

Montana BPA 2017 State Leadership Conference

Secondary students from across the state of Montana attended the 2017 State Leadership Conference for the Montana Association of Business Professionals of America in Billings, Montana, March 2017.

The 2017 Montana BPA State Leadership Conference was held at Montana State University-Billings, Radisson Hotel and Convention Center, and the Red Lion Hotel and Convention Center. One thousand two hundred and forty-nine, local chapter advisors, and chaperones gathered in a spirit of friendship and goodwill as the Montana Association assisted the members through participation in the areas of competitive events, leadership, community development, and professionalism.

During the three-day event, students demonstrated their knowledge in business and technological skills and abilities in over 60 different competitive events from within the five core assessment areas of Finance, Business Administration, Management Information Systems, Digital Communication & Design, and Management, Marketing & Communication. The top finalists in each event advance to compete at the National Leadership Conference this spring in Orlando, Florida from May 10-13, 2017.

The state conference also included keynote Ryan Moran and various workshops on topics including entrepreneurship, traffic safety, leadership development and dance on Monday morning and then in the afternoon we held our first ever MT BPA "Special Olympics Walk" and "Respect Rally—BPA Style" presented by Special Olympics Montana. Additionally, local chapters donated \$14,000.19 to Special Olympics Montana as their state-wide philanthropic organization, \$860 more than last year's contribution. The four largest Chapter contributors included: Shields Valley High School, \$3,018.00; St. Regis High School \$2001.00; Glasgow High School with \$532.00.

Community members and Montana businesses also played a tremendous role in the success of the state conference by serving as judges for the competitive events. In addition, Montana BPA has received more than \$12,500.00 in financial support and/or in-kind support Montana business and education institutions as part of the corporate sponsor and education partnership program. One education partner is the Montana State University-Bozeman's Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship who awarded two \$1000.00 scholarships to Montana BPA members Megan Malmstrom from Billings West High School, and Allie Wolverton from Skyview High School.

In non-event awards, Montana BPA awarded Silver Star Awards for Chapter Development to the Billings Senior High School, Billings West High School, Cascade High School, Culbertson High School, Hobson High School, Park High School, Simms High School, Superior High School, St. Regis High School and Twin Bridges High School chapters; two \$500.00 BPA scholarships to Brock Peterson of Shields Valley High School and Kaitlyn Weinheimer of Moore High School; 119 Statesman Torch Awards; 34 Membership Recruiter Awards, 31 National "Student" Certification awards (these students will receive National recognition at the National Leadership Conference in Orlando), and the Spirit of Professionalism Award to the Superior High School chapter. Thirteen chapter advisors also received recognition for completing "Advisor" certification with National BPA last fall and will be recognized for their accomplishments at the National Leadership Conference in Orlando in May. Natalie Schaff from Roundup High School was recognized as the MT BPA Advisor of the Year and will now compete for the National BPA Advisor of the Year.

During the state conference eight secondary members participated in the state officer campaign process with the following six being elected to office for the 2017-18 school year:

- President: Jacob Martin, Culbertson High School
- Vice President: Ruth Redfield, Twin Bridges High School
- Secretary: Savanna Stewart, Twin Bridges High School
- Communications Director: Kelli Ober, Cascade High School
- Public Relations Director: Ben Brodhead, Sidney High School
- Membership Director: Cash Cota, Roundup High School

The 2018 Montana BPA State Leadership Conference again will be held in Billings March 12-14, 2018.

Business Professionals of America is the leading CTSO (Career Technical Student Organization) for students pursuing careers in business management, finance, office administration, information technology and other related career fields. BPA has more than 44,000 members in over 1,700 chapters in 24 states. BPA is a "co-curricular" organization that supports business and information technology educators by offering curriculum based on national standards. This year, the Montana association has 1,726 members and 90 chapters. Our Montana post-secondary chapters from MSU-Northern, FVCC and Montana Virtual Chapters have 18 total members.

DECA News

All of the highlights information from 2016-2017 can be found by [clicking here.](#)

The 2017-2018 State Officer Team Includes:

Harisson Rennie (President) - Glacier HS

Keegan Siebenaler (VP of Administration) - Glacier HS

Will Bittner (VP of Public Relations) - Bozeman HS

Shae Bills (VP of Communications) - Bozeman HS

Marisa Curtin (VP of Membership) - Capital HS