



MEDA
MONTANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION

Online News 2021

JAN

Jan 4: [Montana Legislative Session Opens](#)
 Jan 8: MEDA Value Added Ag 1:30pm
 Jan 11: MEDA Broadband Committee 2pm
 Jan 14 – 15: [IEDC Tech Led Economic Dev](#)
 Jan 19: SBA [Ready Set Go](#) series begins, 10am
 Jan 22: Ignite 2021 10am [Register](#)
 Jan 25: MEDA Broadband Committee 2pm
 Jan 29: Peer-2-Peer Network 10:30am

FEB

Feb 1: Deadline [FWP Recreation Grant Program](#)
 Feb 1 – 2: [Virtual Economic Outlook Seminar](#)
 Feb 9: MEDA Broadband Committee 2pm
 Feb 17: [Mansfield Lecture with Dr. Fauci](#)
 Feb 23: MEDA Broadband Committee 2pm

Happy 2021!

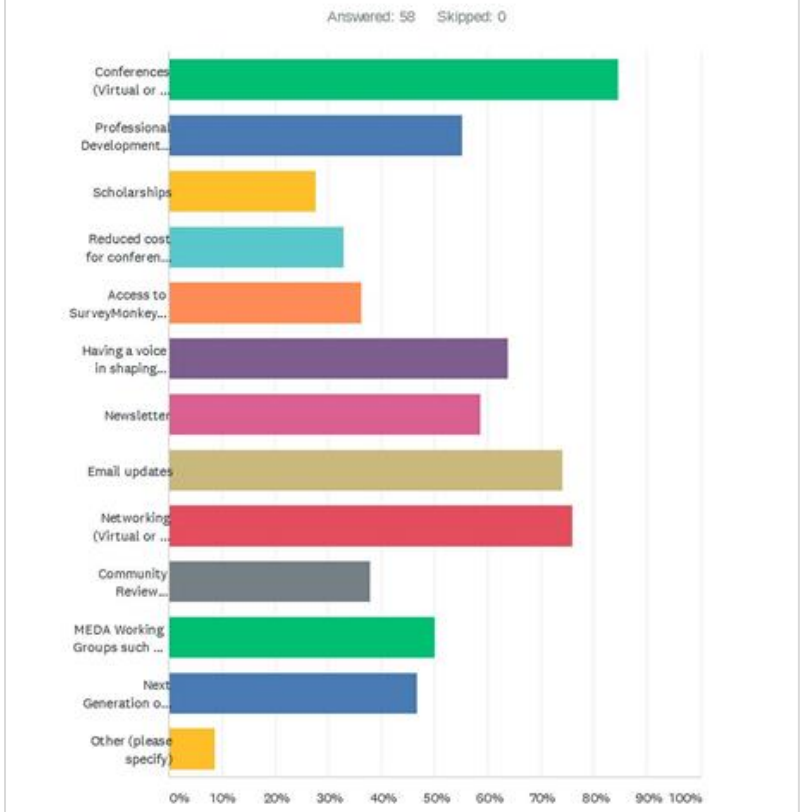
IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU

It is very appropriate to start the first story of the first newsletter of 2021 with a focus on *you*, our MEDA Members. MEDA began in 1993 with eleven members and today stands at 253.

A recent survey indicated MEDA's greatest strength is in its network which includes the value of our conferences, whether virtual or in person. With the support and participation of each individual MEDA member, there is no doubt our network will only grow stronger in 2021.

MEDA invoices for dues will be mailed within the next two weeks. Thank you for your support which is ever more important for MEDA's sustainability.

Q2 Which of the benefits of MEDA Membership have value to you?
Please select all that apply.



MEDA MEMBER NEWS

- ★ Jim Thaden, Executive Director of Lake County Community Development Corporation, announced two additions to the LCCDC staff. Welcome to MEDA.

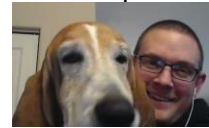


Brenna Fulks is the new Community Development Director, 406.676.5906, brenna.fulks@lakecountycdc.org



Leonard Malin is the new Director of Business Development, 406.676.5913, leonard.malin@glakecountycdc.org

- ★ Paul Reichert, Executive Director, Prospera Business Network, shared an amazing format and news in the Prospera 2020 Annual Report. [Check it out!](#)
- ★ Paddy Fleming, Montana Manufacturing Extension Center, shared [MMEC's 2020 Annual Report](#). The report indicates an ever increasing demand for manufacturing support and activity.
- ★ Julie Foster, Ravalli County Economic Development, was in the news for her work with the completion of a major land acquisition in Hamilton. [Tonix Pharmaceuticals](#) made the purchase to construct a vaccine production and manufacturing facility.
- ★ Eric Seidensticker checked in with MEDA about a Community Review. Itchy was able to join the call as well.
- ★ Kim Morisaki is the new Director of the Northwest Montana Community Land Trust. You can reach her at 406.261.8831 or kmorisaki@nwmmt.org
- ★ Jim Atchison, Executive Director, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation, was a guest on Voices of Montana the last week of December. Thanks for highlighting the Montana Next Generation of Community and Economic Development Tools Report. [Part 1](#) [Part 2](#)
- ★ Ashley Kent is leaving Montana State University Extension, Local Government Center, to begin work with Bozeman Health. Ashley was part of the Montana Design Team for MEDA Community Reviews.



Itchy and Eric

MEDA SCHOLARSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE! SPECIAL NDC OFFER

MEDA Rick Jones Memorial Scholarships are now available. 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>



MT ACCESS PROJECT FEATURED MEDA AND CHOTEAU

Path Ahead Webinar Series from Montana Access Project featured the MEDA Community Review Process and the successful outcomes that took place in Choteau. If you have been thinking of holding a MEDA Community Review for your community, you will learn how the process works and engages a community for action.

[Webinar Recording](#)



Pillars of the Plan: Key focus areas for Choteau

- Infrastructure
 - Prepare for MDT corridor study and Highway/Main Avenue reconstruction.
 - Tree Maintenance and Sidewalk Plan data gathering.
 - Voluntary neighborhood cleanup.
- Business Development
 - Telecommuting Business/Recruitment Strategy
 - Maintain and sustain existing businesses.
 - Foster entrepreneurs and start-ups
- Community Enhancement
 - Library Revitalization
 - Main Street and Greater Main Street Project
 - Internal Community Branding



AND OF COURSE.....



If your community is interested in a MEDA Community Review contact gloria@medamembers.org.

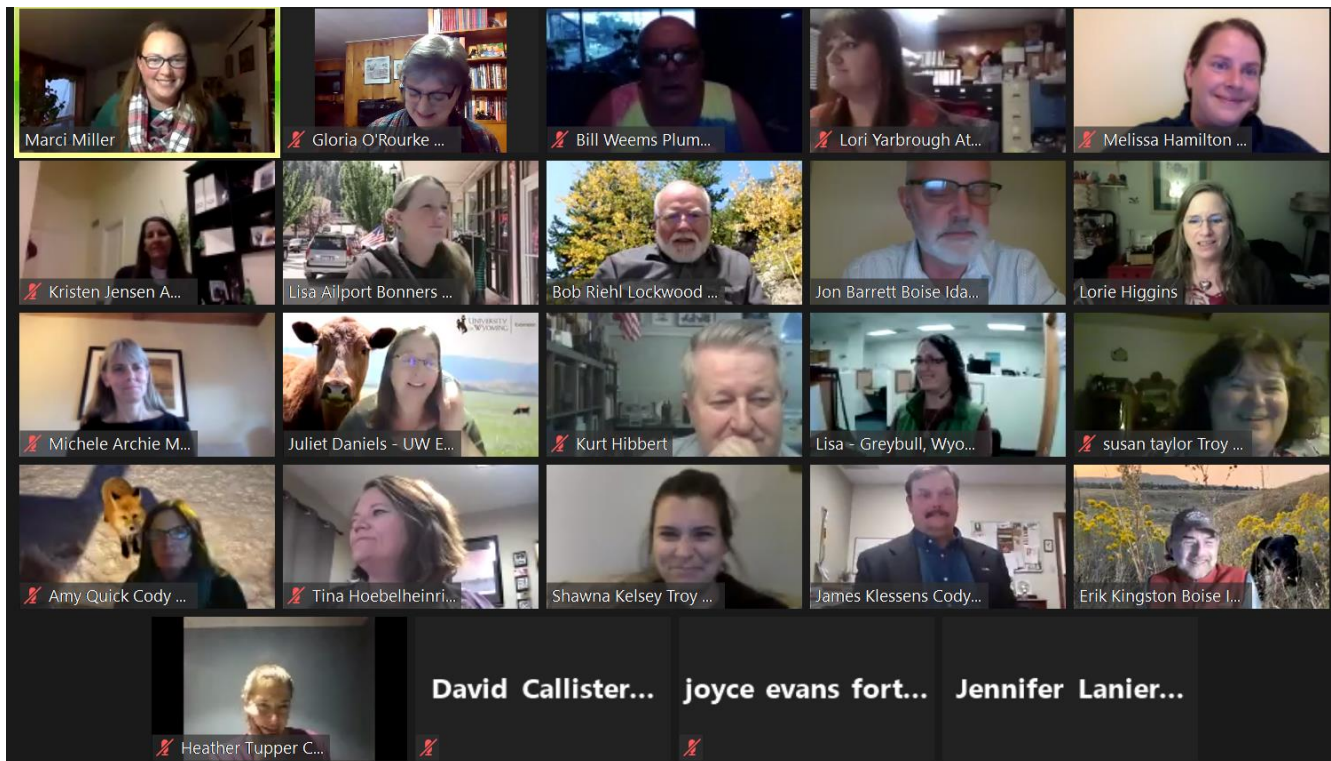
MEDA WORKING GROUPS and COMMITTEES

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

- **MEDA Value Added Ag Working Group** – Resource Media Group is holding a special meeting with this working group on January 8th. Follow this group's progress on the [webpage](#). Paddy Fleming serves as Chair.
- **MEDA Community Review Working Group** - This [working group](#) is all about assisting with MEDA's Community Review process and switching to a virtual format. As the next three year grant was awarded, there will be much to accomplish in the near future.
- **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. Much excitement was generated during a recent meeting for Utah's [Rural Online Initiative](#). Several MEDA Members have signed up for the course. Anne Boothe serves as Chair. [Notes](#)
- **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.
- **MEDA Broadband Committee** was formed as a result of the NextGen report. Strategies are in the works to improve Montana's broadband access; meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month, at 2pm. [Webpage](#) Tracy McIntyre is serving as Chair. [Broadband Priorities](#)
- **MEDA Workforce Committee** was formed as a result of the NextGen report. The first meeting was held December 9th with a second held on December 18th. Mary Craige and Nicole Rush are Co-Chairs. [Webpage](#)

- **Legislative Committee** –This committee completed Policy Statements and Legislative Priorities for the MEDA Board to approve. Rick Edwards, Chair, has begun weekly Legislative Committee meetings at 7:00am each Wednesday. If you would like to join in the conversations, contact [Gloria](#). [MEDA Policy Statement](#) [MEDA State Policy Priorities](#)
- **MEDA RLF Working Group** – This group met on December 17th and learned from Tyler Delaney about insurance needs for those working with Revolving Loan Funds. [Notes](#)
- **MEDA Scholarship Committee** –as mentioned in the story above, MEDA Scholarship opportunities are now available.

MEDA WeCAN PEER-2-PEER NETWORK – first meeting held



Over two dozen community leaders in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho joined the Peer-2-Peer Network zoom call in December. The purpose of the network is to share how things are getting done in those communities that have held a [Community Review](#). While most on the call had never met others, there was an instant bond in sharing information to move communities forward. The next call is set for January 29th.

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.

- ⇒ **Lorraine Roach**, Hingston Roach Group, shared [Community Leadership in Action](#), a guide put out by Vermont Council on Rural Development.
- ⇒ **Golden Shovel** is offering a free toolkit titled: [COVID-19 Media Toolkit: How to Prepare to Reopen your Community](#).
- ⇒ **Heather McCartney-Duty**, Family Connections MT, shared the report titled [Childcare: An Essential Industry for Economic Recovery](#).
- ⇒ **USDA Seeking Applications for Funding to Establish Revolving Loans for Rural Economic Development** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development is accepting applications to establish revolving loan programs to support rural businesses and community development projects. The revolving loan funds may issue loans for the purchase, construction, or expansion of a rural business; purchase or development of land; purchase of equipment, machinery, or supplies; or for start-up costs and working capital. The loans will be established through USDA's [Intermediary Relending Program](#) and are subject to the availability of funds. Nonprofits, cooperatives, federally-recognized tribes, and public agencies are eligible to apply. This funding is awarded on a competitive basis. The deadlines for completed applications to be received in the USDA Rural Development State Office for quarterly funding competitions is no later than 4:30 p.m. (local time) on the following dates:
 - Third Quarter: March 31, 2021 Additional information is available [here](#).
- ⇒ [Leading in a Time of Crisis](#) – Be inspired by these short videos from IEDC
- ⇒ Current, updated link to **FWP grant programs**: <https://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/grant-programs>
- ⇒ **Creative Placemaking: Creating Communities We Love Through Arts & Culture, Diverse Partners and Community Spaces**



FEB. 23-MAR. 9, 2021. THREE 2-HOUR VIDEO CONFERENCE SESSIONS + MAR. 16 Q&A WITH CREATIVE PLACEMAKING PRACTITIONERS + OPTIONAL ONE-ON-ONE COACHING

Learn more and register [here](#).

GRANT RESOURCES

- ⇒ MEDA is a member of [GrantStation](#). Email [gloria](#) if you would like the username and password.
- ⇒ Check out this [grant source](#) from the University of Montana.
- ⇒ **MSU Extension** has a great list of grants!
<http://msucommunityresources.org/GrantOpportunities.html>
- ⇒ **Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks will begin accepting grant applications for four recreation grant programs. Applications are due February 1st.** : <https://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/grant-programs>

FWP is offering virtual training sessions for prospective applicants on Thursday, January 7, 2021: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

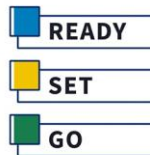


A great partner: SBA “Ready Set Go” in the Spotlight

Montana Department of Commerce has a strong partnership with SBA and provides for Montana’s Small Business Development Centers.

The SBA Montana District Office is the only SBA office in Montana and serves all 56 counties. Montana is the fourth largest state covering approximately 147,046 square miles. Greatest distance from east to west boundary: approximately 550 miles, greatest distance from north to south boundary: approximately 320 miles in western Montana and approximately 280 miles in eastern Montana. Thousands of miles are traveled each year providing financial and business assistance to the small business constituency of Montana.

Montana has 30,641 small businesses with employees covered under the Worker's Compensation System. There are another estimated 120,173 self employed workers. Over 99% of businesses in the state are classified as "small" and 89.65% of all employment in the state is in small business. Small businesses are very important to Montana's economy. Recent covered employment data shows that about 41 percent of the state's wage and salary jobs are with firms employing fewer than 20 people—and about 75 percent are with businesses employing fewer than 100 people. Only 20 businesses are classified as "large" by SBA standards.



Andy Shirtliff, Outreach and Marketing Specialist, recently announced a new series of workshops titled, “Ready Set Go.”

In this workshop you will learn what it takes to have a successful startup:

- Gain a basic understanding of the key steps to getting your business off the ground.
- Learn about various financing options and what banks look for when lending money.
- Learn about the local resources available to assist you in starting and growing a small business.

Multiple events will take place from Tuesday, January 19th through June 15th. [Registration and more info](#)

MT SBA Contacts:

District Director - Montana Brent Donnelly 406-441-1083 Brent.Donnelly@sba.gov
Senior Area Manager – Billings Martin DeWitt 406-459-5347 Martin.DeWitt@sba.gov
Lead Lender Relations Specialist Lorena Carlson 406-202-3401 Lorena.Carlson@sba.gov
Lender Relations Specialist Tom White 406-202-1611 Thomas.White@sba.gov
Business Opportunity Specialist Kelly Dixon 406-441-1085 Kelly.Dixon@sba.gov
Outreach & Marketing Specialist Andy Shirtliff 406-441-1088 Andy.Shirtliff@sba.gov

THANKS TO OUR MEDA MEMBERSHIP SPONSORS

Gold	Silver	Bronze
 <p>NorthWestern[®] Energy <i>Delivering a Bright Future</i></p>	 <p>NewFields Perspective. Vision. Solutions.</p>  <p>MYAP</p> <p>Montana Youth Apprenticeship Partnership</p>	 <p>MONTANA MDT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Small Business Enterprise Program</p>  <p>KLJ ENGINEERING, REIMAGINED</p>  <p>Lake County Community Development Corporation LCCDC <i>Creating Communities. Growing Economies.</i></p>  <p>Cushing Terrell.</p>  <p>MONTANA Cooperative DEVELOPMENT CENTER</p>

January 2021