



MAY 2016 NEWSLETTER



MEDA: Leadership Dedicated to Building Montana's Economy

Thanks to everyone who sponsored, attended, and supported the unique MEDA Spring Conference. What a fabulous event! [View more great pictures and the presentation files](#); save the date for the fall conference in Ronan October 12th – 14th.



NorthWestern Energy was a gracious site host MEDA attendees.

MEDA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Chris Mehus is shifting his career from banking back to economic development. You can reach him at chris.mehus@gmail.com. Welcome back, Chris. Adam Vauthier, Vauthier|Ferguson, LLC, Anaconda, attended the MEDA Conference and is now a member. MEDA's membership count is at 248.

MEDA RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENTS

Do you work with a community that could benefit from a MEDA Resource Team Assessment? Would you like to experience serving on a Resource Team? Read the [summary](#) of what they are all about and give MEDA a call at 406-563-5259.

⇒ **Ronan, Montana – Assessment set for May 9th – 10th**

The team is gearing up for Ronan! Gypsy Ray, Lake County Community Development, is the on-the-ground local lead. Thus far the team includes John Donovan (SBA), Eric Seidensticker (MBAC), Tracy McIntyre (Rural Economic Designs), Sarah Converse (Sweetgrass Development), Gus Byrom and Alyssa Townsend (DOC), and Martin DeWitt, USDA/RD.

⇒ **Deer Lodge, Montana – Team’s Return Visit May 12th**

Working with Julie Schroder, the MEDA Resource Team will return to Deer Lodge on May 12th to guide participants at the Town Meeting through a three step process. By the close of the meeting, Deer Lodge will have prioritized projects listed and working groups in place. Read the Deer Lodge Report

OPPORTUNITY CALLS – May 25th at 10:30am

Thanks to our partners at Montana Dept. of Commerce, MEDA Members have a great opportunity to learn of program updates and dig deeper into two featured programs during each call. In April, participants learned of the MTIP/SBIR and details of the International Trade program. Check out the other program updates and news by reading the [meeting notes](#).



MEDA WORKING GROUPS UPDATE

- **MEDA RLF Working Group**– This working group plans to meet once again on May 17th via conference call at 10:00am. Learn best tips and best practices from peers who manage RLF’s. [April notes](#)
- **MEDA Resource Team Assessment Working Group** – This working group will meet again on May 18th at 9:00am. MEDA Resource Team Assessments continue to evolve and develop best practices as a result of this collaboration. [Minutes of the meeting](#).

MEDA RICK JONES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

The Second Quarter round is now open with the deadline of May 6th. [Criteria and Application](#) Submit your application...QUICK!

MEDA BOARD ACTIVITY

The MEDA Board met on Friday, April 22nd, following the MEDA Spring Conference, in Butte. Minutes will



be available soon and posted on the MEDA website. Among the topics discussed: Montana Infrastructure Coalition, MEDA Legislative activities, Innovation Symposium (coming in July), a joint meeting with the MEDA and MT Ambassador Boards on August 11th. Special thanks were extended to Linda Kindrick, Luke Walawander, and Ken Richardson for their service to MEDA.

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.
- [EDA Grant Announcement](#)
- **GRANTSTATION:** [Click here to read the entire newsletter](#) or click on the section headings for specific grant opportunities and important announcements. MEDA's login information and password will be available next week upon our renewal notification.



BEAR CLIENT RESOURCE

What is WOTC – Work Opportunity Tax Credit? Work Opportunity Tax Credit is a federal tax incentive designed to encourage employers to hire and train a wide range of qualified individuals. Take a few moments and read Mike Jackson's recent article in the series [“Profits Hiding in Plain Sight.”](#)

IWT UPDATE – Chris Wilhelm

Chris sent an update that the website for IWT is: IWT.mt.gov. In mid-April Chris noted 4th Quarter funding allocations had begun with wait list applications awarded first. There was at that time \$51,307 available with 12 claims (\$50,000) in process.

BEAR TEAM OUTREACH FOR APRIL

The BEAR Google Report data collected nine new entries with 13 outreach specialists participating. [Please see the full report here.](#)

BUILDING CAPACITY PRESENTATION – Thanks Warren and Jeff!

The Friday morning MEDA Conference presenters were top notch. The topic: **Building Capacity Where It Matters**



Warren Vaughan, Gallatin County Planning/BEAR Director, compared the typical BEAR model with his approach which is focused on building relationships, creating a team, and making resource connections.
[Warren Vaughan Presentation](#)



Jeff Batton, HomeStake Partners Provided information on his latest business venture to help small business owners and startups learn specific skills and systems they need to succeed.
[Jeff Batton Presentation](#)