It is MEDA’s privilege to submit this report for the current contract to the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor and Industry and Montana BEAR Team participants regarding Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program activity in the state. The following is a summary of MEDA BEAR activities as provided for in the Scope of Work under Amended Contract MT-MEDA-ED-12-01 for the month of May 2012.

ACTIVITY REPORT FOR MAY 2012

The Mobilizing Rural Communities Webinar Series presents
A Different Kind of BEAR in Montana
Wednesday June 20, 2012 at 10:00 AM Mountain

Webinar Instructions  Call: 866-740-1260
Go to http://readytalk.com  enter Passcode: 3853940

The Montana BEAR Program will be featured during the Mobilizing Rural Communities Webinar series sponsored by Rural Dynamics, Inc. and the Northern Plains Initiative. RDI was founded in 1968 as Consumer Credit Counseling Service which now provides programs and develops partnerships to help youth, individuals, and families achieve economic independence. In partnership with the Northern Plains Initiative, involving Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota and Wyoming, the Initiative works to increase communication, community awareness, and community engagement. To act as the connector, informer, and advocate for the northern plains region, the NPI often facilitates meetings and various convenings. The webinar will include participants from the states involved in the NPI.

IMPORTANT IWT UPDATE
Chris Wilhelm, MDLI, sent the following email regarding the close of this Fiscal Year and the start of a new Fiscal Year in relation to IWT:

- New applications for SFY12 funding (not already submitted) must be received by the State by June 15th in order to allow time for processing paperwork.

  o **ACTION** Please send me a list of all applications in work for SFY12 funding and their recommended grant amount so we can shift funding to communities that can use it.

- In order to qualify for SFY12 funding, two things must be in place
  o The training must begin before June 30th
  o The financial agreement must be signed and returned to the State by June 30th.

Accruing Funding: Reimbursements for SFY12 applications that meet the above criteria will be accrued so we can process reimbursements after July 1st, which is next fiscal year. State staff will be working to compile reports of accrued funding for me by June 15th.
- Reimbursements for SFY12 funding must be submitted to the State within 90 days after the completion of training.

**SFY13 FUNDING**

SFY13 funding will be available July 1st. Applications may be submitted now, but they may not be processed until we finalize our SFY12 funding activities.

If you have questions, please contact Chris at 406.444.3341 or ChrisWilhelm@mt.gov

**WEBPAGE UPDATED**

Thanks to Karyl Tobel, MT Dept. of Commerce, for making sure our state BEAR page was updated. http://businessresources.mt.gov/BEAR/default.mcp

**BEAR TRAINING AT RCC CONFERENCE**

Dave Morey and Mike Jackson (see photo on right) presented with Mike and Gloria O’Rourke at the 2012 Rural Community Conference, *The Future of Rural*, held May 15-16 at the Montana State University campus in Bozeman, MT. One outcome from the presentation is that a business owner from White Sulphur Springs is now preparing to organize a BEAR Team for that community.

**STATEWIDE BEAR UPDATE**

**Activity by Geography**

These figures demonstrate the number of businesses contacted per region in May 2012

**TOTAL INTERVIEWS: 22**

- Flathead County – 4
- Yellowstone County - 1
- Lake County - 2
- Fergus County - 2
- Gallatin County - 3
- Missoula County - 5
- Ravalli County - 1
- Park County - 1
- Silver Bow County – 2
- Cascade County - 1
- Deer Lodge County - 1

**Activity By Outreach Specialists and Volunteers MAY 2012**

The count of interviews will not equal the number of outreach specialists due to the inclusion of other outreach specialists in the data collection.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Records</th>
<th>Outreach Specialist</th>
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<td>Cox, Patty</td>
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<td>McNeill, Linda</td>
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</table>
Cunningham, Carol   1  Moore, Chad   1
Daniels, Jessica    1  O'Rourke, Gloria  1
Egelhoff, Tom       2  Palmer, Gary   1
Eisenman, Amy       3  Palmer, George  2
Erickson, Todd      2  Rhodes, Laura  1
Gardner, DeLynn     1  Strand, JR   1
Hardy, Barbara      1  Strauss, Cassie 1
Jackson, Mike       4  Vannatta, Jeremy 1
                          Zdinak, Andy  2

Generated referrals: 18
Successfully closed: 47

Jobs created: 2
Jobs retained: 6

**Referral Type**
Information only     29
Project Driven      18

**Type of Need for Closed Referrals**
Domestic/global marketing and sales 10
Entrepreneurship/management        25
Financing/capital                  3
Information technologies           1
Operations/production              2
Workforce/training                 6

**HEARD AROUND THE STATE**
Business owners and Outreach Specialists had the following to share in May regarding:

**Training**
- People skills: Employer may hire a fantastic mechanic but he/she does not typically have good people skills.
- The top skills needed as a result of May interviews: Basic, Personal and Thinking Skills

**Recruitment Issues**
- Employers need flexible workforce and people with a work ethic, soft skills, and communication capabilities.
- Location
- Shifts

**Best Practices:**
- Continuing education is financially supported to allow recertification of positions that require it.

MEDABEARRReportMay2012.doc