activities, MEDA leadership met with representatives of MACo, MT League of Cities and Towns, and the Montana Chamber to discuss bills of common interest pending in the legislature. Visit the [MEDA Bills List](#) for more information.

TWO IN MONTANA MAKE TOP 50 ED LIST

Congratulations to Brett Doney, Great Falls Development Authority and Jeremy Vannatta, Big Sky Economic Development for making the [Top 50 Economic Developers in North America](#) list. The list is compiled by Consultant Connect's robust site selector community and voted on by peers.



UPDATE: MEDA SPRING CONFERENCE

Montana Economic Developers Conference & Leadership Development Event
Impact: Learning, Sharing & Partnering for High Performance

Brett Doney, Great Falls Development Authority, is serving as Conference Chair for MEDA's spring event. The training and conference will be held in Great Falls, May 4th – 6th, with an impressive agenda of several international economic development leaders, unique "Impact" panels, professional development training, and outstanding networking opportunities. In addition to Brett, the Spring Agenda Committee includes Jason Rittal, Karyl Tobel, Kellie Danielson, Steve Arveschoug, Tracy McIntyre, Rick Edwards, Kathie Bailey, Sarah Converse, and Paul Tuss. Be watching for more details available soon!

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR – MEDA DUES

MEDA dues invoices were recently mailed. Thanks in advance for your support! As of January 31, 2015, MEDA membership is at 203. To review all of the benefits of membership, [visit our webpage](#).

MEDA RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Malta/Phillips County Resource Team

The Malta/Phillips County Resource Team was prepared to be in Malta the night of January 7th for the priority and project setting Town Meeting. The weather, however, had different plans. The meeting has been rescheduled for Wednesday, March 4th. You can review the team's report here: [Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report](#) is completed and online. The Malta/Phillips County Team: Anne Boothe, Kathy McLane, Debra Demarais, Michael Dann, Cheryl Curry, Steve Zeier, and Warren Vaughan.



MONTANA BEAR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

2014 BEAR ANNUAL REPORT

The [Annual Report for Montana BEAR Team](#) activity is now available for 2014. Take a few moments and see what the 296 businesses visited by our BEAR Teams shared about doing business in Montana.

Great News: Those who have conducted IWT grants do **not** need to enter a follow-up survey into ExecutivePulse. MT Dept. of Labor is able to extract the data they need to learn if the grant impacted wages and/or resulted in business expansion.

Data Highlights for January

- There were 10 BEAR Retention Visits held in January.
- Counties with retention visits: Flathead – 3, Gallatin – 6, Park – 1.
- Action Items: Gallatin County had 17 Action Items in January; Flathead County recorded 3. These numbers reflect Action Items that were conducted for businesses across Montana, meaning a Bear Team member made a referral or conducted an activity to assist a business.

January Outreach Specialist Visits and Business Updates

The following BEAR Team members completed Business Retention Surveys and/or update reports for the businesses they have contacted.

Mike Jackson – 3	Meagan Lannan - 1
Warren Vaughan - 6	Chris Parson - 2

MEDA WORKING GROUPS



The **GOED/MEDA Web Presence Committee** met prior to Rotunda Day on January 13th. The meeting, facilitated by Andy Shirtliff, was very productive and helped identify areas of collaboration between MEDA and GOED websites. Committee members include: Rick Edwards, Tracy McIntyre, Martin DeWitt, John Rogers, Anne Boothe, Sarah Converse, Karyl

Tobel, Nancy Faroni, Jason Rittal, Chris Mehus, Jennifer Ewan, Brett Doney, Julie Foster, Davey Madison, and Gypsy Ray.

GRANTS AND FUNDING

- [Check these out! New Community Friendly Grants](#) *Extension Community Resources Program weblink*. Thanks to David Young, Professor, Community Resource Specialist Extension Service & College of Nursing, MSU, for providing this information.
- **GRANTSTATION:** [Click here to read the entire newsletter](#) or click on the section headings for specific grant opportunities and important announcements. Email [MEDA](#) for the username and password.
- The Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center, a non-profit, helps companies **fund improvement projects of their choice**. Eligible companies can receive up to **\$75,000** in matching grant funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to fund these projects. We quickly assess a company’s eligibility and we prepare, submit and track the

application, cost free! Visit our website and view company testimonials and success stories at www.nwtaac.org.

OPPORTUNITIES AND TOOLS FOR YOU

Interested in sharpening your professional skills as an economic and community development practitioner? Looking for new tools to place in your economic development tool box? Check these out.

- **Save the Date for the 2015 Washington Policy Conference: NADO on the Hill; Registration Opens Soon**
The 2015 NADO Washington Policy Conference: NADO on the Hill will be held **March 22 – 25** at the [Crystal City Gateway Marriott](#) in Arlington, VA. Registration will open in the coming weeks. This year's conference will feature a performance by the [Capitol Steps](#) on the evening of Monday, March 23. Attendees will spend the afternoon of Tuesday, March 24 on Capitol Hill for meetings with members of Congress and/or their key staff. This year's conference will offer many opportunities for attendees to hear about current federal policy issues and meet one-on-one with federal agency partners at the annual Federal Agency Networking Reception. If you have questions, please contact Susan Howard at showard@nado.org or Ted Stiger at tstiger@nado.org.
- **MEDA Scholarship Rounds Expanded!** The MEDA Scholarship Committee is pleased to invite members to check out the “new improved” timelines for scholarships in 2015. To encourage participation, funds will be made available on a quarterly basis and to insure activity, all awards must be used within a 6 month timeframe. Add these dates to your calendar and [apply now for round one!](#)
 - o Q1 2015 – deadline to submit 2.19.2015 – award notice by March 1st (award timeframe 3.1.2015 to 09.1.2015)