



MLHA 2026 Annual Conference and Trade Show
October 20-22, 2026
Billings Hotel and Convention Center, Billings MT
Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)

Big Sky, Big Goals

Tuesday, Oct. 20

9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Board of Directors Meeting
12:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Registration Opens
12:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Exhibitor Set-Up
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm	TBID Meeting (Tentative)
2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	First-Time Conference Attendee Orientation
2:45 pm – 3:30 pm	MSU Hospitality Student Orientation
4:00 pm -- 5:15 pm	Conference Kick Off & Opening General Session Welcome Remarks: Honorable Mike Nelson, Mayor of Billings Keynote Speaker: Mandy Murry, Murry Hotel Advisory & Stewardship <i>“Enhancing the Guest Journey”</i>
6:30-9:00 pm	Trade Show Grand Opening and Reception Celebrating Montana’s Hospitality History Vendor Booth Decorating Contest Featuring “Your Favorite Place in Montana” Costume Contest Featuring “Characters from Montana’s History” <i>(Costume Guidelines: Costumes should not depict violence, or be offensive regarding cultures, ethnicities, or religions.)</i> Contest participation is optional, but...Great Prizes Await.

Wednesday, Oct. 21

8:00 am -9:00 am	Breakfast in the Trade Show – Top Sponsor Spotlight
9:00 am -10:30 am	General Session: Wednesday Wake Up Session with Karen Miller, Kaleidoscope Group <i>“The Science of Making Magical Moments”</i>

Break In Trade Show

10:45 am -11:45 am

Breakout Session I:

Karen Miller, Kaleidoscope Group – *“Leading with the Brain”*
Justin Lewis, Former VP, Timberline Hospitality – *“Managing Through Chaos”*
Conor Smith, CEO, First Call Computer Solutions – *“Practical AI for Hospitality Leaders: Real-World Applications for Hotel and Lodging Operations”*

Break In Trade Show – *Last Chance to Submit for Tradeshow Drawings*

12:15pm -1:45 pm

MT Tourism Luncheon

Vendor Prize Drawings and Allied Member of the Year Award Presentation

2:00 pm

Trade Show Closes: Exhibitor Tear Down

2:15 pm -3:15 pm

Breakout Session II:

Justin Lewis, Former VP, Timberline Hospitality – *“The Leadership Compass”*
Conor Smith, CEO, First Call Computer Solutions – *“Applying AI in Hospitality Operations: Interactive Examples, Workflows and Q & A”*
Sales and Marketing Council Meeting – Erica Cherry, S & M Council President

3:30-5:00 pm

Afternoon Session: Closing Speaker

Nichole Mehling, President, Billings Clinic Foundation
“Leading Through Fire”

6:30 pm-9:00 pm

Awards Banquet

Honor Guard Presentation
Annual Awards Presentations

Thursday, October 22

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Breakfast Buffet

9:00am – 12:00 noon

MLHA Membership Meeting/Conference Closing

State of the Association & Introduction of MLHA’s 2026-2029 Strategic Plan–
Whitney Bergmann, MLHA Chairperson
Legislative Update – Melissa Shannon, Benchmark Public Affairs
STR Update – Rico Louw
Presentation of 2028 Conference RFPs
Presentation from Officer and Board Candidates
Selection of 2028 Fall Conference Host Property and Location
Officer and Board Elections
Raffle Drawing