



118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A Anaconda, MT 59711
ph: 406.563.5259 fx: 406.563.5476
<http://www.medamembers.org>

MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR MARCH 2015

MEDA CALL TO ACTION - FIRST TRANSMITTAL BREAK

The MEDA Legislative Committee has been meeting faithfully at 7:00am each Wednesday (you are welcome to join the call), has spent hours traveling to Helena, testifying on bills of priority to MEDA, and compiling letters of support or opposition on issues.

As you may remember, going into the session, we had five main priorities. They were:

- Inflationary increase for key economic development programs,
- Extension of 2019 sunset related to suite of economic development programs,
- Allocate funding for statewide infrastructure improvement, especially in eastern Montana,
- Maintain existing tax increment policies, and
- Enhance/revise policies related to brownfield redevelopment.

In addition, a number of major initiatives have surfaced for consideration by the legislators. These include:

- Medicaid expansion,
- Early childhood education, and
- Local option taxes / business equipment taxes.

To learn the status of these key issues, [please read the Transmittal Report](#) and take action! Now is the time!

Helpful Links

[Leadership Roster](#)

[House Committees](#)

[Senate Committees](#)

[Legislative Roster](#)

UPDATE: MEDA SPRING CONFERENCE



Montana Economic Developers Conference & Leadership Development Event
Impact: Learning, Sharing & Partnering for High Performance

Brett Doney, Great Falls Development Authority, is serving as Conference Chair for MEDA's spring event. The training and conference will be held in Great Falls, May 4th – 6th, with an impressive agenda of several international economic development leaders, unique "Impact" panels, professional development training, and outstanding networking opportunities.

Also of interest to you so that you can schedule accordingly, SBDC partners will be holding a meeting following the conference. In addition, DEQ representatives are planning a Brownfields Workshop. Plan to travel to Great Falls and make great use of your time and mileage!

In addition to Brett, the Spring Agenda Committee includes Jason Rittal, Karyl Tobel, Kellie Danielson, Steve Arveschoug, Tracy McIntyre, Rick Edwards, Kathie Bailey, Sarah Converse, and Paul Tuss.

MEDA MEMBERSHIP NEWS

MEDA gained two new members in February. Welcome to Robert Neihart and Jeremy Fadness of WWC Engineering, in Helena. Read about the expertise of our new members [here](#). To review all of the benefits of membership, [visit our webpage](#).

MEDA RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Malta/Phillips County Resource Team

The Malta/Phillips County Resource Team is hoping for clear roads to conduct the priority and project setting Town Meeting in Malta, on March 4th. You can review the team’s report here:

[Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report](#). The Malta/Phillips County Team is pictured L to R, Michael Dann, Kathy McLane, Steve Zeier, Debra Demarais, Gloria O’Rourke, Cheryl Curry, and Warren Vaughan. Not pictured. Anne Boothe.



MONTANA BEAR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Improving IWT Criteria and BEAR Team Definitions

As the partnership between the Incumbent Worker Training Grant and the BEAR Program grows stronger, it has become apparent that clearer definitions are needed to identify: a. What is a “current” BEAR client, b. Clarify ExecutivePulse must be utilized so that data can be quantified, and c. Conduct an overhaul of the Retention Survey to make the questions more practical for Montana and more “journal” information friendly. As Montana BEAR Teams look different across the state, the data entry process needs to be modified to reflect the different models.

Great News: Those who have conducted IWT grants do *not* need to enter a follow-up survey into ExecutivePulse. MT Dept. of Labor is able to extract the data they need to learn if the grant impacted wages and/or resulted in business expansion.

Data Highlights for February

- There were 10 BEAR Retention Visits held in February, nine in Gallatin County and one in Flathead County.
- Action Items: Warren Vaughan, Gallatin County BEAR Director, continues to make full use of ExecutivePulse and recorded 22 Action Items in February. Eleven are still being worked on and twelve are closed. Michael Jackson, Flathead Job Service, is another BEAR Team Leader that uses this great feature. Thank you! The input of thorough data is critical to accurate data reports.

February Outreach Specialist Visits and Business Updates

The following BEAR Team members completed Business Retention Surveys and/or update reports for the businesses they have contacted.

Mike Jackson – 7	Warren Vaughan - 1	Chaney Reon Okert - 2
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Kiki Huls - 1	Chris Parson - 4	
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MEDA WORKING GROUPS

The **GOED/MEDA Web Presence Committee** met in conjunction with Montana Ambassadors on February 26th. John Rogers, GOED, provided an update of his office’s activities and highlighted the importance of key economic development groups using the internet and social media to promote a strong message about Montana. Many ideas were exchanged and action items set.

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.
- **The Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center**, a non-profit, helps companies fund improvement projects of their choice. Eligible companies can receive up to **\$75,000** in matching grant funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to fund these projects. We quickly assess a company’s eligibility and we prepare, submit and track the application, cost free! Visit www.nwtaac.org. Contact Patrick Meuleman, Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center, Phone: [208-343-6855](tel:208-343-6855)

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.

- Read the latest [NADO news](#) and learn of new tools, webinars, and policy updates, etc.
- Two great workshops of interest to BEAR Teams and MEDA Members and Partners

Valuation Considerations When Buying or Selling a Business



About the instructor – Mike Size is the founder and president of Portside Advisors, a company that has completed more than 1,000 accredited valuations in various industries ranging from insurance brokers and professional service firms to restaurants.

Mike has earned a B.S. from the State University of New York at Buffalo as well as an MBA from the University of Phoenix. He has also done post-graduate work in business at Arizona State University. Additionally, Mike has served as an officer for organizations such as the Missoula Rotary, Montana Community Development Corporation, and United Way of Missoula and Ravalli Counties.

This workshop will take into consideration valuation techniques and strategy for a business owner that is looking to sell or an entrepreneur looking to buy a business. Attendees will learn basic financial structures and strategies involved in buying or selling a business.

When: Friday, March 13, 2015
11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Where: ALDC Community Service Center
118 East 7th
3rd floor conference room
Anaconda Montana

Cost: \$40 (cost includes lunch)

To register, please contact Julie Jaksha (533-6780 or jjaksha@headwatersrcd.org) or Angela Grinolds (533-6781 or agrinolds@headwatersrcd.org)

HEADWATERS RC&D – SBDC

65 E. Broadway
Butte, MT 59701
Julie 406-533-6780
jjaksha@headwatersrcd.org

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested 2 weeks prior to the event.



State and Federal Government Contracting Matchmaking Event

In conjunction with the Montana Chamber of Commerce Manufacturing/International Trade Day the U.S. Small Business Administration is hosting this exciting matchmaking meeting. Did you know the Federal Government buys nearly \$400 billion worth of goods and services from small business each year? In 2014, the Federal Government purchased about \$480 million worth of goods and services from Montana firms alone.

Take the time to meet one-on-one with federal and state contracting officers as well as some other large contractors, including: Montana National Guard, CDM Smith, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, Department of Air Force, Forest Service, Montana Department of Transportation, U.S. Commercial Services, Ex-Im Bank, General Services Administration and more.

March 16 | 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Red Lion Colonial
2301 Colonial Drive
Helena, MT**

There is no pre-registration or cost to attend the matchmaking event. For more information please contact Kelly Dixon at 406.441.1085 or kelly.dixon@sba.gov

We encourage you to attend the Manufacturing/International Trade Day. Come hear keynote speaker, U.S. Ambassador to China (and former U.S. Senator) Max Baucus. Governor Steve Bullock will also speak and present the Governor's Exporter of the Year and the Manufacturer of the Year. For registration and additional information contact the Montana Chamber of Commerce at 888-442-6668.



The support given by the U.S. Small Business Administration to this activity does not constitute an express or implied endorsement of any cosponsor's or participant's opinions, products, or services. All SBA programs are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Reasonable arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least 2 weeks in advance. Contact: Crystal Baker SBA, crystal.baker@sba.gov or 406.441.1085.

- MEDA Members and partners are cordially invited to attend the [Montana Ambassadors ENGAGE](#) Conference on March 19 – 20, in Helena.
- **The Asia Montana Energy Summit (AMES) will take place on April 29-30, 2015 in the Dennison Theatre and the Gallagher School of Business at the University of Montana.** All plenary and breakout sessions are free and open to the public. Join us for two days of discussion with 70+ international energy thought leaders, business leaders, and policy influencers to discuss global, regional, and Montana energy trends in 5 keynote and 20 breakout sessions. Experts will be addressing technology innovations, economic developments, environmental impacts, and opportunities for cooperation between the United States and Asia. Registration Link: <https://www.xcdsystem.com/ames>, Conference Website: www.MansfieldConference.org Twitter Hashtag: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/ames2015>