

March 2011



INROADS

Paving the Way for Montana's Disadvantaged Business Enterprises



Montana Department of Transportation
DBE Program
Civil Rights Bureau
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

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DBE National Review Team visits Montana

FHWA's National Review Team for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act spent last week in Montana reviewing our DBE program. They reviewed compliance with the federal regulations, federal policy, and the accuracy of ARRA data reporting. The team visited with various MDT staff in Missoula, Great Falls and Helena. The team also had the opportunity to visit with 8 DBEs to hear any concerns they may have. Thanks to the DBEs that were able to attend those meetings!

The National Review Team asked questions of the DBEs regarding Commercially Useful Function (CUF), prompt pay, joint checks, how do DBEs hear of jobs, how do DBEs hear of committed work, do primes hold retainage on contracts, how do DBEs get their plans for jobs, do DBEs feel there is bid shopping out there, bonding, DBE goals and DBE fraud.

Montana was the 49th state that this team has reviewed and the team was impressed by what the program has done to improve the use of DBEs in a race-neutral goal environment. Program instruments that were mentioned by the team that made an impact on DBE businesses were the DBE Toolbox, the annual Needs Assessment, the DBE quote request via the MDT website and the DBE map.

The close-out meeting reported that the team was impressed with the strength of Montana's DBE program with a race-neutral goal. The team noted that running a successful race-neutral program is difficult at best.

There are three rankings for the National Review Team. The rankings are Satisfactory (Green), Needs Improvement (Yellow), and Unsatisfactory (Red). Montana successfully received the highest ranking of Satisfactory or Green and joined only 43% of the states that received that ranking. The National Review Team will eventually conduct 52 reviews to include Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. Of the 49 states/agencies that have been already reviewed, 41% of the DBE programs need improvement and 16% of the programs were unsatisfactory.

MDT is excited that the NRT ranked our state as satisfactory as well as having some of our current program reported as "best practices."

Do you know someone who could be a DBE?

If they are a small business owned by a minority or a woman and have less than \$1,320,000 in personal net worth and less than \$22.41 million in annual sales averaged over the last 3 years, they may qualify! Tell them to contact Wendy Stewart, DBE Program Manager at 406-444-6337 or westewart@mt.gov for an application packet.

**Welcome,
Recently
Certified DBEs!**

Bonnie Jares
Jares Fence Company
Fencing

Baseline Supply LLC
Tracey Meents
Highway Construction
Supplies



Bid and Contracting Opportunities

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MDT holds two bid lettings each month.

Proposed for letting April 2011

UPN/UNIT	PROJECT ID	FINANCIAL DISTRICT	PROJECT DESIGNATION	TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION	LENGTH MILES
4075 000	NH 14-3(14)108	5	SHAWMUT – WEST	MAJOR REHAB – WITHOUT ADDED CAPACITY	8.4
6947 000	STPP 49-1(21)9	2	STONE CREEK – NORTH	RESURFACING – SEAL & COVER	7.1
7352 000	STPP 39-1(45)35	4	NORTH OF COLSTRIP - NORTH	RESURFACING – ASPHALT (THIN LIFT<=60.00MM)(INC SAF.IMP.)(PAVE PRES)	10.3
7393 000	HSIP 292-1(13)7	1	SF109 FLASHER HODGSON RD	TRAFFIC SIGNALS & LIGHTING	
6835 000	BH 5299(85)	3	BR DECK REHAB/REPAIR 09	MAJOR BRIDGE REHAB WITHOUT ADDED CAPACITY	
4158 001	MT-STPS 213-1(15)0	3	RR OVERPASS – CUT BANK	RELOCATION	1.3

DBE participation for MDT Awarded Contracts for December and January:

Prime DBE	Location	Project	DBE Participation
A M Welles Inc	SF069- Guardrail-Bozeman NE	HSIP 86-1(38)3	0.00%
H L Construction Inc	SF079 York Rd – NE of Helena	HSIP 280-1(23)14	100%
Jim Gilman Excavating Inc <i>Promark</i>	SF079 Turn Bay-E of Anaconda	HSIP 19-1(44)7	8.21%
Prince Inc <i>Arrow Striping Yellowstone Environmental Contracting</i>	W of Jct MT 16-West	STPS 201-2(11)38	3.36%
Riverside Contracting Inc – Msla	East of Nashua – East	NH 1-9(48)565	0.00%
Yellowstone Electric Co	SF089 Signal Jct S-518	HSIP 8-2(76)50	0.00%
Average Participation			2.38 %



Money is available to highway related DBEs for training and travel. You must be a certified highway-related DBE and get **prior** approval from Shannon, it's that easy and it's first come, first served.

This year's grants are:

\$250 for travel/per diem costs

\$750 for training costs (this can be for you or your employees)

How to Grow Your Small Business

From About.com

Many successful small business owners have at least one thing in common – the ability to see the big picture and envision what their success will look like tomorrow. Here are some of the activities successful small business owners complete to place their focus on the future and keep moving forward.



Use Goal-Setting to Push Boundaries

Goals can be a great way to clarify your focus, measure progress and track achievements. And for the most successful among us, goals also present an opportunity to push the lines of your comfort zone and take calculated risks.

The more you are willing to stretch and challenge yourself, the more you have to gain over the long term. Creating a plan for this growth in the form of long- and short-term goals, a business plan or even single targeted tasks can help your business reach new levels of success.

Put the Focus on Customer Service

Being able to retain desirable clients plays a significant role in the continued success of a small business. Not only does having regular customers mean regular income, but happy clients can also provide powerful word-of-mouth marketing.

Along with providing your clients with an exceptional product or service, you can encourage repeat business by being customer service-focused. This means asking for and acting on feedback, addressing issues and complaints quickly and thoroughly, and being consistently accessible and accountable.

Commit to Continuous Learning

You should understand that no matter how much you achieve, there will always be more to be learned and applied for even greater success.

Even if you don't have the time or the desire to learn in a traditional classroom setting, there are a number of ways you can advance your knowledge and continue to learn so your business can continue to thrive. Continuous learning can take the form of online training, self-paced programs, collaborative opportunities, mentoring, and even reading.

Learn How to Delegate

Whether you have employees, subcontractors or family pitching in, learning how to delegate effectively can be the difference between reaching new heights and burning out.

Many small business owners are accustomed to doing a variety of things themselves, so it can be challenging to identify the tasks you don't need to do yourself and assign the work to someone else. Once you overcome the challenge, though, you will have more time to dedicate to what you do best -- grow your business.

Increase Your Productivity

Some of what you do as a small business owner will be routine; there are a variety of daily tasks that will need to be accomplished to keep your business running smoothly.

The more effective you are when it comes to completing the day-to-day business management tasks (the ones that you don't delegate, that is), the more potential your small business has for greater success. You can boost your productivity by developing systems to streamline these processes.

Stay Current with Technology

Technology plays a role in every business, so all small business owners can benefit from not only having an understanding of the technology that impacts them directly, but also keeping track of how it changes.

Keeping up with new and changing technology can help small business owners make better decisions; and it can help save money, time and other resources.

Change Up Your Marketing

Many small business owners are discovering how online marketing can add a new dynamic to promoting their goods and services. The most successful small businesses are willing to explore new outlets of online marketing -- in combination with their offline marketing activities -- to see what produces the most interest.

Consistently changing, testing and mixing your marketing activities can be a valuable way to see what works, what doesn't and what type of result it produces.

While you do not need to do all of these activities at once, most successful small business owners find a way to work them in over time. To gain momentum, start with one or two that are already aligned with the way you run your business, and then start to make changes to incorporate the others gradually.

MDT Civil Rights Bureau Directory

Wendy Stewart DBE Program Manager/Certifications	westewart@mt.gov	(406)444-6337
Shannon Hahn DBE Supportive Services Coordinator	shahn@mt.gov	(406)444-7287
Andy Hyatt-Marcucci Compliance Technician	ahyattmarcucci@mt.gov	(406)444-6331
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Bill Anderson Title VI & EEO Compliance Specialist	bianderson@mt.gov	(406)444-6334
Kathy Terrio EEO & Labor Compliance Specialist	kterrio@mt.gov	(406)444-9270
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March

Do you need some specialized training for your employees?

Are you struggling with a unique business issue?

If you need some training for your employees or you would like the DBE program to conduct training OR you need some personalized consulting, contact Shannon at 444-7287 and she can set it up!

And watch for upcoming training...Spring will have lots of opportunities!

Meetings, Workshops, and Training Opportunities

April

Sound HR Practices and Stress Management for Small Businesses Sponsored by the DBE program

4/13 9 am to 4 pm
Hilton Garden, 2520 14th St SW, Great Falls

4/14 9 am to 4 pm
Best Western, 1345 1st St, Havre

Human Resources – Establish accountability & build commitment, Build an employee handbook, Design a new hire program

Stress – Practical tools for stress, Action plans for life balance, Revitalize for the New Year

Cost: \$20, Certified DBEs are free!
You must register at: https://app.mt.gov/cgi-bin/confreg2/index.cgi?CONFERENCE_ID=843&ACTION=INTRO

4/6 All day
Crowne Plaza, Billings
The Small Business Development Center Network is hosting the 2nd annual Invest in Success Conference on April 6th. The conference is designed to help owners of growing large and small businesses of all industries and offers a unique opportunity to obtain skills, knowledge and resources.
Contact:
<https://sites.google.com/site/sbdcinvestinsuccess/home>

4/15 8:30 am
Increase Your Revenues And Dramatically Improve Your Margins
Emerson Cultural Center, Bozeman

<http://www.matr.net/files/AveusWorkshop--YPO.pdf>

4/19 8:30 am
SBC Strive Towards Sustainability Workshop
Office Solutions and Services, 1020 North Ave West, Missoula
Helping businesses prepare for higher energy prices and a carbon constrained world
Contact: sts@sustainablebusinesscouncil.org
824-7336

4/27 12:30 pm
Marketing For Results!
Holiday Inn Bozeman, Bozeman
Learn the three stages of marketing, successful marketing strategies, messages that work, NO/LOW budget marketing, marketing materials, and 14 fabulous tricks
Contact: www.medamembers.org/Marketing2001.pdf