

Tips for Students on a Budget at the IAEM Conference

By

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There are several ways to save money when attending the IAEM Annual conference. Here are some examples that have been used by IAEM Student Members in previous years:

- Carpool to the conference.

Use a school van or bus if possible; otherwise, split the driving and the gas between as many people as possible. We observed students from Arkansas, Colorado and North Dakota drive to Kansas City last year by carpooling. Ask your local emergency management agency how they are traveling. If they are driving, see if you can hitch a ride.

- Become a registered volunteer and work enough hours to offset the cost of the conference. Last year students did an amazing job working at the conference, and we fully expect the same turnout at future conferences.

- Take advantage of the student hotel/motel. It is close enough to walk to the convention center and cheaper.

- Room together. Put two, three or four to a room. Some students used the IAEM Student Council Facebook message board to connect with other students attending alone as possible roommates. Roll-away beds are usually available in most hotels.

- Book flights and rooms early so you can pay for the flight months before you attend. Register early, and pay off that bill in advance as well. If you were to register in June, book a flight in August, and then attend in November, you would have two to three months to pay off each segment of the entire cost of the trip. Getting the room early will assist in obtaining the cheapest rates.

- If you are a member of a student chapter that raises money, see if the chapter bylaws allow for some of the money to be used to offset professional development opportunities like the IAEM Annual Conference.

- Many schools offer money to attend conferences. Check to see

if your school can assist in some way with funding the trip. Some require you to be a presenter to access these funds. You can enter the student academic poster competition to fulfill that requirement, and possibly receive cash prizes for placing in the top three! It never hurts to ask.

- Apply for an IAEM conference stipend if available. Each year various IAEM Councils and Regions offer stipends for students to attend the conference.

Conclusion

Do not allow the current economic climate to dissuade you from attending. You are only a student for so long, so experience the conference from the student perspective. There are opportunities at the IAEM Annual Conference that are only available to students, including networking and professional development. We believe that you will not be disappointed.