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MONTANA HIGH TECH BUSINESS ALLIANCE REACHES 200 MEMBER MARK

The Montana High Tech Business Alliance, started in 2014, hits 200 high tech member firms benchmark in just over a year of operation.

BOZEMAN, Mont.,—The Montana High Tech Business Alliance (MHTBA) announced today that the Alliance has grown to include 200 high tech member firms in a little over one-year of its formation. The Alliance, established in 2014, now represents firms from every region of Montana.

“The number of high tech and manufacturing firms in Montana is astonishing,” said Greg Gianforte, Founder and Chairman of the MHTBA Board of Directors. “The speed in which these firms have identified themselves and joined the Alliance is an indication of something great. These businesses represent the fastest growing industry in Montana. To see so many of them come to the table to decide how to improve and grow their industry in the state holds incredible potential to create better Montana jobs so we can stop exporting our kids and grandkids.”

The MHTBA is the first ever organization dedicated to representing high tech and high tech manufacturing businesses in the state. In February of 2015, the MHTBA commissioned the University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) to conduct a survey of the Alliance’s membership to learn more about Montana’s high tech industry. The results found that high tech and high tech manufacturing businesses represent a significant opportunity for the state.

“The trends and findings of the BBER survey have truly come to life with this announcement that the Alliance has grown to 200 members in just over a year,” said Christina Henderson, Executive Director of MHTBA. “Montana’s high tech and high tech manufacturing sector is growing eight-10 times the rate of the overall state economy, creating jobs that have salaries twice the size of the median income of Montana workers overall.”

The MHTBA’s membership is comprised of members who represent nearly every region of the state. More information on the Alliance can be found at www.MTHighTech.org.

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Attached: Montana High Tech Business Alliance Members are Expanding success quotes

Montana High Tech Business Alliance Members are Expanding:

Livingston based Printing For Less opens office in Bozeman:

Livingston-based MHTBA member PrintingForLess.com (PFL) recently opened an office in Bozeman, its third location. Founded in 1996, PFL was the nation's first e-commerce commercial printer. The draw was Bozeman's abundance of talent in many fields, including software development and marketing.

"PFL is proud to be a founding member of an organization dedicated to the growth of high tech in Montana," said Andrew Field, PFL's founder and CEO. "One of the most exciting aspects of the High Tech Business Alliance is that we can stand shoulder to shoulder with our colleagues in the industry and celebrate each other's successes."

With offices in Memphis, Dillon and Bozeman, Helix Business Solutions continues to grow:

Helix Business Solutions, based in Memphis, opened two Montana offices in the past year. The first office, in Dillon, has created partnerships with the University of Montana Western and has already begun to hire local talent. Helix opened its second office in Bozeman on the Oracle campus on Monday, July 13th. Helix is an Oracle Service Cloud Partner and was the Oracle Partner of the Year in 2014.

"The Alliance has been an incredible partner for Helix as we've expanded in Montana," said Travis Cotton, VP of Business Development and Solutions. "We've grown our employee base by 40%, almost all of this growth in Southwest Montana. We are continuing to find and hire some of the most experienced talent while creating partnerships with area universities to grow the next generation of our team. The MHTBA has created a great source of collaboration for finding talent and in building relationships to promote and grow our business."

Missoula's Solutions Center of Advanced Technology Group (ATG) grows to more than 60 employees:

Tom Stergios founded the Missoula Solutions Center of Advanced Technology Group (ATG) in 2011 and has since grown his team to more than 60 employees. The Missoula office is now the largest for the management and technology consultancy headquartered in Kansas City.

"The Montana High Tech Business Alliance is taking the high tech industry in the state to another level," said Tom Stergios, vice president of Quote to Cash for ATG. "I believe the MHTBA is helping me scale my company, particularly by showcasing the strong businesses we have in Montana and attracting the technical talent we need to grow."

Spika Welding and Manufacturing in Lewistown continues to grow and meet global demand:

Beginning with a two-man shop and a vision for manufacturing in rural Montana, Spika Welding and Manufacturing has grown over the past 14 years to over 50 employees, with their specialized upper-level access stands and work platform systems shipping globally. A snapshot of products in production includes complex aircraft-interfacing platform systems for a new Bell helicopter manufacturing plant; a fully-encompassing assembly access structure for a Lockheed Martin satellite manufacturing facility;

numerous truckloads of universal aviation stands for the Israeli Air Force, and Blackhawk phase maintenance platforms bound for Army Aviation training in Fort Eustis.

"It's been great being a part of the Alliance and getting the opportunity to network with other business leaders from around the state," said Tom Spika, owner of Spika Welding. "We are in agreement with the belief that, even though unemployment rates are low in many parts of Montana, good jobs with benefits and compensation that allow for the costs of raising a family are difficult to find. We as business leaders can work to increase the state's average wage, and as an organization work to entice former Montanans to return home, both for good paying manufacturing jobs and for high tech opportunities here and through telecommuting. Working together, we can pave the way to a better, more prosperous tomorrow here in the state we call home."

Kalispell's Hagadone Digital was one of the first firms to join the MHTBA:

Hagadone Digital, a digital marketing solutions firm with offices in Kalispell, Coeur d'Alene, Beloit, Wisc., Honolulu and Waterloo, Ontario Canada, is growing and was among the first high tech firms to join the Alliance.

"We're thrilled to be members of the High Tech Business Alliance," said Brian Doan , Director of Sales for Hagadone Digital in Kalispell. "Having access to networking events and being a part of the discussion that is taking place to create more opportunities for high wage jobs in Montana provides a tremendous benefit to our business. As we scale, we will continue to look to the Montana High Tech Business Alliance as resource to make our efforts successful."

Billings' Arrow Solutions Group aims to connect IT professionals with the growing number of high tech jobs in the state:

Arrow Solutions Group, Montana's only specialized IT and engineering staffing and recruiting agency, connects professionals with companies in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota and has offices in Billings and Boise. ASG is a founding member of the Montana High Tech Business Alliance.

"The Montana High Tech Business Alliance has created a powerful resource for Montana high tech and manufacturing firms," said Kathy Boelter, CEO of Arrow Solutions Group in Billings. "We have been excited to work alongside the Alliance and see tremendous value in the Alliance's jobs portal. The Alliance has stepped in and has given Montana's high tech companies a channel for better communication, collaboration and celebration. All of the above will continue to prove beneficial for Montana's job seekers and economy."