

# AGENDA



## THURSDAY

June 25

10 AM

### REGISTRATION & CHECK-IN

AC Hotel Lobby

10:50 AM

### WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

**Kirsten Madsen, Deputy Securities Commissioner**  
**US Representative Troy Downing (by video)**

11 AM

### MONEY & MORE: THE COST OF CAPITAL

**Susanne L. Meline | Ember Peak Capital, LLCI**

This session will address a crucial question every startup should ask before embarking on its capital formation journey: How much will it cost to make this happen? The discussion will focus on financial and other costs to expect when starting a business.

11:50 PM

### LUNCH

Dish up your lunch (buffet-style in foyer) and join us back in the room for a special keynote speaker.

12:10 PM

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Chef Eduardo Garcia, Co-founder | Montana Mex, Bozeman, MT**

In this powerful session, Chef Eduardo Garcia shares how a freak electrical accident in the Montana backcountry nearly took his life and led to years of grueling recovery. He explores how surviving that experience reshaped his perspective, deepened his gratitude, and clarified what truly matters, and how that mindset fueled the creation and growth of his Bozeman-based food company, Montana Mex. Attendees will gain practical insights on resilience, entrepreneurship, and living their values every day.

12:50 PM

### 10-MINUTE BREAK & REFRESHMENTS

1 PM

### THE MONTANA EDGE: TURNING VISION INTO VENTURE

**Dean Folkvord | Folkvord Family Foundation, Bozeman/Three Forks, MT**

1:30 PM

### LEGAL SESSION (1 CLE Pending): PROTECTING YOUR IDEAS THROUGHOUT THE CAPITAL FORMATION PROCESS

**Antoinette Tease, Antoinette M. Tease Law, PLLC**

This session will discuss how startups can protect their brand, from intellectual property, trademarks, and patents, and learn the ins and outs of protecting your trade secrets and business.

2:20 PM

### MONTANA MADE: A SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

**John Helle, Co-Founder | Duckworth, Dillon, MT**

2:50 PM

### 5-MINUTE BREAK

2:55 PM

### SMALL BUSINESS & STARTUP EXPERIENCES PANEL

**MODERATOR: Brian Gillespie, Dean and Professor, Jake Jabs School of Business, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT**

**PANELISTS:**

**Jessica Dehn, Dino Drop-In/Explore Montessori**  
**John DiCola, Business Leader & Board Member**  
**Mitch Thompson, Iron Oil**

This session will highlight various Montana businesses and their startup experiences. Speakers will share insights on where to find appropriate investors, how to navigate hurdles, and what they've learned about raising capital.

4:10 PM

### CLOSING REMARKS FOLLOWED BY SOCIAL HOUR

Join us for appetizers, drinks & networking on the AC rooftop at The Benchmark.