“Preparing a Competitive Workforce”
Monday, October 26 – 5:00-6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 27 – 9:15-10:00 a.m.

Overview
Education and workforce alignment is a critical strategy for developing and maintaining a strong economy. Topics for this session will include how government at the federal, state, and local levels, the education system, and industry-recognized organizations are able to collaborate and minimize traditional silos. To strengthen these connections, what possible apprenticeships, internships, certificates, and degrees should be considered? What are ways in which private-public partnerships might be employed to ensure our graduates have the tools, including soft skills, they need to go right to work?

Panel Discussion
5:00-6:00 p.m. in the UC Theater

Panelists
• Pam Bucy, Commissioner, Montana Department of Labor and Industry
• Reed Humphrey, Dean, College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences
• Leonid Kalachev, Professor, College of Humanities and Sciences
• Larry Simkins, President/CEO, Washington Companies
• Shannon O’Brien, Dean, Missoula College (Moderator)

Questions
• What are ways in which public-private partnerships might be employed to ensure that our graduates have the tools, including soft skills, that they need to go straight into the workforce?
• How do we minimize the traditional silos of government at the federal, state and local levels, the education system, and industry-related organizations?
• How can we strengthen these connections?
• What are the collaborative opportunities involving industry-recognized credentials, apprenticeships, internships, certificates and degrees?

Keynote Address
Tuesday, October 27 – 9:15-10:00 a.m. in the UC Theater

Introduction by Angela McLean, Lieutenant Governor of Montana

"Education as the Great Equalizer: Partnering to Prepare a Competitive Workforce for the 21st Century" by Thomas E. Perez, United States Secretary of Labor

Secretary Perez will examine the many pathways for Americans to access the skills and training they need to compete for the jobs of today and tomorrow, as well as how governments, businesses, colleges, labor unions, and nonprofits can partner together to support them. He will also discuss how those skills contribute to both a growing economy and a vibrant democracy.