

Program History

Family Business Program

Established in 1994 as an outreach program through Montana State University College of Business, the Family Business Program offers education and information to the backbone of many Montana businesses, those owned and managed by families across the state.

The annual Family Business Day consists of an awards luncheon and keynote speaker, usually held in September. At this event, outstanding family businesses are honored based on contributions to their communities and industry, innovative business strategies and practices as well as other factors.

Family Business 'On the Road'

In 2006, the Family Business Program 'On the Road' was introduced, offering similar educational programs as featured at the Family Business Day to family owned and small businesses in communities across the state.

The 'On the Road' programs have been offered in conjunction with the Montana Chamber of Commerce Business Days at the Capitol in Helena. The program has also partnered with the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center for a conference in Missoula. We have taken the free program to Butte and Miles City in the past.

In 2012, the 'On the Road' series will visit 11 cities across the state for the first time. Starting with Business Days at the Capitol in Helena, the program will visit these other cities: Lewistown, Billings, Miles City, Glasgow, Havre, Great Falls, Kalispell, Missoula, Butte and Bozeman. The dates and topic information are still to be determined.



Webb Brown, President/CEO of the Montana Chamber of Commerce handing out one of the Family Business Awards.



Gary Bishop, presenting "The Business of Customer Service" to attendees.



Diamond Construction, Inc. of Helena with their Family Business Award.

Nominate a Business

Is there a business in your community who you think is deserving of a Family Business award?

Now is the time for you to think about businesses in your community and consider if a family-owned business you know may be eligible for one of the awards. Annually, businesses from across the state are nominated to win one of the awards given out at the luncheon. Judges pick six to seven Montana family-owned businesses to receive the awards. As it is a great privilege to receive this award, imagine the honor that a business you visit or know would feel to receive this nomination from you. The nomination forms are sent out in mid-March. As you prepare your list of who to nominate, here is a list of criteria to consider:

1. Business headquarters must be in Montana
2. A firm may be nominated by anyone, including employees and business associates. In the spirit of entrepreneurship, self-nominations are encouraged.
3. All family businesses are eligible with the exception of prior winners.

Awards are traditionally given in the following categories:

- a. Large sized business - more than 50 employees
- b. Medium sized - 30-50 employee
- c. Small sized - 10-29 employees
- d. Very small sized - less than 10 employees
- e. Old family business
- f. New family business

Application will ask about:

- a. Family-business linkage
- b. Contributions to community and industry
- c. Innovative business strategies and practices
- d. Succession preparedness
- e. Multi-generation family business involvement (except for new firms)
- f. Longevity (except for new firms)

Contact familybusiness@montana.edu for information.

This is the only state-wide family business program, which allows businesses to share ideas and concerns that are common to most family-owned businesses. The program also provides recognition to pioneering families through the Family Business of the Year Awards Program.

Contact Us

You Can Make a Difference

In 2005, the future of the Family Business Program was further ensured with the establishment of the MSU College of Business State Farm Insurance Family Business Day Endowment. Annual earnings from this endowment, along with additional sponsorships, not only support the awards program, but also enable us to continue our goal to expand outreach activities and services for family-owned and small businesses throughout Montana.

In 2007, the Family Business Program 'On the Road' was introduced with the intention to offer specialized and informative business seminars in cities across the state of Montana. Several successful programs have been presented and there are plans to continue... more information inside.

Imagine the impact this program can have on family-owned and small businesses across the state. We invite you to help provide critical outreach programs and secure perpetual funding by donating to this endowment. Your generous contribution will allow us to further our goal to recognize, support and honor family-owned and small businesses.

Sponsors

Funding for this program is provided through the MSU College of Business State Farm Insurance Family Business Program endowment with additional annual funds from **State Farm Insurance**.

Stockman Bank underwrites the annual Family Business awards and provides support for the 'On the Road' program.

The **Montana Chamber of Commerce** is an important member on our team of supporters.

FOR INFORMATION ON ENDOWMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PLEASE CONTACT:

Jackie Sather, Director of Development
PO Box 173040 | MSU Foundation 221
Bozeman, MT 59717
406-994-6766 • jsather@montana.edu



Craig Ehlert,
Coordinator



Phyllis Johnson,
Program Assistant

451 Reid Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717
phone: 406.994.6796
fax: 406.994.6206

email: familybusiness@montana.edu

Past Topics

- The Successes and Failures of a Family Business
- "Back from the Blast" *Comeback Strategies for success*
- The Wheat Montana Story
- Building Excellence into Your Business
- The Business of Customer Service
- Finding & Reaching Your Target Market
- Market Research for Your Family Business
- Using Branding Strategies for Your Family Business
- Transforming Conflict into Creativity in the Family Business
- Avoiding the BIG Mistakes Family Businesses Make
- Managing for Peak Performance: An HR Perspective
- Navigating the Whitewater of Family Business
- Celebrating the Past and Preparing for the Future
- and more

FOR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Audrey Lee, PO Box 173040
Montana State University | College of Business
Bozeman, MT 59717
406-994-7026 • audrey.lee@montana.edu

Montana State University College of Business State Farm Insurance Family Business Program



Connecting Montana Family Businesses
to the Global Market

[www.montana.edu/wwwdb/
FamilyBusiness/FamilyBusiness.html](http://www.montana.edu/wwwdb/FamilyBusiness/FamilyBusiness.html)

