

Who's going to ICDC?

How many paths lead to the International Career Development Conference?

The most obvious way to get to ICDC is to succeed in the competitive events program. But lots of folks besides competitors will be at the conference. Here is the low-down on other ICDC attendees and what they accomplish in order to travel to the conference.

DECA Inc.'s basic policy is that everyone at the ICDC should have a reason for being there. You will also find it easier to get your school's permission if you can show what specific activities you and your students will participate in.

The primary fact of ICDC attendance is that the state associations are in charge of much of the selection process. DECA Inc. gives allotments to each state for its delegation based on the membership numbers of those states. And, not to lay too much on the shoulders of the state advisors, we are really talking about the state association, that is, not just the state advisor, but his/her board of directors or advisory committee—those advisors who put in time and effort to make the state's DECA activities work. If you're interested in going to ICDC, these are the folks you will need to know, and they are the ones who can answer your questions.

The state allocations are necessary so that the members attending ICDC can be adequately provided for by the conference planners.

COMPETITIVE EVENTS

Those competitors who are successful at the state competitive conference will move on to ICDC. Even these numbers are based on the size of the membership in each state, but the events are the core of ICDC activity.

THE ACADEMIES

Most state advisors will support those who wish to attend the leadership academies, and DECA Inc. will give them generous conference slots for this purpose. This is a good way to attend ICDC to build up your chapter.

The LDA (Leadership Development Academy) is the foundational leadership experience at ICDC. Attendees who are mainly sophomores and juniors find their way into the LDA, since they may not have previous leadership experience. These members are looking forward to assuming a leadership role and probably running for local election either in the spring or the fall. The LDA accommodates 1,200 participants, and DECA Inc. encourages attendance. Attendees at the LDA may not take part in the competitive events.

The Senior Management Institute (SMI) enrolls about 600 members who are seniors. Attendees may not take part in the competitive events. They will be fully involved in the Institute's program of participatory activities that help them move on to the world of college or career.

For state officers, conference offers **DECA LEADS**. About 250 state officers will attend this advanced leadership experience, and they may also enter event competition.

Advisors (both new and experienced, although newer advisors are especially encouraged) can also come to ICDC to attend the **Advisor Academy**. Attendance is with the approval of the state advisor. Remember that any advisor attending ICDC must register for the conference and pay the \$75 fee. Advisors usually find it easy to get onto a state's delegation because of the need for chaperones, but the state advisors make these decisions.

ELECTIONS, SCHOLARSHIPS, TRAINING

A state's **voting delegates**, who will have the tasks of caucusing with the state delegation and attending the session where candidates speak to

the delegation, can also attend ICDC

Scholarship award recipients may also attend ICDC to be recognized.

Advisors may also attend ICDC to receive training in the **Building Wealth investment curriculum**. DECA, Better Investing, and MarkED partner to develop and present this popular new resource.

SPECIAL PERMISSIONS

Each state association is given a number of slots for attendees under the category of special permission. This amounts to one percent of the state's membership as of July 1 of the previous year.

Attendees who fall under the category of special permission include

- Noncompeting members of a state's campaign team
- Officer candidates
- Chapters achieving the highest level of the membership campaign.
One member of the chapter may go onto the stage to accept recognition. The advisor may also be present at the conference. Those attending for this purpose and not competing or attending an academy fall under special permission.
- School-based Enterprises Gold Level achievement chapters
- Those attending Johnson & Wales' special breakfast recognizing the school's scholarship recipients
- Those attending the MDA breakfast for recognition
- Advisors attending the Leadership Luncheon who are recognized as operating the largest DECA chapter in their states
- Students may also attend ICDC to do the A*S*K Institute certification testing.

You can see that there are multiple ways to qualify for ICDC attendance, but the state associations will be putting their delegations together by balancing all of these possibilities. Sizes of delegations need to be managed so that the conference activities run smoothly and also to make sure that those attending the conference have a reason to be there.

This article was written with the assistance of Shirlee Kyle, the High School Division director of DECA Inc.