

TAKING THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED: A CAREER CONFERENCE FOR GIRLS INFORMATION/EXPECTATIONS FOR PRESENTERS

What is the purpose of the conference?

Sponsored by the Program for Women in Science and Engineering at Iowa State University, the career conference began in 1987 and has touched approximately 33,000 young women. The goal of the conference is to expose 6th-12th graders to careers in science, technology, engineering and math-related fields; some conferences are for middle school, others are for high school. The overall goal is to increase the number of women in these professions in which women have historically been under-represented.

Who attends the conference?

Attendees are girls and their parents/educators from all over the state of Iowa. Some schools bring large groups, some schools bring small groups, and some girls come on their own or with their parents.

Where is the conference held?

The conference is held at the Memorial Union on the campus of Iowa State University. You may park in the MU Parking Ramp; you will receive a parking chit for exiting the ramp at no cost. You should check in at the Regency Room of the Memorial Union upon your arrival.

Who presents at the conference?

Because of the importance of role-modeling, our presenters are typically female professionals who work in either industry, government, or academia in science, technology, engineering or math-related careers.

In what forum/time period would I present?

There are two main options:

- 1) Career Sessions (morning), EITHER 9:30-9:55 and 10:00-10:25, OR 10:30-10:55 and 11-11:25AM
- 2) Hands-on Activities and Tours (afternoon), 1-2PM

Career Sessions- The morning career sessions are 25 minutes in duration. You would do two of these, back-to-back, sharing the same info each time, at EITHER 9:30-9:55 and 10:00-10:25, OR 10:30-10:55 and 11-11:25AM. You will need to arrive at the Memorial Union 20 minutes before your sessions and check in at the Regency Room. You are invited to eat lunch after the sessions; this gives you the opportunity to meet and talk with the other presenters.

Hands-on Activities and Tours- The afternoon sessions are held from 1-2PM, either in a room at the Memorial Union or somewhere else on campus. For activities and tours meeting outside of the Memorial Union, presenters (or representatives) need to meet their participants in the Great Hall of the Memorial Union at 1PM; please check-in at the Regency Room by at 12:45. Participants should be escorted back to the Great Hall with a planned arrival of 2PM. You are invited to eat lunch before the sessions; this gives you the opportunity to meet and talk with the other presenters.

On which dates would I present?

Some presenters present for all six conferences in a given academic year, while others present at only one. Oftentimes new presenters like to present at two conferences in one month, allowing the opportunity for reflection and fine tuning in between.

How many participants will be in my session(s)?

Depending on total registrant numbers for the conference, morning sessions typically have 20-50 in each session. This maximum number in a session is typically based on the room size.

Afternoon sessions are often capped at 20-30 participants based on the hands-on nature of these sessions.

Please let us know if you would like to put a maximum on the numbers of students allowed to be in your session.

You will receive your participant numbers via email on the Friday or Monday before the conference.

What information should I cover in my career session?

We ask the presenters to cover the necessary educational steps to the career (beginning with the importance of math/science in high school), their personal path to the career decision, a little about why they like their career, and some “day in the life” kinds of examples. It’s nice if you can offer some average salary examples. We recommend looking to your professional organization or the U.S. Dept of Labor’s Occupation Outlook Handbook, <http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>, for some guidance in these areas.

Beyond those basics it is up to you. Here are some general ideas, as new presenters often like a little bit of brainstorming:

It might be interesting for you to share some of the specializations within your career area. With middle schoolers, concrete examples are good. It’s also interesting for them to hear how you balance your personal and professional life.

The more interactive the better; however, we realize that it can be hard with a large number in the audience and only 25 minutes. Some of the presenters will have the girls do something on paper that necessitates some interactive discussion. Others will bring items to pass around, like a show and tell. Others will involve a few students in “demo” situations. Whatever you can think of to involve the students, rather than just having them sit and listen for the 25 minutes, is great!

An interesting activity that one of our seasoned presenters uses follows:

Because this presenter has a doctorate and discusses a career path which requires a doctorate, she starts off the session talking to the girls about how they need to visualize themselves having attained their goals. She then has the participants introduce themselves to one another by shaking hands and saying, “Hello I’m Dr. _____.”

Twenty five minutes turns out to be a pretty short time. You can’t count on them asking a lot of questions, although sometimes they surprise our speakers!

What information should I cover in my hands-on activity/tour?

It’s always good to talk a little about career paths and educational preparation for those careers as part of your session. However, your activity will often dictate how much time you have for such information. The value in this session is getting the girls actively involved and/or out and about campus.

If you are interested in becoming a presenter for Taking the Road Less Traveled, please fill out the attached information form and return it to the Program for Women in Science and Engineering.

Email the form to trlt@iastate.edu

OR

Send it via U.S. Mail to: Program for Women in Science and Engineering, Iowa State University, 218 Carver Hall, Ames, IA 50011.

Please contact the PWSE Outreach Coordinator at (515) 294-5883 or trlt@iastate.edu with additional questions.

TAKING THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED: A CAREER CONFERENCE FOR GIRLS
PRESENTER INFORMATION SHEET

Name _____

Discipline/Career Represented _____

Address _____

Employer _____

Email address _____

Work phone number _____

Fax number _____

What kind of session would you like to offer?

Morning career session

9:30-9:55AM and 10-10:25AM

OR

10:30-10:55 and 11-11:25 (circle one, please)

Afternoon hands-on activity/tour from 1-2PM

Do you want a room at the Memorial Union? _____

If not, what is your planned alternative location? _____

What is the title of your session?

Please provide a 2-4 sentence description of your session:

What equipment would you like for us to provide? Any special room set-up requests? (We can provide overhead projectors, slide projectors, tv/vcr. We cannot provide LCD projectors due to cost; however we can order you a cart if you would like to bring your own LCD projector.)

What is the maximum number of participants for your session?

***Thank you. You will be contacted by a member of the PWSE upon the receipt of your information sheet. At that time we will confirm dates for your presentations.