

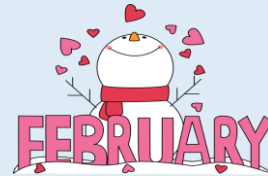


ONLINE NEWS



- Jan 2: [2017 Legislative Session Begins](#)
- Jan 2-3: [Business Days at the Capitol](#)
- Jan 4: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- Jan 11: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- Jan 12: Resource Team Working Group 9am
- Jan 17: Legislative 101 Capitol, 9:15 – 10am
- Jan 17: MEDA Rotunda Day! 10 – 1:30
- Jan 17th MEDA Partnership Meeting 2pm
- Jan 18: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- Jan 25: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- Jan 25: MDOC/MEDA Opportunity Call 10:30am

[Outlook Seminars Jan - March](#)



- Feb 1: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- Feb 7 – 9: [DBE Summit](#)
- Feb 8: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- Feb 9: Resource Team Working Group 9am
- Feb 15: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- Feb 21: MEDA RLF Working Group 10am
- Feb 22: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- Feb 22: MDOC/MEDA Opportunity Call 10:30am
- Feb 27 – Mar 1: [MT Cooperative Summit](#)

[Outlook Seminars Jan - March](#)

MEDA ROTUNDA DAY

Join us in the Montana State Capitol Rotunda, on January 17th, 10:00am, as we showcase to Legislators the impact of key economic development programs, share an interactive project map, and play a slideshow of success stories. Please contact [Gloria](#) if you are interested in sponsoring the lunch and/or obtaining ½ table for a display. Space is still available but the deadline is January 10th. [Registration](#)



If you plan to arrive in Helena the night of January 16th, join us downstairs at the Brew House, 5:30pm, for a no host social. John Rogers has been especially invited as many of us were not able to attend his send-off reception in December.

MEDA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



Another one of the so called “Dirty Dozen” responsible for the creation of MEDA, in 1993, is retiring. Evan Barrett, a former business development officer for the state under Governor Schweitzer, eighteen year Executive Director for Butte Local Development, and most recently a professor and outreach coordinator for Highlands College announced his retirement. To enjoy some of Evan’s work while at Highlands College click this [link](#).

We have two new MEDA members: Jene Matzkanin, Headwaters RC&D, and TeAra Bilbruck, Two Rivers Economic Growth. Welcome!

OPPORTUNITY CALL –

Next one is January 25th, 10:30am

Thanks to our partners at Montana Dept. of Commerce, MEDA Members have a great opportunity to learn of program updates and dig deeper into featured programs during each call. We took a break in December, but back at it in January. [Meeting notes](#).



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 meeting is set for February 21st at 10:00am. [notes](#)
- **MEDA Resource Team Assessment Working Group** – This working group will meet again on January 12th, at 9am to continue to fine-tune Montana’s Resource Team process. Learn more about MEDA’s assessments [here](#).

MEDA RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENTS

- Fort Benton – A great resource team assessment was held in Fort Benton December 7th and 8th. Team members included: Anne Boothe, Alyssa Townsend, Brian Obert, Craig Carlson, and Cheryl Ulmer. Bear Paw Development Corporation and Triangle Communications are working with local leadership to ensure long term outcomes.



Fort Benton Team
Standing L to R: Brian Obert, Alyssa Townsend, Gloria O’Rourke, Anne Boothe; Seated L to R: Lea McGiboney, Cheryl Ulmer, and Craig Carlson.

- Pending: Philipsburg and Poplar are making plans for a resource team visit. More information will be available soon.
- While full details cannot yet be announced, a successful grant application will be awarded for Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana to work together to dig deep into the resource team assessment process, discover best practices, and implement all that was learned. Stay tuned!

MEDA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Anne Boothe, MEDA Scholarship Chair, announced three winners for the 4th Quarter round: Adam Benson, Headwaters RC&D \$500; Jolene Schalper, Great Falls Development Authority, \$500; and Barbie Durham, Butte Local Development, \$500. Adam is receiving training from Herb Kulow, Jolene is working toward IEDC Certification, and Barbie attended a Brownsfield Workshop. Congratulations to all!

MEDA COMMITTEE UPDATES

- MEDA Scholarship and Professional Development Committee** – This committee met in December to consider a host of options for MEDA Members and professional development training opportunities. To fine-tune the list, a survey was compiled. Here is how the majority of 29 members responded:
 1. Prefer to hold a Professional Development Training prior to each MEDA conference for ½ day and hold at least two webinars on various topics throughout the year.
 2. Participate if NDC EDFP training was brought to Montana
 3. Participate in a Montana-made training for those working in the field of Economic Development that would supplement Ellensburg and/or IEDC training. Note: training may be via webinar.
 4. Would find it helpful and use materials designed to educate elected officials and other leadership on the purpose, practice, and function of economic development.
- MEDA Legislative Committee** –Rick Edwards, Chair, has been leading this committee to prepare for the 2017 Legislative Session. All MEDA members are encouraged to reach out to their area legislators and inform them of the value of Montana’s key economic development tools and programs. Everyone is welcome to join the weekly 7am calls on Wednesday morning. [Resources](#)

On December 12th, a call was held with MEDA key partners (MACo, MT Chamber, MLCT, MIC) to learn of agenda items and issues pending in the Legislative Session.



Highlights for December 2016

OUTREACH VISITS

Twenty-five outreach visits were recorded into the BEAR database in December: Gallatin County – 14, Ravalli County – 1, Flathead County – 10.

Outreach specialists included: Warren Vaughan (14), Michelle Twist (1), Chany Ockert (1), Morah McCarthy (9), and Krista Lammers (1). Thank you for your hard work!

BEAR TRAINING UPDATE

Bozeman Job Service hosted a training on the BEAR process on December 2nd. The philosophy of business expansion and retention was reviewed as well as the various BEAR team structures across the state. Warren Vaughan provided an update on his activities and welcomed Bozeman Job Service to attend BEAR team meetings.

IWT UPDATE

State Fiscal Year	Current Level Funding	Total Amount Granted	Percent Granted	Applications Approved	Workers Trained
SFY17* In first 4 months	\$541,496	\$301,140	56%	116	260

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.

- **NATIONAL COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS TEAM**
Documenting Community Outcomes with Surveys: A how-to on designing questions and collecting data. February 6th at 1:00pm CT/2:00pm ET. This webinar will focus on designing clear and concise survey questions and a discussion of best practices to follow when fielding your survey. To join the session: https://msues.adobeconnect.com/_a828402417/srdc/
- **Census Bureau Releases ACS Comparisons Profile Tables**
Last week, the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) released findings from the five-year American Community Survey (ACS). Along with considerable focus on statistics in rural areas, the ACS statistics also include "Comparison Profile" tables. The data compares five-year ACS statistics from 2011 – 2015 to the previous five-year period of 2006 – 2010. To access the tables, click [here](#).
- **Farm Business Planning Workshops Across Montana**
MSU Extension is partnering with the Community Food & Agriculture Coalition to offer a series of workshops from January to March 2017 designed to help. *Planning for On-Farm Success* is a seven-part series that teaches the skills needed to launch a farm business in Montana. Workshops will be offered Wednesdays from 5:30-8:30 pm in Missoula, Bozeman, Butte, Joliet, Columbus, Corvallis and Conrad. Full registration is \$75 or \$15 each for individual workshops with light refreshments included. Full registration includes a copy of the *Planning for On-Farm Success* workbook. For more information and links to register in your community, visit [Farm Link Montana](#) or contact dave@farmlinkmontana.org

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

- 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 **Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology** is accepting proposals for funding. Proposals are due March 1, 2017. The Request for Proposals can be found on the MBRCT website at <http://businessresources.mt.gov/Portals/94/shared/MBRCT/docs/RequestforProposal.pdf>. If you have any questions regarding the RFP, please contact Dave Desch, Executive Director [\(406\) 841-2760](tel:4068412760).
- The **Montana Department of Agriculture** is now accepting applications for an estimated \$1.3 million in federal funding available through the Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) program. This competitive grant program is designed to expand markets for Montana specialty crops. Eligible projects include education, marketing, improving distribution systems, development of good agricultural practices, pest and disease control, variety development, and improving production practices. Technical assistance calls will be held on February 1 and 15, 2017. For more information, visit <http://agr.mt.gov/SpecialtyCropBlockGrants>.