MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR JUNE 2010

You asked for it….PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
The MEDA Professional Development Committee was formed to bring professional development options to the members of MEDA. MEDA’s membership was surveyed to determine a starting point for training needs. At the top of the list: Managing an Economic Development Organization and Strategic Planning.

The first training on these two topics is to take place August 10th and 11th, in Billings, MT. The training is made possible by a generous sponsorship from PPL Montana. LaDene Bowen, Institute for Decision Making, University of Northern Iowa, is the trainer. LaDene is a former Montanan and extremely qualified to bring these professional development courses.

The workshop will be interactive with full participation utilizing case studies, exercises and practical examples on how to manage an effective economic development organization and strategic planning tools focused on results. Save the date and be watching for more information. Committee members include Kellie Danielson (Chair), Brett Doney, Lisa Perry, Steve Arveschoug, Linda Twitchell and Tracy McIntyre.

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. USDA Rural Development officially announced the application deadline for the Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP). This announcement covers both grant and loan guarantee applications for Renewable Energy System (RES) and Energy Efficiency Improvement (EEI) projects. The applications deadline for the Feasibility Study Grants and the Energy Audit Assistance Grants has yet to be announced. The application deadline is 4:30 local time on June 30, 2010. Additional information on this program is available at any Rural Development office or by visiting the following websites: www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt and click on Business & Cooperative Programs link www.farmenergy.org and click on the Application Tools link.

3. USDA/RD announced changes in application deadlines for the Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) program.
   - The application deadline has changed to June 28th.
   - Maximum dollar amount is raised from $50,000 to $250,000 except that federally recognized tribes and Rural Area Economic Partnerships are not limited to that amount.
For further details visit the website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt, or contact one of USDA/RD Area Offices.
COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS

Professional Development Committee: Please see the first article to learn of the Professional Development Committee’s activities to date.

Legislative Committee: This committee met via conference call on May 20th and decided on next-steps for formulating the MEDA 2011 Legislative Agenda. A time has been set aside on Friday morning, June 11th, for the membership to discuss the agenda. The interim committee is: Evan Barrett, Paul Tuss, Tracy McIntyre, Andy Poole, Larry Mires, Rick Edwards, Brett Doney, Terry Myhre, Kellie Danielson, Jim Smitham, Kathie Bailey and Steve Arveschoug

Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee (Rick Edwards, Chair) met via conference call on May 18th. As a result, individuals with expiring board seats were asked to serve another term and one officer seat was changed. The Nominating Committee will present its recommendations to the board during the meeting on June 10th. Joining Rick Edwards on the Nominating Committee: Jim Davison, Paul Tuss, Ken Richardson, Jim Smitham, Kathie Bailey and Gloria O’Rourke

MEDA BEAR Working Group: The MEDA BEAR Working Group met via conference call on May 5th and is working on survey modifications, 2010 BEAR Roundup and marketing materials. BEAR Teams will gather around tables to talk about BEAR activities during the Friday morning breakfast, June 11th at the MEDA Conference in Miles City.

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.


3. The Heartland Center for Leadership Development is pleased to announce its new Leadership Development and Board Effectiveness series. These five webinars on developing community leadership and building board member capacity will begin in June and conclude in October, 2010 For more information visit: http://www.heartlandcenter.info/webinar_reg/

4. As mentioned above, MEDA is bringing Professional Development for Economic Developers to Montana. Mark your calendar for August 10th -11th and plan to join us in Billings to gain skills on managing your economic development organization and strategic planning.

5. NWCDI Conference - you will learn current strategies for sustaining strong communities, attend exciting classes from top community development instructors and develop networking relationships with other city leaders. Register at www.nwcdi.com

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

View the May 2010 report and notice the visible impact of the IWT Grant Fund Program. There were 30 business visits held in May in the following counties:

Richland County - 1   Park County - 1   Yellowstone County - 12
Sheridan County - 1   Gallatin County - 2   Deer Lodge County – 1
Flathead County – 2   Jefferson County - 1   Missoula County – 6
Lewis and Clark County - 1   Silver Bow County - 2

Highlights in May:

• MEDA BEAR Working Group met
WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY
Susan Ockert, (406.841.2740) Senior Research Economist for CEIC, MDOC, will share information on the economy of Eastern Montana and how its resources impact the rest of the state. For more information on CEIC, visit http://ceic.mt.gov.

My Turn: Spring Conference Grand Finale – it’s a surprise!
I don’t know what it is exactly, in fact, only two people know for sure; those two people have been sworn to secrecy. There is to be a “Grand Finale Surprise” for those that stay for the entire MEDA Conference. From the rumors, it will be a surprise well worth seeing. So…if you have not registered, do so today. And plan to stay for the entire conference!

Do you have a Success Story to share? Download the report template and send to MEDA.