

# Montana University System Workforce Development Taskforce

May 24, 2012 Update to the BOR

Co-chairs:

*MSU President Waded Cruzado & Deputy Commissioner John E. Cech*

## **Taskforce Mission:**

*The Montana University System is committed to understanding the needs and providing users training and education programs in Montana necessary to help support increased business and industry growth.*

## **Overview:**

In November 2011, the Board of Regents created a statewide Workforce Development Taskforce and appointed MSU President Waded Cruzado and Deputy Commissioner John Cech to serve as co-chairs. Steering committee membership includes: Stefani Hicswa, President of MCC; Pat Wise, Governor's Office; Steve York, Assistant Superintendent of OPI; Don Blacketter, Chancellor of MT Tech; and James Limbaugh, Chancellor of MSU Northern. Full taskforce membership includes leadership from each of Montana's two-year and four-year institutions and additional representatives from State Department of Labor and Jobs Corp.

Since the formation of the Workforce Development Taskforce, the group has held two meetings: 1) March 8, 2012 in Sidney, Montana, involving over 60 people and 2) May 9, 2012, in Helena, Montana. Members of the Taskforce have reached out to more than 25 different business and industries through personal visits to communities in the Sidney and Williston areas, as well as two days of telephone conference interviews conducted by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Governor's Office of Economic Development with business both within the Bakken region and those outside the region who are affected by the worker shortage.

All discussions involved learning more about the training needs of industry employees and how Montana's colleges can expand or offer new courses and outreach. A shortage of housing for the growing workforce was the number one issue which emerged. Other issues centered around stresses on basic community infrastructure resulting from rapid energy development and population growth and loss of workers in the community to the high paying jobs of the energy sector.

Industry members spoke of the need for short-term training focusing on issues such as safety and general equipment operation, welding, and commercial driver's license followed by the need for leadership training and other people skills. The companies need short, stackable training programs. They are receptive to receiving online, hybrid, and other distance learning types of training. They would like to see something developed in Montana that resembles the TrainND (Train North Dakota) program which is a consortium of four colleges in North Dakota. Williston State College is anticipating they will serve 10,000 noncredit students in 2012.

## Outcomes of the Taskforce

November 2011 – May 2012

### 1) Creation of a Statewide Workforce Training Proposal to the US DOL:

**Lead Institution:** Montana State University Billings – College of Technology

**Consortium Members:**

Montana State University Billings – College of Technology (Applicant)	Billings, MT
Montana State University Northern	Havre, MT
Montana State University Great Falls - College of Technology	Great Falls, MT
Montana State University – Gallatin College Programs	Bozeman, MT
University of Montana Missoula - College of Technology	Missoula, MT
Montana Tech College of Technology of the University of Montana	Butte, MT
University of Montana – Bitterroot College Program	Hamilton, MT
University of Montana Helena – College of Technology	Helena, MT
University of Montana Western	Dillon, MT
Dawson Community College	Glendive, MT
Flathead Valley Community College	Kalispell, MT
Miles Community College	Miles City, MT
Williston State College	Williston, ND

### **Description of MTN – Montana Training Network Project:**

We will create a response network comprised of public two-year colleges across Montana and Western North Dakota (including a Tribal College) to leverage the expertise and resources of each campus to respond to workforce training needs in the areas of healthcare and energy. This Montana Training Network (MTN) consortium approach will enable 14 two-year colleges to apply existing faculty expertise, courses, and training capabilities to serve growing healthcare and traditional and nontraditional energy workforce training needs in the region.

The MTN consortium will make use of modular designed courses, stackable certificates, remote training labs, and a combination of on-line and distance delivery to help the consortium colleges prepare students to meet healthcare and energy employer workforce training needs. The MTN consortium model also provides linkage between high TAA regions of Western Montana with the booming Bakken region of eastern Montana and Western North Dakota.

The MTN consortium network would make it possible to have electronic delivery from one site to another (when/where one site has resources and expertise that is not available at another particular site). However, many of the trainings will be held face-to face due to the nature of the training and the equipment that is required to train in the healthcare and energy careers. The consortium will link the State's institutions together through Cisco Telepresence, foster on-line development, and support delivery of credit and noncredit programming.

## **2) Established Protocols for Rapid Response Communication in Bakken Region**

- a. MCC President Stefani Hicswa will serve as the point of-contact for two-year education for the Bakken region of Montana
- b. MSU Northern Chancellor James Limbaugh to serve as the four-year education point-of-contact for the Bakken region of Montana.

Both President Hicswa and Chancellor Limbaugh will coordinate with the Statewide Workforce Development Taskforce strategies and issues related to rapid response, communication, and engagement of Montana's colleges to serve the growing needs of the region.

## **3) Identified Available Non-Credit Rapid Response Training Programs**

- a. Grid of programs (attached)
- b. Support from funding secured from Senator Baucus to create a comprehensive study and produce a catalog of available educational resources at participating institutions