MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR JANUARY 2011

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2011 SCHOLARSHIP ROUND ONE NOW OPEN
The Rick Jones Memorial MEDA Scholarship Round 1 is now open for 2011. In addition to MEDA scholarships, First Interstate Bank is sponsoring one scholarship in Round 1 and a second scholarship in the Fall. Criteria for applying as well as the application form are available at http://www.medamembers.org/scholarships.html. The deadline is February 15th.

NDC TRAINING PENDING FOR MONTANA
A conference call was held in December to bring partners together interested in bringing NDC training to Montana. Montana USDA/RD, MDOC and MEDA met with an NDC representative to begin planning for all four courses to be brought to Montana. The first course is expected to be held in September 2011. Stay tuned!

KEEP LEGISLATIVE LINK HANDY
Publications showcasing key economic development programs are available at http://www.medamembers.org/legislature.html. Use these documents to showcase the success of our economic development programs.

The full MEDA Legislative Committee met via conference call on Wednesday, December 15th at 7:00am to prepare for the 2011 Legislative Session that begins January 3rd. Weekly meetings will begin January 5th and take place at 7:00am each Wednesday. A face-to-face meeting will be held January 4th from 9:30am – Noon to discuss key issues and strategies.

The MEDA Legislative Committee includes the MEDA Board and: Rick Edwards, Chair, Steve Arveschoug, Partner Liaison, Sarah Converse, Jim Davison, Evan Barrett, Terry Myhre, Dore Schwinden, Paul Tuss, Pam Lemer, Tony Preite, Jim Smitham, Brian Gion, Dick King, Andy Poole, Tracy McIntyre, Brett Doney, Philip Fletcher, Jan Tusick, Larry Mires and Gloria O’Rourke.

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. MDT announcement of funds available through the Montana Essential Freight Rail Loan Program. Please find information about the current solicitation for proposals at this site: http://mdt.mt.gov/business/grants_rail.shtml. Letters of interest are due January 31, 2011. Information about this and other grant and funding programs at MDT can be found here: http://mdt.mt.gov/business/grants.shtml

Plan to attend Economic Development Day in the Rotunda January 25th.
3. The Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology is accepting proposals for funding. Proposals are due March 1, 2011. The Request for Proposals can be found on the MBRCT website at http://businessresources.mt.gov/MBRCT/requestforproposal.mcpx. If you have any questions about the RFP, please contact Dave Desch, Executive Director, (406) 841-2760.

4. NeighborWorks has a Real Estate Acquisition and Development Loan Fund that has been capitalized by Department of Treasury’s CDFI program as well as a $2.5 million loan from NeighborWorks Capital. We have had the money fully deployed since we received the loan and the first CDFI grant, but right now we have funds available to lend for housing projects in Montana. The loan funds can be used for acquisition of land, predevelopment, and development of housing projects sponsored by non-profit and public organizations. We received our second CDFI grant this year and immediately deployed it into HomeWord’s Solstice project in Missoula, and we are in the process of applying for another CDFI grant at this time. Contact: Maureen Rude, Operations Director, NeighborWorks Montana, 406-458-8704, mrude@nwmt.org

5. The HUD Rural Innovation Fund will award grants on a competitive basis to state housing finance agencies, community development corporations, state community and/or economic development agencies, local rural non-profit organizations, federally recognized Indian tribes, and consortia of these eligible groups. For more information see http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2010/HUDNo.10-259

MEDA WORKING GROUPS BLAST OFF
MEDA Working Groups are definitely re-ignited. Five groups met in December. Please click on the following links to review progress and minutes from each meeting. If you have not yet joined a working group – it is never too late. Innovation and Strategic Planning, Transportation, Workforce and Education, Value Added Ag and Revolving Loan Fund.

Conference calls scheduled (dial in using 712.432.0175 pin 217279) in January:
- January 5th, 3:00pm: BEAR
- January 7th, 10:00am: Workforce and Education
- January 11th 10:00am: Transportation
- January 11th 3:00pm: Revolving Loan Fund
- January 27th, 3:00pm: Innovation and Strategic Planning

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. **Outlook Seminars**: The seminars run from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will be held in nine Montana cities during January, February and March 2011. Registration costs $80, which includes a proceedings booklet, lunch and a one-year subscription to Montana Business Quarterly, BBER’s award-winning business journal. The series begins in Helena on Tuesday, Jan. 25, at the Best Western Great Northern Hotel. Following is the schedule for other seminar cities:
   - Great Falls – Wednesday, Jan. 26, Hilton Garden Inn
   - Missoula – Friday, Jan. 28, Hilton Garden Inn
   - Billings – Tuesday, Feb. 1, Crowne Plaza
   - Bozeman – Wednesday, Feb. 2, Best Western GranTree Inn
   - Butte – Thursday, Feb. 3, Holiday Inn Express
   - Kalispell – Friday, Feb. 11, Hilton Garden Inn
   - Sidney – Tuesday, March 15, USDA/Agricultural Research Station
   - Miles City – Wednesday, March 16, Bureau of Land Management

   For more information or to register for a seminar, visit the BBER website at [http://www.bber.umt.edu](http://www.bber.umt.edu) or call 406-243-5113

2. **Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Funding the Topic of February 17, 2011 Workshop in Billings**
Farmers, ranchers and rural businesses who want to cut energy costs are invited to attend the “Tapping Clean Energy for Rural Montana” workshop in Billings, Thursday, February 17th. The workshop will outline what’s needed to secure loans, grants or rebates for energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. Attendees of the Clean Energy Funding workshop will receive educational materials and sample applications. For more information about the workshop costs and how to register, contact Al Kurki at 406-449-0104 or by e-mail at akurki@ncat.org.


**BEAR Report**

Learn what is new in your region with the statewide Montana BEAR Program’s monthly report.

View the December 2010 report and catch up on the latest BEAR Team news. There were 10 business visits held in December in the following counties:
- Flathead County – 5
- Gallatin County – 1
- Yellowstone County - 3
- Missoula County - 1

2010 Census results –

**Montana’s resident population was 989,415 on April 1, 2010**

Since the last official count from Census 2000, Montana grew 9.7%, to 989,415 residents as of April 1, 2010 – adding 87,220 people over the 10 years. This 9.7% growth rate ranks Montana as 21st among all states. The fastest growing state was Nevada with a 35.1% increase. Michigan saw the greatest decline with a loss of 0.6%. Montana continues to be ranked 44th among the 50 states in population. Only Delaware, South Dakota, Alaska, North Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming have fewer residents. Texas with an increase of approximately 4.3 million had the greatest increase in number of residents since the last count in 2000.

The increase in population was not enough for Montana to gain another seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. Montana’s lone representative will continue to have the largest number of constituents of any in the nation. The U.S. population grew 9.7% in the last decade. During the last century, the fastest growth rate, 21.0% occurred between 1900 and 1910; the slowest, 7.3% between 1930 and 1940. The newest figures do not include details about population shifts within Montana. The 2010 Census Redistricting Data Summary File with population counts down to the block level is expected to be released in February, 2011.

To access the data cut and paste: [http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/apportionment-pop-text.php](http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/apportionment-pop-text.php)  For more information: Telephone: (406) 841-2719 E-mail: [ceic@mt.gov](mailto:ceic@mt.gov)

**MY TURN**: Dues and a Resource Team Flashback

Happy 2011 to you all. With the start of a New Year comes….an invoice for dues. To save postage, I will be emailing invoices within the next two weeks. Thank you for your support of MEDA.

Remember Resource Teams? They are still available if your community is interested in an assessment. Resource Teams and a very special man, Tony Rudbach, came to mind when I read an article about West Yellowstone ED. You see, it was Tony who came up with the idea to create a learning center in the area. Tony’s idea was to utilize all of the lodging available during shoulder seasons to boost West Yellowstone’s economy. His first thought coincided with his love of music – to create a learning center for musicians. He also suggested a college-level study center for geothermal activity, tourism services training, etc. Read how one man’s idea is becoming a reality in West Yellowstone today. [http://www.westyellowstonenews.com/news/article_92009424-0f64-11e0-ad32-001cc4c002e0.html](http://www.westyellowstonenews.com/news/article_92009424-0f64-11e0-ad32-001cc4c002e0.html)

Do you have a Success Story to share? [Download the report template](http://www.westyellowstonenews.com/news/article_92009424-0f64-11e0-ad32-001cc4c002e0.html) and send to MEDA.