



Today's students. Tomorrow's business professionals.

Montana Association

Eric Swenson, State Advisor
Montana Office of Public Instruction
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501
406.444.7991
eswenson@mt.gov

September 28, 2011

Dear Montana BPA Chapter Advisors & Prospective Advisors

Many signs of Fall are all around us—the turning of leaves, hitting the highways for ballgames, cooler mornings, the first chapter meetings, regional advisor meetings, and the occurrence of the Autumnal Equinox—so it must be time for the Montana BPA 2011 Fall Update. The past year as your state advisor was a great experience and I am looking forward to an even better 2011-2012 Business Professionals of America membership year and the opportunity to work with some of the best business educators, advisors, leaders, mentors, and students around.

There have been several new developments and many great opportunities created within Montana BPA over the course of the summer and into this fall. Below are updates and important details for the Montana association as we all gear up for the 2011-2012 membership year.

Montana BPA Website & the Montana Advisor Manual

With the continued support and Corporate Sponsorship from 3 Rivers Communications and the expertise and efforts of our Montana BPA Executive Secretary Anza Ketterman the Montana BPA Website, www.bpamt.org, continues to be the source of information for Montana's advisors, students, and those wanting to learn more about our association.

Over the course of the summer, Anza and I have worked to update all the files of the [Montana Advisor Manual](#) and upload them on the [Advisor Manual](#) page of the [Montana BPA Website](#). Almost all of the forms and documents received a facelift, including the [Table of Contents](#), and are updated to reflect 2011-2012 details and deadlines.

Be sure to take some time to download the new files including the [Montana BPA Calendar of Events](#), the Montana BPA State Leadership Scholarship Application (in both [Word](#) and [PDF](#) formats), the [State Officer Candidate Application Packet](#), and the [State Officer Team's Montana BPA Fall 2011 Newsletter](#). Additionally, the [2011-2012 Workplace Skills Assessment Programs Events at a Glance](#) is ready for your review as well as preliminary details about the 2012 National Leadership Conference in Chicago.

Over the course of the next week I will be mailing a complete Montana Advisor Manual to new chapter advisors and to other new advisors as chapter membership registrations are submitted.

Montana BPA State Executive Board

The [State Executive Board](#) of the Montana association of Business Professionals of America met in Helena the end of July for their yearly meeting to review last year's events and to plan for this year. The [Montana BPA State Executive Board](#) is made up of all eight regional coordinators, our secondary and postsecondary Classroom Educators Advisory Council (CEAC) representatives, the current [Montana BPA State President](#), a Postsecondary division representative, the State Officer Coordinator, the Executive Secretary, and the State Advisor.

A complete [State Executive Board directory](#) can be found on the [Advisor Manual](#) page of the [Montana BPA Website](#) (www.bpamt.org) as well as the [minutes](#) from the July 22-23, 2011 meeting. One important item to note from this year's meeting was a \$1.00 increase in Montana association dues; thus increasing dues from \$7.00 to \$8.00 per student and advisor. With this change, membership registration dues will be \$12.00 for National dues and \$8.00 for State.

This year I am excited to welcome two new regional coordinators to the State Executive Board: Jamie Toivonen (Superior) for Region 2 and Kerri Cobb (Bozeman) for Region 4. Both of these leaders bring a great level of energy, excitement, and professionalism to their regions, the Board, and the entire association. Please refer to the [State](#)

[Executive Board directory](#) on the [Advisor Manual](#) page for a complete listing of regional coordinators and their E-mail addresses. An updated [Map of Regions](#) is available on the [Advisor Manual](#) page if you are not sure of the region in which your chapter belongs. Additionally, the [Calendar of Events](#) lists the dates and locations of the Fall Advisor Meetings and regional leadership conferences. If you have not been contacted by your regional coordinator about your region's meeting, please contact your coordinator to get the details.

State Officer Team

The [2011-2012 State Officer Team](#) got off to a great start during the Montana Career and Technical Student Organizations' (CTSOs) Leadership Camp in Bigfork the first weekend of June. During Leadership Camp they set their goals for the year, began planning for their year as an officer team, picked their Buddy Regions and Buddy Chapters, and chose the theme for the [2012 State Leadership Conference](#)—*Unmask Your Future*. The theme will be based upon a Mardi Gras/Masquerade design scheme. Be ready for a colorful, exciting, and festive State Leadership Conference!

Below is a listing of the Buddy Regions for each officer as well as their home chapters.

<u>State Officer</u>	<u>School/Chapter</u>	<u>Buddy Region</u>
Amy Calley, Membership	Huntley Project	Region 1
Molly McGonigal, President	Cascade	Region 2 & 3
Rae Huether, Secretary	Absarokee	Region 4 & 5
Lily Westerhoff, Communications	Huntley Project	Region 6
Lexyn Walker, Vice President	Plevna	Region 7
Nicole Moore, Public Relations	Sidney	Region 8

In addition to the Montana BPA [Fall 2011 Newsletter](#), the officers will also be sending out Buddy Chapter letters to all the chapters within their Buddy Region starting the end of September/first of October. Advisors, please be sure to share both of these publications with your members. One of the goals of the officer team is to increase communication with the chapter members and you are key to helping them achieve this goal.

Trading Pin, T-Shirt, and State Program Cover Contest

The details and guidelines for the [National Leadership Conference Trading Pin](#) and the [State Leadership Conference's T-shirt](#) and [Program Cover](#) design contests are posted within the State section of the [Montana BPA Website's Advisor Manual](#) page.

Entries for the [National Leadership Conference Trading Pin](#) must be received by State Officer Coordinator Staci Auck by Wednesday, October 26, and entries for the [State Leadership Conference's T-shirt](#) and [Program Cover](#) have a December 1 deadline.

Online Membership Registration

The registration of local chapter membership continues to be processed through the National website via the Register My Chapter system, <http://www.registermychapter.com/bpamem/>. For instructions on using the online system are on the National website, www.bpa.org, under the Membership Reg. item of the Membership tab. Look for the link to the Registration Guide (<http://www.bpa.org/membership/regguide>). Should you need further assistance, you may refer to the [Online Membership Registration Instructions](#) document on the Montana BPA Website, contact the National Office, your regional coordinator, or give me a call (406.444.7991). Please do not hesitate to reach out and get in touch with someone, help is just a phone call or an E-mail away.

State Leadership Conference

Planning has already started for the 2012 State Leadership Conference. This year's conference will be March 11-13 at the Montana State University-Billings College of Technology, the Holiday Inn Grand Montana and the Billings Hotel and Convention Center. [Preliminary information for planning purposes](#) can be found in the State section of the [Advisor Manual](#) page including registration fees, due dates, and details about hotel rates and reservations.

The hardworking and dedicated State Leadership Conference Committee of Julie O'Dell, Competitive Events Coordinator, Elaine Stedman, Judged Events Coordinator, Molly Barta, Judged Events Recruiter, and Becky DePuydt, State Leadership Conference Registration Coordinator, will again be in place to ensure a very organized and professional conference for all attendees. They are such a great team of dedicated professionals and are an asset to our association.

This year, Montana BPA will be utilizing the National Center's online pre-submission system for those contests which are to be sent to Judged Events Coordinator Elaine Stedman. The system is the same one used for the National Leadership Conference and contest specifics and pre-submission details will be provided in future communications.

As a reminder, just as last year, after the preliminary judging only the Top 20 in Graphic Design Promotion will advance to Finals for interviewing/presenting and the Top 15 in Video Production will present at State following preliminary judging. Also, as stated in the [State Qualifiers' Formula](#) only two teams in the same event per school/chapter can advance from the regional level to compete at State, no matter if three or more teams from the same school/chapter qualify in the same event.

National Leadership Conference

The [2012 National Leadership Conference](#), *Reach New Heights*, will head to “the other” Windy City of Chicago, Illinois. The 2012 NLC will be April 25-29 with all competitive events and general sessions being held at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. The Hyatt Regency Chicago will be the NLC headquarters and is also the Montana association’s hotel—this is the same hotel when BPA was last in Chicago for the 2002 NLC.

The [Advisor Manual](#) page of the [Montana BPA Website](#) includes preliminary NLC information including [Hyatt Regency Chicago](#) room rates and contact information, [General Information on 2012 Leadership Conference](#), and a [NLC Schedule of Events](#).

During the 2012 NLC, Montana BPA will again host a Montana BPA Special Event. Ideas for the Special Event were discussed during the State Executive Board meeting and specifics and details will be announced at a later date.

Workplace Skills Assessment Program

The Workplace Skills Assessment Program is your source for information about BPA’s competitive events. This summer, members of CEAC spent a lot of time reviewing and updating the Workplace Skills Assessment Program as well as completing a thorough audit of the 2011-2012 competitive events.

The 2012 edition of the Workplace Skills Assessment Program, as well as all supporting materials, can be downloaded via the National BPA Download Center (www.bpa.org/compete/eventdownload). Within this year’s Workplace Skills Assessment Program you will see two new Pilot events: Computer Modeling and Business Meeting Management. Please note, the Montana association is not participating in the piloting procedure for these two events; therefore, they will not be offered at the State Leadership Conference.

A PDF version of this Fall Update will be available under the Tab 5 Communications section of the [Advisor Manual](#) page of the [Montana BPA Website](#) for downloading, along with the current and future Montana BPA Newsletters. I hope your school year has gotten off to a great start and membership and activities are starting to come together for your chapter. Please do not hesitate to call (406.444.7991) or send me an E-mail (eswenson@mt.gov) with your questions, comments, or concerns. Thank you for your interest and dedication to Business Professionals of America and for providing such tremendous opportunities for your students and communities.

Yours in Membership

Eric Swenson