



Learning, Sharing & Partnering for High Performance



## MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR MAY 2015

### **Great Falls Here We Come!**

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

Hopefully you are reading this while getting ready for a one-of-a-kind MEDA conference in Great Falls. We have over 100 people registered with a lot of new names and faces. As you know so well, one of the best features of a MEDA gathering is the high level of networking. Add to the networking: walking and bus tours, nationally known keynote speakers, Impact panels, professional development training, social events, and more. See you in Great Falls! [Final Agenda](#)



### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Rick Edwards, MEDA Legislative Committee Chair, compiled a legislative wrap-up that will be shared during the MEDA Annual Meeting, May 6<sup>th</sup>, in Great Falls. The presentation will be made available as a link in the MEDA Conference Summary. Thanks to everyone who took the time to review the MEDA Bills List and, most importantly, took the time to contact their legislators on key issues.

### **MEDA MEMBERSHIP NEWS** [Updated Membership Directory now Online](#)

MEDA gained three new members in April including Jerry Grebenc, Great West Engineering; Cathy Kirkpatrick, Dawson County Economic Development; and Cynthia Johnson, Pondera Regional Port Authority. While attending the spring MEDA Conference be sure to meet our new members who are part of the [State Tribal Economic Development Commission](#). Read about the expertise of our new members [here](#). To review all of the benefits of membership, [visit our webpage](#).

### **MEDA SCHOLARSHIP Second Quarter Round**

Congratulations to MEDA's First Quarter Scholarship Winners: Marcy Allen and Rachel Anderson. The Second Quarter Round is now open with the deadline to submit of May 20<sup>th</sup>. [Scholarship Info](#)

### **MEDA RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENTS**

Two Resource Team Assessments are pending, although no dates have yet been set. Thanks to a referral from Luke Walawander, MEDA Resource Team Assessments may soon be part of a study to improve the process and build capacity on the local level. Stay tuned!



## MONTANA BEAR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### MT Retention Survey – Big Changes on the Way

A conference call was recently held with the individuals who use the MT Retention Survey and ExecutivePulse the most. Not surprising, BEAR Outreach Specialists mold and shape the survey to best fit their interview/visit approach. The purpose of the call was to begin the process of identifying what should remain in the Montana survey and what could/should be removed. The key is to find a balance with collecting analytical data and inputting the story and action items for each business. The draft survey will be shared with Montana BEAR Team’s before confirming it with ExecutivePulse.

### BEAR and Legislative Outcomes

Chris Wilhelm shared that MT Dept. of Labor is researching how programs, including Incumbent Worker Training Grant funds, were funded for 2015 – 2017. Information should be available by mid-May.

### Data Highlights for April

- There were six BEAR Retention Visits held in April: Stillwater County – 1, Missoula County – 1, Flathead County – 4.
- Action Items: Park County – 1, Flathead County – 6, Gallatin County – 11.

### April 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.

Marissa Hauge – 1 visit; 1 update	Mike Jackson – 4 visits; 4 updates	Warren Vaughan – 11 updates
Chris Parson – 2 visits	Joel Bertolino – 1 visit	Mora McCarthy – 1 visit
	Mike Williams – 1 visit; 1 update	

## 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.
- **New Tourism Grant Program Improves Access** to \$1 Million Pool  
The Montana Office of Tourism is restructuring its \$1 million grant program so state financial assistance will be more accessible and inclusive. All categories require matching funds, and eligibility varies by category. Complete details may be found online at [tourism.mt.gov/MarketingDevelopment/GrantProgram](http://tourism.mt.gov/MarketingDevelopment/GrantProgram).
- The [2015 Barrett Foundation Business Concept Challenge](#) They are offering \$100,000 for innovative solutions to natural resource issues. Pre-proposals are due June 15, 2015.

**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.

- **Fall Economic Gardening Certification Training:** Application/Registration: June 22 – August 3, 2015; Payment deadline: August 3, 2015 Online learning portion: August 4 – September 18, 2015; Retreat portion at BRV in Cassopolis, MI: September 22 – 25, 2015  
To apply or request additional information, contact [Rita Phillips](mailto:rita@lowe.org) at [rita@lowe.org](mailto:rita@lowe.org).
- **Upcoming Brownfields Downtown Redevelopment Workshop** The Montana Department of Commerce is happy to announce an upcoming workshop opportunity on Brownfields redevelopment resources for your community.
- MT Dept. of Commerce **“Removing Obstacles to Redeveloping Your Downtown”**

**When:** May 19, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Where:** MT Department of Commerce, 301 S Park Avenue, Room #228, Helena, MT

This free workshop, co-hosted by the Montana Department of Commerce and the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Program at Kansas State University, is designed to help you gain a better understanding of what a Brownfield is, learn how Brownfield revitalization can be a part of your business development strategy, and to hear from state and national leaders on resources available to assist local government with redevelopment of contaminated or potentially contaminated property. Bring your community-specific project and join in the discussion!

Attendance is **FREE** and lunch will be provided, but registration is required by May 15th. To register, visit the workshop webpage at: <https://www.ksutab.org/education/workshops/>

To view workshop flyer, click [HERE](#)