MEDA NEWS FOR JUNE 2014

Outgoing President Tracy McIntyre welcomed everyone to the 2014 MEDA Spring Conference.

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MEDA SPRING CONFERENCE
Attendees are still talking about the MEDA Spring Conference, held in Havre, May 6th – 7th, hosted by Bear Paw Development. Pictures do speak louder than words and MEDA was favored throughout the conference with the MSU photographer, Jim Potter. Check out the photos and the presentation files and revisit a fabulous conference. Here are some comments from the evaluation feedback:

- Waded Cruzado is fabulous. She “gets it” and has a way to bring people together for a common goal and leverages Higher Education to promote business and economic growth in MT.
- Building Main Street from the Private Sector Viewpoint was inspirational and reminded us why we do this every day. It was great to hear the impact we are making.
- I am new. I found all sessions of great value. I developed many contacts and new friends.

Many thanks to the hard working MEDA Agenda Committee: Paul Tuss, Chair; Michelle Burchard, Jason Rittal, Karyl Tobel, Tracy McIntyre, Jim Davison and Kellie Danielson.

MEDA MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE
This is a very hard working MEDA committee. The group is charged with reviewing current MEDA membership benefits, making suggestions on improving, changing, and/or adding benefits, listserv information, conference fees, recommending by-laws changes as well as promoting MEDA and recruiting new members. During the MEDA conference, Jim Smitham, Chair, asked members to submit names of
colleagues that would be a good fit to join the MEDA Team. The MEDA Membership Committee and the MEDA Board also reviewed a list of dropped members since 2010. Jim Smitham compiled letters and sent them to invite new people to join MEDA and a different letter to encourage dropped members to rejoin. The next meeting is scheduled for June 25th at 10:00am. All MEDA Members are welcome to participate. Currently on the committee: Jim Smitham (Chair), Alyssa Townsend-Hudders, Roger Hopkins, Tracy McIntyre, Marie Mahugh, Julie Foster, Jim Smitham, Stuart Leidner and Martin DeWitt.

MEDA WORKING GROUPS

MEDA CRDC/EDD Working Group – The CRDC/EDD Working Group is planning a meeting sometime in August, in Bozeman, to focus on the unique issues regional economic development organizations deal with on a daily basis. In case you missed it, here are the notes from a conference call with Jodi Duncan, EDA, that was held with the CRDCs/EDDs on April 30th. http://www.medamembers.org/groups/crdcedd/

MEDA Transportation Working Group – As a result of a meeting held in February, action items have been completed and resources are posted on the Transportation Working Group site here. Kathie Bailey, Chair, has set the next meeting for Thursday, August 14, 2014 10:00am - 11:30am; 2nd Floor Commission Room, MT Dept. of Transportation, Helena.

MEDA Brownfields Working Group – As Chair, Katharine Thompson, City of Kalispell, held a meeting on May 13th for this working group. Minutes are available at http://www.medamembers.org/groups/brownfields-environmental/ Another conference call is scheduled for September 9th at 10:00am. An additional call is tentatively set for June 24th for Chris Cerquone to share suggested policy changes for Brownfields. All are welcome to participate.

MEDA ECONOMIC GATEWAY/WEB PORTAL PROJECT UPDATE
MEDA conference attendees received a sneak peek of the framework for the online Montana Economic Gateway by John Marshall, Golden Shovel Agency. The feasibility study is now complete and the combined Web Portal Committees (one is board based and one is membership based) will meet June 3rd to review the study as well as the proposal for the Montana Economic Gateway. The group will meet in the CTA Missoula Conference Room; webinar information is available. The Web Portal Working Group (combined committees): Luke Walawander, Chair, Chris Mehus, Rick Edwards, Brigitta Freer, Jim Davison, Tracy McIntyre, Martin DeWitt, John Rogers, Dan Lloyd, John Rogers, Davey Madison, Anne Boothe, Sarah Converse, Karyl Tobel, Jason Rittal, and Nancy Faroni.

2014 MEDA BEAR ROUNDPUP
The 2014 MEDA BEAR Roundup took place immediately following lunch on May 7th as part of the MEDA Spring Conference. It is always hard to have great participation and energy at the end of a conference but about 20 people stayed to discuss all things BEAR. A roundtable was held with MT Dept. of Commerce program officials so that BEAR Teams could learn about programs that could assist BEAR clients. SBA representatives shared program updates as well. In addition, Chris Wilhelm, MDLI/IWT Program Manager, shared key aspects of working with the program. The BEAR website for the working group is: http://www.medamembers.org/groups/bear/

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.

- Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the Department is accepting applications for loans and grants to support community development projects, business expansion and job creation. View Full Story
• 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.

• USDA Announces Funding for Advanced Communications Technology in Rural Areas: Details are on page 29405 Federal Register and page 29399 of the Federal Register.

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.

• Free webinar for ED Pro’s from Purdue

• Brownfields Tools for Redevelopment and Economic Growth, June 19th, Miles City. To register, go to the workshop webpage at https://www.ksutab.org/education/

• Governor Bullock Looking for Industry Leaders for Main Street Montana Project Key Industry Networks

• Northwest Community Development Institute: Who Should Attend? Organizations, community officials and volunteers associated with city, county and state government, chambers of commerce, private and public sector economic development organizations, utility companies, and financial institutions will find the institute a valuable learning tool for the development of individual and community leadership skills. www.NWCDI.com

What the Numbers Say...
Census and Economic Information Center
Montana Department of Commerce

Welcome to Census & Economic Information Center

The Census and Economic Information Center provides current, easily accessible and thorough economic and demographic analysis, maps, data, and expert assistance to meet the needs and requests of Montanans.

Got a minute? Explore the CEIC webpage!
BEAR stands for Business Expansion and Retention and is the statewide program for keeping and growing Montana’s businesses. See Monthly Report

BEAR EXPANSION PILOT PROGRAM - Butte: Butte Local Development, NorthWestern Energy, and Montana Tech teamed up to take the BEAR process to the next level. Four businesses went through the Southwest Montana BEAR Team assessment and were selected to benefit from business student interns provided by Montana Tech. NorthWestern Energy provided a “scholarship” for the interns. A meeting was held on May 13th, at Montana Tech, for the students to give final presentations on what they had accomplished while working with each business. Feedback from both business owners and interns indicated great impact and success. Jim Smitham carefully documented the entire project and is encouraging partners to make this a statewide project. It was felt this project would be a perfect fit in addressing several issues outlined in the Montana Business Plan. Photo L to R: Dale Mahugh, Rick Edwards, Jim Smitham, Kristie McPherson, Erica Good, Traci O’Neill, Julia Bryant and Julie Jaksha.

EXECUTIVE PULSE DATA HIGHLIGHTS FOR MAY

- There were 11 Retention Visits held in May.
- Action Items Created: Nine with Outreach Specialists leading the way in Gallatin County with eight, Flathead County with two and Granite County with one. Eight action items were closed: seven by Gallatin County and one by Granite County.
- Counties with retention visits: Flathead – 2, Gallatin – 3, Missoula – 1, Granite - 1, Park – 1, Stillwater – 2, and Yellowstone County – 1.

May Outreach Specialist Visits

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chad Moore – 1</th>
<th>Dena Johnson – 1</th>
<th>Dale Mahugh - 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gloria O’Rourke – 1</td>
<td>Mike O’Rourke – 1</td>
<td>Marko Lucich - 1</td>
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<td>Joel Bertolino – 1</td>
<td>Marissa Hauge – 2</td>
<td>Kendall Hartman - 1</td>
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<td>Mike Jackson – 2</td>
<td>Patty Cox – 1</td>
<td>Vida Wilkinson – 1</td>
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<td>Warren Vaughan – 4</td>
<td>Emily Shellabarger – 1</td>
<td>Kathy Wojcik - 1</td>
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NEW MEDA MEMBERS

MEDA gained five new members in May: Brit Fontenot and David Fine, City of Bozeman Economic Development; Mark Peterson, County Commissioner, Hill County; Kev Campbell, Triangle Communications; and Mallory Riphenburg, Development Director, Toole County. MEDA’s membership is now at 201.