



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

## People Worth Knowing: Lesa Evers

If Lesa Evers looks familiar, you may have met her in her previous job at the Montana Department of Commerce where she promoted economic development in Indian Country. This summer Lesa began working in the Governor's Office of Economic Development as a Specialist promoting Indian equity and economic development on Montana's reservations. She works directly with the tribal economic developers and serves as the point person for referral to a variety of programs with grant or loan money.

"I want any business person on any of Montana's reservations to feel comfortable calling me. The wide array of economic development programs can often be confusing and intimidating, but I'm here to lend a hand and hopefully make it easier. It is an honor to serve both Governor Schweitzer and Indian Country," Lesa explains.

Lesla typically assists entrepreneurs and tribes looking for start-up or expansion dollars. She also does a lot of project coordination working closely with tribes and state agencies on specific economic development projects. With her broad network of contacts, she can refer businesses to organizations that provide professional consultation, assist with business and marketing plan development, and help access a variety of programs. She understands the criteria for accessing the various programs—for example, some might require matching funds—and presents all the options so that business owners can decide what they want to pursue.

"Although our office doesn't actually provide financial assistance, we can connect people and projects to dollars and resources in the field. We work hard to establish relationships with the service providers because we are all partners in economic development in Indian Country, and we don't want to duplicate efforts," Lesa says. "Our office reflects Governor Schweitzer's commitment to creating jobs and growth in Indian Country and for Montana's tribes. I believe Native people are recognizing that and are developing a level of comfort in working with us."

Lesla represents the Governor's Office of Economic Development on the State Tribal Economic Development (STED) Commission. Administratively attached to the Department of Commerce, the Commission promotes and encourages economic development on Montana reservations. It helps guide the department's Indian Country Economic Development program, which has provided financial assistance to the Tribes and to entrepreneurs through the Montana Indian Equity Fund and *Indianpreneurship*™ training.

Lesla was born on the Blackfeet Reservation and is enrolled in the Turtle Mountain Band of the Chippewas of North Dakota. She attended Montana State University and Matanuska-Susitna Community College in Palmer, Alaska. She started working at age fifteen as a Certified Nurses Aide and has had a lifelong interest in business. Most of her family lives on the Blackfeet reservation.

"Until I took this job, I really didn't know a lot about the other reservations. Working as an Economic Development Specialist for the Governor's Office of Economic Development has allowed me to connect with my people and my larger Indian family. I learn so much through every situation. It is doubly rewarding to be able to learn and serve at the same time. I put a face of a family member on everything I do, whether it's helping a person get a job or build a business. It's very important to me to help people gain a living wage to provide for themselves and their families. I'm happy to be in a job that builds self-esteem, respect, and independence."

Lesla lives in Helena with her son Elliott, a student at Capital High School.

Lesla can be reached at (406) 444-1366 or [levers@mt.gov](mailto:levers@mt.gov).



## WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

*Inroads*, the Montana DBE Newsletter, is your tool to gain new ideas, meet new people, network with other businesses, blow your own horn, and move your business down the road to success.

- ◆ Have you or an associate won an award or been promoted?
- ◆ Do you have an idea for an article, or would you like to have your firm profiled in the newsletter?
- ◆ Do you want to show off your good looks or your contracting handiwork?
- ◆ Do you want to hire an employee or buy/sell a business-related item?

Let us know what's new! Send questions, comments, ideas, photos, and want-ads to: [turnerandassocmt@aol.com](mailto:turnerandassocmt@aol.com) or call (406) 443-8096.

# INROADS

## Bid and Contracting Opportunities

### Web Site Quick Tip: Include These Seven Pages

Does your web site have these seven pages?

1. Contact Us
2. Testimonials
3. Privacy Policy
4. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
5. "Gimme" Page
6. About Us
7. Confirmation

We'll tell you more about each one in future newsletters.



### MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION—Proposed for letting December 4, 2008

UPN/UNIT	PROJECT ID	FINANCIAL DISTRICT	PROJECT DESIGNATION	TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION	LENGTH MILES
5783 000	IM 90-1(170)29	1	St. Regis area structures	Major bridge rehabilitation without added capacity	
2703 002	IM 90-1(153)28	1	St. Regis East & West	Restoration and Rehab—PCCP	17.6
3833 000	STPP 13-3(4)83	2	Sappington Jct—South	Reconstruction with added capacity	1.7
5380 000	HSIP 15-5(110)281	3	2002 intersection improvement—GF	Roadway and roadside safety improvements	
4862 000	BR 205-1(30)12	2	Structures—SE of Manhattan	Bridge replacement with no added capacity	
4869 000	BR 9037(25)	3	Canal 6 KM SW Valier	Bridge replacement with no added capacity	

### WESTERN FEDERAL LANDS HIGHWAY DIVISION

Solicitation #	Description	Closing Date	Closing Time
DTFH70-08-R-00032	Rehabilitate Going to the Sun Road Big Bend to Logan Pass Phase VIII	Summer 2009	

### MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Solicitation #	Description	Closing Date	Closing Time
308950	Troy Rest Area Maintenance	11/24/08	3:00 p.m.
STPX0002 (771); UPN 5714	Wetland Feasibility Study, Willow Creek Crow Reservation	none specified	

### MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Solicitation #	Description	Closing Date	Closing Time
RFP 09 -1721R	Noxious Weed Programmatic EIS	11/14/08	2:00 p.m.

### MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

Solicitation #	Description	Closing Date	Closing Time
Beartooth WMA	Repair 4.6 miles of four-wire fence	11/6/08	3:00 p.m.

### MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

Solicitation #	Description	Closing Date	Closing Time
095090 CSO	Lynch Creek Rehabilitation	11/07/08	2:00 p.m.
095130 CSO	Personnel research, analysis, descriptions	11/26/08	2:00 p.m.

## Meetings, Workshops, and Training Opportunities

<b>Nov. 5</b>	<b>Entrepreneur Bootcamp</b> \$20, Best Western Gran Tree Inn, Bozeman, MT Contact: Tech Ranch (406) 556-0272	<b>Dec. 4</b>	<b>Payroll Compliance Workshop</b> \$319, Best Western Great Northern, Helena Contact: Lorman Education Services (866) 352-9539
<b>Nov. 6</b>	<b>Doing Business with the Government</b> \$35, Headwaters RC&D, Butte, MT Contact: Deanna Johnson (406) 782-7333 x 306 or Ashley Pope x 300	<b>Feb. 9-11 2009</b>	<b>Pavement Test Track Conference</b> Latest research findings Auburn Marriott, Auburn AL Contact: www.ncat.us
<b>Nov. 6-7</b>	<b>2008 Highway Quality Conference</b> Developing quality partnerships, maintenance, and workforce. San Antonio, TX Contact: Bob Templeton (512) 301-9899 or btemplenphq@aol.com	<b>Feb. 10-12</b>	<b>International Construction Management Conference</b> Orlando, FL Contact: Ed Tarrant (202) 289-4434 or etarrant@artba.org
<b>Nov. 11-13</b>	<b>International Warm-Mix Asphalt Conference</b> Marriott Nashville Airport Nashville, TN Contact: www.warmmixasphalt.com	<b>Apr. 1-3</b>	<b>Design-Build in Transportation Conference</b> Baltimore, MD Contact: Jerry Yakowenko (202) 366-1562 or gerald.yakowenko@fwha.dot.gov
<b>Nov. 18-19</b>	<b>Small Business Contracting Summit</b> The preeminent small business West Coast contracting summit Seaport Marina Hotel, Long Beach, CA Contact: Nat'l Assn. of Small Business Contractors (888) 861-9290	<b>Apr. 22-24</b>	<b>National Conference on Preservation, Repair, and Rehabilitation of Concrete Pavements</b> St. Louis, MO Contact: Shiraz Tayabji (410) 997-9020 or www.fwha.dot.gov/pavement/concrete/2009CPTPconf.cfm

## Surviving the Recession

Josh Turner

“The plan is useless; but the planning is essential.” Dwight D. Eisenhower

If you've been in business for a while, you may have weathered the recessions of 1971, 1982, 1992, or 2001. Recessions are scary—especially for small businesses. And this one may be the worst one yet.

But you can survive it. First, take a deep breath and don't panic. Don't rush into cutting prices, dropping products or services, selling off inventory, or laying off people. Instead, spend some time on your business fundamentals.

### 1. Planning

The first fundamental is planning, which essentially means taking a close look at things. Track your progress on cash flow, sales, expenses, new projects, customer satisfaction, traffic, advertising spending, speed of customer payment, etc.

Look at the built-in indicators that drive your sales—or expenses—and think about how you can get early warning about changes that might affect you. It may be street traffic, floor traffic, internet traffic, e-mail response rates, deal flow, or lead generation. Look at them early, before they play all the way through your system.

Tighten your planning and shorten your planning cycle. Review your progress more often than usual. Look at things by the week instead of the month, or the month instead of the quarter.

### 2. Cash Drivers

The second fundamental is watching the drivers of cash flow. Keep a close eye on your *burn rate*—what you spend every month to keep your business running, such as salaries,

rent, marketing, and office expenses. If your revenue goes down, you may be able to sacrifice profits for a while, but if revenues stay below the burn rate you will lose capital and maybe your business.

### 3. People

The third fundamental is people. Don't make the mistake of laying people off too soon. No matter how carefully you follow your plan, layoffs may be necessary. But don't be too quick, because the recession WILL end. Good people are hard to find—especially trained people who know your business.

*Josh Turner is a DBE in Helena who provides enterprise development consulting for businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. Her 15-year old business, Turner and Associates, is reachable at [turnerandassocmt@aol.com](mailto:turnerandassocmt@aol.com) and 406-443-8096.*

*In each DBE newsletter we give a management or marketing tip and recommend a book that can help grow your business. This month's recommended book is [The Plan-As-You-Go Business Plan](#), by Tim Berry (available at [Amazon.com](#) and your local book store).*

## Useful Resources

Governor's Indian Affairs Liaison: Jennifer Perez Cole, 406-444-3713, [jpcole@mt.gov](mailto:jpcole@mt.gov)  
 Governor's Office of Economic Development: Lesa Evers, 406-444-1366  
 Montana Indian Business Alliance: <http://www.mibaonline.org/SmallBusinessResources.html>  
 Southeastern Development Corporation: <http://www.semcd.org/>  
 Montana Cooperative Development Center: <http://www.mcdc.coop/>

### Contracting opportunities:

State of Montana: <http://www.mt.gov/dao/gsd/osbs/>  
 Montana General Services Division: [www.gsd.mt.gov](http://www.gsd.mt.gov)  
 City of Billings: [www.ci.billings.mt.us](http://www.ci.billings.mt.us)  
 Great Falls Tribune: [www.greatfallstribune.com](http://www.greatfallstribune.com)

**Online representation and certifications applications:** <http://orca.bpn.gov>

### Business topics/ Starting a business:

<http://humanresources.about.com>  
[www.business.com](http://www.business.com)  
<http://www.entrepreneur.com/bizstartups>  
 Small Business Administration: <http://www.sba.gov/>  
 Internal Revenue Service: [www.irs.gov/businesses/small](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small)

### Business training:

Montana Business Connection: <http://www.mbc.umt.edu/calendar/default.asp>  
 Montana Small Business Development Center: <http://commerce.mt.gov/>  
 Indianpreneur and NxLevel training: Phil Belangie, Montana Department of Commerce, 406-721-3663, [pbelangie@mt.gov](mailto:pbelangie@mt.gov)

**National Highway Specifications:** <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/>

**Online Courses:** [www.elementK.com/corp/catalog.html](http://www.elementK.com/corp/catalog.html)

## 30-SECOND WRITING CLINIC

### Sick sentence:

Our business owner said, by way of illustration, that he had made a bid to the prime contractor that included sufficient funds to make a purchase of two new post-hole diggers.

### Healthy Sentence:

Our business owner said, for example, that he had bid to the prime contractor for enough money to buy two new post-hole diggers.

# MDT Civil Rights Bureau Directory

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## Thanksgiving



D	Y	K	W	N	O	T	G	N	I	H	S	A	W	T
V	S	A	N	O	V	E	M	B	E	R	U	N	S	F
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E	A	P	N	I	K	O	J	B	E	B	V	S	H	X
T	Y	W	L	E	L	N	X	Q	C	R	T	A	P	V
A	F	L	H	Y	I	O	Y	K	A	I	N	B	B	S
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T	R	R	A	L	A	V	H	J	H	Y	Y	B	C	L
I	B	S	L	M	I	D	A	W	J	R	E	A	N	I
N	M	A	I	N	Q	P	Z	S	H	J	O	U	R	P
U	E	L	G	Y	A	D	S	R	U	H	T	C	P	P
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COLONISTS	MAYFLOWER	SETTLERS
FAMILY	MEAL	THANKSGIVING
FASTING	NOVEMBER	THURSDAY
FRIENDS	PILGRIMS	UNITED STATES
HARVEST	PLYMOUTH ROCK	WASHINGTON
HOLIDAY	PRAYER	

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## INROADS

Paving the Way for Montana's Disadvantaged Business Enterprises

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