



ONLINE NEWS FOR JANUARY 2014

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A successful meeting was held to create a strategy to Engage Canada.

ENGAGE CANADA

John Rogers, GOED, and MEDA President Tracy McIntyre collaborated on a meeting held Monday, December 9th, in Helena, as a follow-up to the Jobs Across the Border Symposium held in early November. Key leaders worked to begin a one year strategic plan for engaging Canada in a coordinated effort. If you would like minutes of the meeting, just email gloria@medamembers.org and request the file. Below is a list of identified priorities which have committees assigned: 1. Trade Missions and Trade Shows – build Team Montana; 2. Market Research; 3. Tourism Development; 4. Workforce Development; 5. Trade Office in Calgary; 6. Cross Border Employment; 7. Direct Flights.

MEDA BOARD UPDATE

The MEDA Board met on Tuesday, December 10th, in Helena, to compile the MEDA Legislative Strategy. Strategies thus far include:

1. Obtain the Main Street Montana Report themes; begin to plug in the program matches for those needs.
2. Encourage MEDA members to meet with Legislators and/or candidates, along with businesses or companies that have benefited from programs and share the value of the funding.
3. Plan a meeting with Governor Bullock, Meg O’Leary, and others to place key program funding in the Governor’s budget.

MEDA WEB PORTAL – PROGRESS!

Beartooth RC&D shared the great news that the MDOC/Big Sky Trust Fund Application was approved to begin Phase 1 of the MEDA Web Portal Project. Economic Development organizations that do not have a website or wish to have theirs updated at a minimal cost should contact the MEDA office ASAP for more information. President Tracy McIntyre sent an email to MEDA’s Membership requesting match support for the project. Approximately \$6,000 has been raised to date. If you are interested in contributing please email gloria@medamembers.org

SPRING CONFERENCE AND LOCATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The MEDA Board voted to hold the spring conference in Havre, the fall 2014 conference in Helena, the spring 2015 conference in Great Falls, and fall 2015 in Helena, with multiple hosts assisting at the Helena locations. Paul Tuss agreed to serve as Chair of the spring 2014 Conference.

MEDA Online News – January 2014
Explore Dashboards



Visit the CEIC website and [explore five “real time” dashboards](#) including:

What's New



MT Agriculture Commodities Dashboard



Economic Dashboard



Energy Quick Stats



Industry Dashboard



State Labor Force Dashboard

For more information, contact CEIC staff at ceic@mt.gov or (406) 841-2740.

GRANT AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- [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.
- **USDA Announces Support for Mental Health Facilities in Rural Areas**
Dec 12, 2013 -- Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced that the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has set a goal of investing up to \$50 million to increase access to mental health care in rural areas over the next three years. The funding will be used for the construction, expansion, or equipping of rural mental health facilities and will be provided through the Community Facilities direct loan program.
- The Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology is accepting proposals for funding. Proposals are due March 3, 2014. The Request for Proposals can be found on the MBRCT website at <http://businessresources.mt.gov/content/MBRCT/FY2015Guidelines.pdf>. If you have any questions regarding the RFP, please contact Dave Desch, Executive Director [\(406\) 841-2760](tel:406-841-2760).
- **Growth Through Agriculture:** The next deadline for draft applications for the Growth Through Agriculture program is January 31, 2014. For more information, visit www.agr.mt.gov or contact Angie Nelson or Collin Watters at [406-444-2402](tel:406-444-2402) or gta@mt.gov.
- **Brownfields Grant Funding:** The FY14 ARC RFP has been posted to <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/grants-funding.htm>. All three RFPs, the Assessment Checklist and the FAQs are posted to our brownfields site. Proposals are due by 11:59 EST on January 22, 2014.

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.

- **GRANT PROPOSAL WRITING CLASS, FEBRUARY 11 & 12, 2014-8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M**
About the Instructor — Janet Cornish has been presenting proposal writing seminars for more than twenty years. She is an independent community development consultant and has been on the adjunct faculty at Montana Tech since 1991. [Registration Link](#). Fee \$110.00 for 2 day class and materials. Pre-registration is required. Class will be held at 65 E. Broadway, Butte MT.
- [Montana Department of Commerce Announces FundingMT.org](#)
- **2014 Harvesting Clean Energy:** Registration is open for the 2014 Harvesting Clean Energy conference, which will be held Feb. 4 through 6 at the Colonial Inn in Helena. The conference will bring in leading clean-energy experts and practitioners to talk about what's involved in creating successful clean-energy projects that can cut a farm's energy costs and produce power or feedstocks to market.
<http://harvestcleanenergy.org/events/conference.html>.
- The Economic Development Alliance of southeast Alberta has recently completed a Pulse Processing *feasibility study* and *investment attraction* and is ready to showcase the findings of this report during a live – free – webinar on **January 31st, 2014 at 10:00am MST**. Value-added food processing and agri-foods initiatives have been identified both federally and provincially as key areas of opportunity for global investment. Please take advantage of the chance to ask questions and get involved in the conversation! Register today <http://edasealberta.wordpress.com/2013/12/17/pulse-processing-webinar-january-31-2014/>



BEAR stands for Business Expansion and Retention and is the statewide program for keeping and growing Montana's businesses. [See Monthly Report](#)

In December:

- The MEDA BEAR Working Group held a conference call on December 2nd with MT Dept. of Commerce leadership to discuss how best to train BEAR Teams on MDOC and MDLI programs. BEAR Teams need a better understanding of MT Dept. of Commerce Programs because it is possible if a business qualifies for an IWT Grant they may also qualify for a MT Dept. of Commerce Program to further enhance the business need. Teams are asked to send Karyl Tobel their BEAR meeting date and time so that trainings can be organized.
- There were 14 Retention Visits held in December with 15 Action Items created.
Counties with retention visits: Flathead – 5, Gallatin – 5, Missoula - 3, Butte/Silver Bow – 1.
- Action Items were opened by: Gallatin – 11, and Flathead – 4.

December Outreach Specialist Visits:

Jim Smitham - 1	Rick Edwards - 1	Warren Vaughan - 6	Mike Jackson - 5
John Balsam - 1	Deborah Derrick Gass - 2	Mike Williams - 1	Angie McDonald - 1
JR Strand - 1	George Palmer - 1		

MEDA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Over the past four years, MEDA membership has dropped from 245 members to 204. This is largely attributed to tighter budgets as a result of the recession, thus one member of an organization has joined MEDA rather than an entire staff as in the past. During the December Board Meeting, Jim Smitham moved the President appoint a Membership Committee which is to include non-board members. The Membership Committee will evaluate the current dues structure, listserv information, conference fees, and strategize on how to get those using the listserv to join MEDA. If you are interested in joining this committee, please contact gloria@medamembers.org

MEDA WORKING GROUPS

MEDA CRDC/EDD Working Group – A conference call was held with the Montana EDD's and Jodi Duncan, EDA to discuss the EDD reporting process. It was decided to hold regular calls with the next date pending in May. Draft minutes are available at <http://www.medamembers.org/groups/crdcedd/>

MEDA BEAR Working Group – This working group met on Monday, December 2nd, to discuss activities within the statewide BEAR program. Minutes are available at <http://www.medamembers.org/groups/bear/bear-minutes/>

MEDA Transportation Working Group – Kathie Bailey, Chair, has organized a meeting with Montana Dept. of Transportation Director Michael Tooley and his Planning Department staff to visit with MEDA members on transportation projects and issues. The meeting will take place Tuesday, February 11th, 10:00am – 11:30am, 2nd Floor Commission Room, 2701 Prospect Ave., Helena.

MEDA Brownfields Working Group –Katharine Thompson, City of Kalispell, has agreed to Chair this working group. The first call is scheduled for Tuesday, January 14th, from 10:00am- 11:00am. Dial in using 712.432.0175 pin 217279.

MY TURN: MEMBERSHIP

MEDA is all about its membership, meaning it is all about you. For the first time, a Membership Committee is being formed to assist MEDA's leadership in guiding the growth of MEDA. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact [me](#) as soon as possible. We are anxious to make 2014 the best year ever for MEDA!