THE INDIAN COUNTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ICED) PROGRAM

The Montana Department of Commerce administers the Indian Country Economic Development (ICED) grant program intended to improve economic development opportunities for the eight tribal governments in Montana. Governor Schweitzer has provided funding for the Indian Country Economic Development Program since 2005. The Montana Department of Commerce has approached economic development in Indian Country as a 3-legged stool, so to speak. This approach has been developed in collaboration with the advice of the State Tribal Economic Development Commission (STEDC). Each leg of the economic development stool is critical to promoting economic development in the tribal communities in Montana:

- ***Tribal Government Priority Economic Development Projects*** ($560,000),
- ***Montana Indianpreneur Equity Fund*** ($126,000), and
- ***Indianpreneur Training & Technical Assistance*** ($24,000).

The remaining funds are used for administration, and marketing assistance designed to provide marketing consultations, technical assistance, and wholesale marketing opportunities to Native American owned businesses.

Tribal Government Priority Economic Development Grants- this portion of the ICED funding is granted directly to the tribal governments for economic development capacity building activities such as business development, workforce training, entrepreneurial training, planning/feasibility studies, and other economic development activities that have a near-term economic benefit. Each of the eight tribal governments in Montana are the eligible applicants for this grant fund. The awards are $70,000 for each tribal government. Funds are matched $1:$1 in collateral or outside funds.

The ***Montana Indianpreneur Equity Fund (MIEF)*** was launched as a pilot grant program in February 2007 as a statewide resource for current or prospective Native American business owners interested in starting or expanding their business. In FY 2012, the MIEF offered a total of 18 grants (2 per reservation and 2 at large) at $7,000 per grant. The program requires a minimum $1:$1 match from outside funds or collateral. Funds can be used for activities usually funded by a commercial lender and include but are not limited to the purchase of land, building and equipment, purchase of assets including furnishings, equipment and technology, and working capital.

Montana Indianpreneur Training was launched by the Montana Department of Commerce as corresponding business training to the Montana Indianpreneur Equity Fund (MIEF) in 2007. Technical assistance providers are awarded a $3,000 stipend to provide the training to current and potential tribal business owners for each tribal nation utilizing the Indianpreneurship®, A Native American Journey into Business curriculum, as well as the knowledge and expertise of local economic development providers.

Native American Made in Montana Marketing Campaign: The ICED Program has partnered with the Made in Montana Program to jointly promote participation in the Native American Made in Montana product identification program and increase consumer awareness of authentic Native American made products. Launched in 2008, the Native American Made in Montana labeling program is the only state-sponsored product identification program of its kind in the nation.

Native American Wholesale Market Exposure: The ICED Program has sponsored 8 tradeshow opportunities in collaboration with the Trade and International Relations Bureau to allow Native American businesses to participate in wholesale and retail trade shows within the State. Kapi Arts & Crafts (Karen Kapi) and Buckskin Creations & Glacier Lily Soap, LLC (Melissa Michel) were sponsored to attend the March 2011 Made In Montana Marketplace in Great Falls. Renegade Art (Valentina LaPier) and Real People Herbals (Pauline Matt) were sponsored to attend the September 2011 wholesale Billings Regional Market, with buyers and producers from Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, California, Idaho, and Utah. Buckskin Creations & Glacier Lily Soap, LLC and Montana Sweetgrass Etc (Toni McClue) will attend the April 2012 Billings Regional Market. Sunshine Can-dle Creations (Lisa and Nolan Michel) and Bigback Silkscreening (Michele and Dennis Bigback) are sponsored to attend the upcoming March 2012 Made in Montana Marketplace.