



ONLINE NEWS FOR JULY 2015

SUMMARY OF MEDA PLANNING RETREAT

The MEDA Board met for a day and a half planning meeting on June 18th and 19th to revisit MEDA's Strategic Plan and to discuss new directions and focus for MEDA:

1. Restructure MEDA's Role, Relevancy and Identity
2. Clarify and Strengthen MEDA's Working Relationship with Montana Dept. of Commerce and other Government/State Departments
3. Improve Membership Relations and Services
4. Identify and Strengthen Organizational Partnerships

The next step is for board members to identify specific issues under each of these topics and invite MEDA members to participate in creating and achieving new goals. Draft Board Meeting Minutes and Draft Board Retreat Minutes are available.



The Lt. Governor, Angela McLean, dropped by the MEDA Board Strategic Planning meeting for a surprise visit.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MEDA BOARDMEETING

Scholarship Committee and Professional Development Committee

The Scholarship Committee and Professional Development Committee will combine to improve strategies as well as scholarship opportunities for MEDA's membership. Anne Boothe and Kellie Danielson will work together as Co-Chairs.

MEDA Annual Awards

Kathie Bailey, Chair, said three award categories are being considered by the committee: Innovation, Partnership, and Champion. Applications will be due early in September with the criteria out by August 1st. The criteria process will involve an Award Selection Committee; the committee would welcome assistance.

Social Media and Listserv Policy Committee; Web Presence Committee

These committees will come together under the marketing efforts with the Improve Membership Relations and Services focus group.

Membership Committee

Roger Hopkins will be the new Chair for this committee serving along with Chris Cerquone and Luke Walawander.

MEDA MEMBERSHIP NEWS

MEDA's membership now stands at 240. To review all of the benefits of membership, [visit our webpage](#). New to the MEDA board: Paul Reichert, Executive Director, Prospera. Welcome, Paul!

MEDA SCHOLARSHIP: Third Quarter Round

The MEDA Scholarship Committee is now accepting applications for the Third Quarter Round. There are many conferences and trainings pending this fall; be sure to apply for a scholarship. Applications are due August 17th. [Scholarship Info](#)

MEDA FALL CONFERENCE – UPDATE

Melanie Schwarz, Big Sky Economic Development Authority, is serving as the Fall Conference Chair with Big Sky EDA hosting. The committee has met twice and continues to make plans for an outstanding conference. Save the date for October 13 – 15th. On the agenda thus far is a pre-conference session with MT Dept. of Commerce to learn of changes within the department and programs. The President of CHS will be the keynote on October 13th at lunch. A MEDA Infrastructure Town Hall Meeting – Call to Action will be held from 2:00pm – 5:00pm that afternoon. A wide span of partners will be invited to participate and compile solutions to funding Montana's infrastructure needs.

KETTERING FOUNDATION AND RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENTS

The Kettering Foundation is a unique foundation that focuses on research and learning centers, with an emphasis on citizen engagement. A group of experienced Wyoming and Montana Resource Team Assessment participants (both team members and community leaders) along with people new to the assessment process met with two representatives of the Kettering Foundation on June 23rd. The purpose of the meeting was to learn about the foundation and determine if improving the Resource Team Assessment process would be a good fit for a project under the Kettering mission. Great ideas were exchanged; within the coming weeks next steps will be decided. [Resource Team Info](#)



Data Highlights for May

BEAR REVISITED

Due to a conversation initiated by John Rogers, Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), the MEDA Board revisited the Statewide BEAR Program and the current process of storing information for BEAR Teams. It was noted that the hundreds of participants in the Main Street Montana Project emphasized the need to reduce barriers between agencies and programs, and to share information, removing possible duplication of services. The re-visit of the BEAR Team process will encourage the sharing of information when possible. The MEDA BEAR Working Group is assisting with revisions to the program.

★ NEW BEAR SURVEY FORM AND DATA COLLECTION

There is a new streamlined process for entering your BEAR Team Survey. [New MT BEAR Survey](#) This will be the data input process Bear Teams use beginning July 1st. There is also a [link for the survey in Word format](#) for easy note taking as it matches the form. You can also enter the information directly into the survey.

BEAR WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

The MEDA BEAR Working Group has been re-ignited. Minutes from the [meeting are available online](#).

IMPORTANT IWT UPDATE

Chris Wilhelm, MDLI/IWT Director held three webinars to update everyone on several important changes with the Incumbent Worker Training Grant program. If you need an update: [View her powerpoint here for a refresher.](#)

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.

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.

- ⇒ **Small business summit** to be held in Bozeman Aug. 17-18; Summary: A conference for entrepreneurs, researchers and small high-tech companies interested in government funding for technology development will be held in Bozeman Aug. 17-18. This conference includes the only Montana stop on the national Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Road Tour and features speakers with expertise in small business funding. June 29, 2015 Contact: Michael Sullivan, [406-841-2734](tel:406-841-2734), MSullivan2@mt.gov
- ⇒ **Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Roundtable - A Conversation with America's Small Business Ombudsman** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 – 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. MDT | Bozeman, MT. Concerned about a level regulatory playing field for your small business? Join other Montana small business owners for this unique opportunity to share your concerns directly with the National Ombudsman for Small Business, Brian Castro. Learn how the Office of the National Ombudsman can help your small businesses save time and money in resolving difficult regulatory compliance and enforcement issues. Learn more about resources and assistance through the Small Business Administration (SBA). RSVP: To register for this event, visit <http://events.montanachamber.com/?ee=117> by July 15th.
- ⇒ On June 5th, 2015, the SBA released a combined synopsis/solicitation on FedBizOpps.gov for regional innovation cluster initiative services. The **SBA intends to award a total of up to three contracts for entities to head regional innovation cluster initiatives.** This combined synopsis/solicitation is partially set-aside for award to one qualified small business. The remaining two awards are being competed full and open. https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=bcbfb49702a2e0e50ad70ab3e6a64184&tab=core&_cview=0
- ⇒ For anyone planning on attending the National Brownfields Conference in Chicago...At this year's National Brownfields Training Conference, there will be several opportunities for attendees to take advantage of pre-conference training events. These trainings will take place on Tuesday, September 1, prior to the Regional Open Houses. http://www.brownfieldsconference.org/en/education/affiliate_trainings_and_workshops