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It is MEDA's privilege to submit this report for the current contract to Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor and Industry and Montana BEAR Team participants regarding Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program activity in the state. The following is a summary of MEDA BEAR activities as provided for in the Scope of Work under Amended Contract MT-MEDA-ED-17-01 for the month of December 2016.

ACTIVITY REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2016

MONTANA BEAR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

2016 ENDED WITH 25 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 LEGISLATION IN THE HOPPER

Of interest to BEAR teams will be [HB88](#) which if passed will remove the need for a business to be reviewed by BEAR, SBDC or MMEC prior to applying for an IWT grant. Check out the other changes as well.

IWT UPDATE – info provided by Chris Wilhelm, MDLI.

State Fiscal Year	Current Level Funding	Total Amount Granted	Percent Granted	Number of Applications Approved	Number of Workers Trained
SFY17* In first 4 months	\$541,496	\$301,140	56%	116	260
SFY16	\$541,496	\$503,827	93%	259	440

INFORMATION FOR YOUR BEAR CLIENTS

In case you haven't seen it, check out this toolkit for Apprenticeships.

The toolkit provides helpful steps and resources to start and register an apprenticeship program, from exploring the apprenticeship model as a workforce strategy to launching a new program.

https://www.doleta.gov/oa/employers/apprenticeship_toolkit.pdf

BUSINESS RETENTION EXPANSION INTERNATIONAL

Have you ever wondered what other states and our Canadian neighbors do to enhance business expansion and retention? A great way to learn is to attend the BREI conference and become immersed

in this focus. Save the date and think about attending this excellent conference in June. [BREI Conference Info](#)

AND THE SURVEY SAID...

The 2016 BEAR Annual Report will be available by February 1st. All the best to our Montana BEAR Teams in 2017.

MEDABEARDecember2016.doc