MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR MAY 2011

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MEDA SPRING CONFERENCE:
Just over 100 people attended the 2011 MEDA Spring Conference. The theme was “MEDA: Leading the Way to Innovation.” A conference summary including photos and presentation files is available at http://www.medamembers.org/2011MEDASpringConferenceSummary.pdf
Stuart Leidner and Maria Kappes, Prospera Business Network, were excellent hosts for the conference. The Innovation Working Group webpage contains the Executive Summary as well as the presentation from the MEDA Intern Innovation Research Project

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING A SUCCESS
The Marketing Professional Development Training was a great success with over 50 students in attendance the first day and 45 the second day. A sponsorship from PPL Montana made the training possible. Kellie Danielson, Chair of the Professional Development Committee, is already at work planning the next training.

MEDA WORKING GROUPS
BEAR, Transportation, Innovation and Strategic Planning, Energy, Tourism and Recreation and Workforce and Education Working Groups met during the MEDA Conference Working Group Breakfast, Friday, April 29th. Minutes will be uploaded as they become available. To view minutes, visit http://www.medamembers.org/groups.html In addition, each Working Group provided an oral report during the MEDA Annual Meeting. Minutes of the MEDA Annual Meeting will be available soon at http://www.medamembers.org/2011MEDAArtualMeeting.pdf

Meetings scheduled in May:
- **Transportation**: The Transportation Working Group will hold a webinar with Joe Kiely, Ports-to-Plains Alliance on May 26th. More details will be available soon.

- **RLF**: The Revolving Loan Fund Working Group will meet Tuesday, May 17th at 3:00pm via conference call. The discussion topic will be: Loan Committee Structure. Minutes of the last meeting are available at http://www.medamembers.org/rlf.html

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. Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP) grants and loan guarantees are now available. The deadline is May 31st. One significant change to the REAP program is that blender fuel pumps and ethanol biodiesel storage tanks for gas stations are eligible for grant/guarantee funding to encourage fuel retailers
The Montana Technology Innovation Partnership (MTIP) is a Montana Department of Commerce initiative created to promote technology commercialization as a viable economic development strategy for the State of Montana. Montana’s support of small technology firms covers all sectors of Montana’s technology-business community. MTIP offers free, confidential and individual guidance with highly experienced and knowledgeable technology counselors in the following areas:

- Identification of potential research and development funding
- Understanding proposal requirements
- Proposal development, including your budgetary requirements
- Patent and intellectual property strategies & licensing
- Understanding federal grants, contracts and accounting
- Developing a commercialization approach

For more information contact Christine Bell.

**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. 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.

2. Attend the webinar training for the Community Development Block Grant-Economic Development (CDBG-ED) Program. It will be held Wednesday, June 1st, at 2:00pm. Register here: https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/262985824.

3. TechRanch, in partnership with USDA, will present three ORBIT workshops in May for small businesses that will help them to develop an effective online presence, which can help drive revenue. ORBIT is Optimizing Regional Businesses through Internet Technology. These all-day workshops will be held in Lewistown on May 10, in Laurel on May 11 and in Belgrade on May 12. The cost is just $35, which includes a continental breakfast, lunch and all workshop materials. You can visit www.orbit-mt.com for more information or to register.

4. Clean Energy Funding 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.

5. Helping Small Towns Succeed is the longest running program of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development and covers the range of the Center’s focus and expertise with small communities. It has been attended by more than 1,000 people since its introduction in 1992. The content is updated annually and the conference is offered once a year for the Center’s national audience. The full institute brochure can be downloaded here.

6. The Native American Development Corporation (NADC) along with its sponsors, NADC Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), BIA Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (OIEED), and the Montana Department of Commerce cordially invite you to participate in their annual Economic...
Development and Procurement Conference. The conference will be held on May 26-27, 2011 at the Billings Hotel and Conference Center in Billings, MT. The conference will focus on business and economic development in Indian Country as it pertains to the Rocky Mountain and Great Plains Regions. It is expected that this event will attract not only outstanding Native American and Tribal Owned companies but a slate of prime contractors and government entities looking for good suppliers. Please feel free to contact our offices at: 406.259.3804 or visit us online at: http://www.nadc-nabn.org/

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

View the April 2011 report and catch up on the latest BEAR Team news. There were 27 business visits held in April in the following counties:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Visits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flathead County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deer Lodge County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellowstone County</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Park County</td>
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<td>Cascade County</td>
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<td>Stillwater County</td>
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<td>Ravalli County</td>
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**MY TURN: LEGISLATIVE HEROES**

During the MEDA Annual Meeting, Legislative Chair Rick Edwards described MEDA’s involvement in the 2011 session as “extensive.” Rick reported the session ended with not all that MEDA had hoped for, but better than what could have been. The MEDA Legislative Committee worked intensely throughout the entire Legislative Session and deserves a hero’s thank you for their time and commitment: Rick Edwards, Chair; Dore Schwinden, Evan Barrett, Larry Mires, Brian Gion, Brett Doney, Terry Myhre, Paul Tuss, Jim Smitham, Jim Davison, Steve Arveschoug, Dick King, Tracy McIntyre, Sarah Converse, Philip Fletcher, Andy Poole, Tony Preite, Jim Atchison, Marie Fisher, Marcy Allen and Pam Lemer.