MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR APRIL 2011

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MEDA SPRING CONFERENCE: LEADING THE WAY TO INNOVATION

The 2011 MEDA Spring Conference Theme is: Leading the Way to Innovation. Here are the links: Full Agenda, Preconference Training and Registration. The keynote will be MSU President Waded Cruzado who will be joined by other presenters focused on the innovation theme. Early Thursday evening a networking event will be held so that attendees may contact multiple program directors and agency representatives. Friday is packed with working groups, MEDA’s Membership Meeting and more presenters. Stuart Leidner, Prospera Business Network, is the Chair of the Conference Committee.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – MARKETING!

Based on a membership survey, two of the highest training needs are 1.) Economic development marketing and 2.) Marketing an economic development organization. Kellie Danielson and the Professional Development Committee have put together a dynamic preconference training on these topics. Each class is stand alone; registration is now open.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The MEDA Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the following spring scholarship round winners. Thanks to First Interstate Bank for sponsoring a scholarship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award Winner</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mike Coryell</td>
<td>Mile City Area Development Corp &amp; South East MT. MBC</td>
<td>$800</td>
<td>NDC ED300 Minneapolis, June 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Smith</td>
<td>Mt. Credit Unions for Community Development</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>Assoc. for Financial Counseling AFCPE</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Rexhouse</td>
<td>Sanders County CD</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>NDC ED201 San Diego, Feb 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allyson Reddig</td>
<td>Two Rivers Growth (Glasgow/Valley County)</td>
<td>$800</td>
<td>Grant Seeking Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracey McIntyre</td>
<td>Eureka Rural Dev Partners</td>
<td>$800</td>
<td>Pacific NW Regional Summit, July 2011, Portland</td>
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LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE
An important two-sided flyer has been developed in partnership with Big Sky EDA and the MEDA Legislative Committee to address impact on economic development programs as a result of current legislative action. The flyer is available at http://www.medamembers.org/NowIsNotTheTime.pdf MEDA members are encouraged to share this document with their local press and legislative leadership.

MEDA WORKING GROUPS
If you are not participating in a MEDA Working Group, you are missing out. Below is a brief summary of each meeting. All Working Groups will meet during breakfast on Friday, April 29th, during the MEDA Conference.

- **Revolving Loan Fund:** Members of this group met via conference call on March 8th and held an interesting discussion on dealing with problem loans and the collection process. To read the minutes and next meeting information visit: [http://www.medamembers.org/rlf.html](http://www.medamembers.org/rlf.html)

- **Innovation and Strategic Planning Working Group:** The Innovation Working Group met via conference call on March 22nd and received the first update from MEDA’s interns on innovative best practices. The Innovative Working Group will meet again with the interns on April 6th and will present a summary to MEDA members during the MEDA Spring Conference. To review the minutes visit: [http://www.medamembers.org/planning.html](http://www.medamembers.org/planning.html)

- **Energy:** The Energy group met on March 25th. Participants are to send energy resources and barriers to energy development to the MEDA office. Minutes and a growing list of resources are available at [http://www.medamembers.org/energy.html](http://www.medamembers.org/energy.html)

- **Transportation:** The Transportation Working Group met via conference call on March 25th to discuss transportation resources and ideas. A webinar is in the works with Joe Kiely, Ports-to-Plains Alliance on May 26th. More details will be available soon. The webpage for this group is [http://www.medamembers.org/transportation.html](http://www.medamembers.org/transportation.html)

Working Group conference calls scheduled (dial in using 712.432.0175 pin 217279) in April:

- → Innovation – April 6th, 9:30am
- → RLF – April 19th, 3:00pm

GRANT AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
1. **New Community Friendly Grants Extension Community Resources Program weblink.** Check out these great community grant links. Thanks to David Young, Professor, Community Resource Specialist Extension Service & College of Nursing, MSU, for providing this information.

2. EPA is soliciting applications (for non grant technical assistance) from states, tribes, regional governments, and communities that want to evaluate the potential development of renewable energy on potentially or formerly contaminated properties. This evaluation will be in the form of a feasibility study conducted by the Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory that will determine the best renewable energy technology for the site, the optimal location for placement of the renewable energy technology, potential energy generating capacity, the return on the investment, and the economic feasibility of the renewable energy projects. Proposals are due to EPA Friday May 20. View the request for applications at [http://www.epa.gov/renewableenergyland/docs/repowering.epa_nrel_2011_rfa.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/renewableenergyland/docs/repowering.epa_nrel_2011_rfa.pdf)

OPPORTUNITIES 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.

1. **Invest in Success – MT Small Business Development Network, April 5 – 6th.** See all the details at [http://sites.google.com/site/sbdcinvestinsuccess/](http://sites.google.com/site/sbdcinvestinsuccess/)

2. Please join us for the 11th Annual Wind River Business Conference/Native American Business Expo on Wednesday, May 4, 2011, at the Intertribal Center at Central Wyoming College in Riverton, Wyoming. This year we will be featuring three tracks: Government Contracting, General Business, and Artisan. Registration information and conference details will be sent out in the next few weeks.
3. Sweetgrass Development is hosting Essential Grant Skills training May 11-12, 2011 in Choteau, MT at the Stage Stop Inn. The Essential Grant Skills tuition will be $100 for all Montana residents, thanks to the financial assistance of Sweetgrass Development. When registering online, please click on the Essential Grant Skills link and utilize the code sweetgrass, to obtain the discounted enrollment. To enroll or for more information, call The Grantsmanship Center's Registrar at (800) 421-9512 or visit the Center's website at http://www.tgci.com, or Sweetgrass Development at 406-727-5173.

4. Clean Energy Finding Workshop Slated for Missoula on May 10th Want to learn about how energy efficiency and renewable energy funds can work for you? Plan to attend the May 10th “Tapping Clean Energy Funding for Rural Montana” workshop at the Holiday Inn Missoula Downtown at the Park. Registration for the workshop is $50, which also includes lunch and more. The pre-registration deadline is Friday, May 6th. For more details on registering for this workshop, contact Al Kurki at 406-449-0104 or e-mail akurki@ncat.org. Or register on-line at www.ncat.org/meetings.

MONTANA BEAR Report Learn what is new in your region with the statewide Montana BEAR Program’s monthly report. View the March 2011 report and catch up on the latest BEAR Team news. There were 37 business visits held in March in the following counties:

- Flathead County – 21
- Carbon County – 1
- Yellowstone County - 11
- Lake County - 1
- Missoula County - 1
- Gallatin County - 1
- Fergus County - 1

Mike Jackson had 16 visits and Brian Edwards had 12.

MY TURN: MEDA FLOWERS Isn’t it wonderful how often our work and personal lives interact and connect? Members of MEDA know of my family and many met my amazing Grandma a few years ago. A scare from a sick grandson interrupted my MEDA spring conference experience last year; MEDA members were so kind and supportive. As life happens, my Dad passed away this week. On my desk sits a beautiful bouquet of flowers from the members of MEDA. Thank you for your amazing professional work for the economic development of Montana and thank you for simple friendship….and flowers.