

# College Diabetes Network Conference Attendance Guide



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# Welcome

Hi NextGen Students,

Congratulations on being selected to attend a conference with CDN! There are so many great things you will get to experience at a conference. You will get a look at new technology and tools, hear about the latest research, make valuable connections, and make new friends. As a NextGen Student you're not just representing yourself, you represent the future leaders in the diabetes industry and more importantly you represent the many CDN members throughout the country. With this in mind, prepare to have an unforgettable experience with CDN!

I'm Emily, one of the ADA 2018 Scientific Session attendees and Chapter Leader at the University of Cincinnati. I had been to smaller conferences before, so I thought I already knew how to prepare, but nothing compared to the things I would do and see at this conference. Thankfully, the team at CDN had this guide to help prepare me with tips, tricks, and information from past conference experiences. The information in this guide will help you to maximize all the opportunities the conference has to offer.

As you read through the guide and while you are at the conference, pay attention to things you wish you had known beforehand as well as things you think might be helpful for future students to know. After your trip, you will be asked to reflect back on your time and fill out an evaluation of your experience for the staff at CDN as well as you will be asked to write a blog to feature on the website. CDN really values your feedback and wants your conference experience to be the best that it can.

With all that said, I hope you have a blast at the conference, meet some amazing people, and represent CDN well!

Best,  
Emily Jacox  
CDN Chapter Leader  
University of Cincinnati

# The CDN Team and Board of Directors

CDN is so excited that you will be joining us this conference season! To get you ready for the conference and to make sure you have all of the tools that you need to have an incredible experience, we've put together this comprehensive guide that will hopefully cover all of your questions. Before we get into all of the details of the conference, we want to introduce ourselves to you! Check out all of our team members on our website [here](#)!

On top of our awesome staff (not to brag), we also have an incredible Board of Directors! Depending on the conference you attend, you may see a lot of our board members or just a few. However, if you want to learn a little bit about them, you can read more about what they do for CDN and in their careers [here](#)!

## What to Expect from Staff

While there may be three or four staff members attending the conference with you, a lot of their time will be occupied with meetings and sessions to help CDN continue to expand! Because of that, the staff will usually be extremely busy and won't be able to spend as much time with you as they may want to, but because of that, Zach—one of our Program Assistants—will be there for you!

Zach will be your main point of contact for all things conferences—from the pre-conference emails, setting up your travel, being with you to set-up and manage the booth, navigating receptions, and communicating with you any post-conference details! If you have any questions you can contact him [here](#).



***“Hi, I’m Zach! I have a degree in Communication Studies and Spanish from Albion College. I’ve been working with CDN since 2017. I’m so excited to meet you all soon!”***

# Expectations for You

*While at the conference, CDN wants you to represent yourself as the amazing student leader that you are!*

## We hope that you:

- Share your experiences as a CDN student member
- Talk about the impact CDN has had on yourself and your members
- Share how you would like to continue to include diabetes in your career

As a NextGen Student, we expect that you will use this opportunity to engage with professionals in the field that you are hoping to enter after graduation. This will come in many forms, and will be detailed later on in this guide.



## We ask that you:

- Be punctual to all meeting and tabling times.
- Communicate with Zach if you are having any issues or need a break.
- Act in a professional and responsible manner throughout the conference.

With that being said, your health is always your top priority, so if you are ever feeling sick or are having a serious low/high, let Zach know that you need assistance, and we will find someone to step in and cover any gaps that we need to fill.

*Overall, CDN expects you to represent yourself and CDN well, stay healthy, and use this opportunity to share what CDN has given you and to network!*

# What CDN will Provide

*In order to make your conference experience as successful as possible, CDN will provide you with a few items!*



## Business Cards

When you arrive at the conference, Zach will provide you with business cards that you can use when you are networking. These will include a place for you to place your name and email. Also, if you have your own, you're encouraged to bring those!



## CDN Polo and Fleece Jacket

You will be provided with a CDN Polo and Fleece Jacket to wear when you are staffing the booth. You will return these at the end of the conference, or you can purchase them if you would like them. The polo costs \$25 and the fleece jacket is \$25, or both for \$40.



## Travel Expenses

All of your travel expenses will be covered by CDN, which includes the price of your travel to and from the conference, any gas costs, and your travel from and to the airport. We suggest using Uber/Lyft for any travel to and from the airport and during the conference.



## Food Expenses

CDN will reimburse your food expenses up to \$25 a day. For almost all meals you will be on your own, so you will need to keep all of your receipts and watch what you are spending in order to be reimbursed the \$25 per day.



## CDN Materials to Review

As Student Leaders, we know that you know all about your Chapter and how CDN works on your campus. However, at these conferences, you will be dealing with a lot of questions about CDN as a national organization. Because of that, we've put together a folder of documents that you should look over and review. This will be important for you when you are preparing to staff the booth or if any questions come up while networking. Please review them before arriving to the conference. These will be located in the [Google Drive folder](#) that will be shared with you when you receive this guide!

## Typical Daily Schedule

Every day, there will be a combination of exhibit hall booth times, session attendance, receptions, and some down time. Below is a schedule for a typical conference day!

<b>7-8am</b>	Breakfast (either on your own, or with CDN team!)	<b>4-5pm</b>	Travel/Break Time
<b>8-10am</b>	Session	<b>5-7pm</b>	Reception
<b>10am-1pm</b>	Exhibit Hall Booth	<b>6-8pm</b>	Reception
<b>2-4pm</b>	Session	<b>8:30-11pm</b>	Reception

## Mentorship Program

One of the most important aspects of your conference experience is your mentor meeting(s)! As a NextGen student, we know that you are aiming to enter the diabetes sector, and we want you to use these mentorships to help you make connections with the individuals who have worked in the sector you are interested in. We've matched you with these specific people because we believe that their career matches the path that you want to take, and they can provide you with the best resources and advice to assist you in your own career.

We encourage you to take some time before the conference to look into your mentor's background, prepare any questions you might have for them, and think about the ways in which they could possibly help you to meet your goals.

There is a lot of freedom in these meetings for you. We want this to benefit you and to make your career in the diabetes sector meaningful. While we have this set up as a short mentorship at the conference, that does not limit it to the conference. We encourage you and your mentor to talk about what could be the most effective for both of you, if you want to stay connected post-conference, and how CDN can help facilitate that relationship for you as well. Take advantage of these meetings and don't be afraid to ask your mentor any questions. Check out our Networking Tips and Tricks document in the [Google Drive folder](#) for some tricks you can use here too!

## Staffing the Booth

*At every conference, you will spend a few hours a day staffing CDN's booth!*

At each conference we attend, CDN will have a booth set up. At this booth will be all of our materials, promotional items, and YOU! This is where we advertise who CDN is and what we do for the diabetes community. This is a great opportunity for you to share the impact that CDN has had on you and your Chapter, to meet individuals who have a connection to CDN, and for you to tell people who have never heard of us what we do.



Many times when we have individuals approach our booth, they either know us very well or know nothing at all. Because there will be times when you are talking with someone who doesn't know much of anything about CDN, we've put together some resources that will be very helpful for you.

In the shared [Google Drive folder](#), you will find multiple documents that will be very helpful for you to review before attending the conference. The first document is "CDN Key Resources", which includes a description of our key print resources that will be on display at our booth. The second resource is "Conference Talking Points", which will help you start and end conversations with people at the booth, give you some basics on what to say, and other information. There are also other resources in the [Google Drive folder](#) that talk about our other programs that we like to highlight at the booth. You should read those all beforehand, and we will also give you more information once you are at the conference.

Additionally, we will also have a sign up at the booth. This will be for individuals to request resources, and to sign up for our newsletter for more information from CDN. Again, more information will be provided to you once we are at the conference!



# Receptions and Networking

On most (if not every) night, there will be receptions that you will be attending with CDN staff. We hope that you use these receptions to network for yourself, meet people in the diabetes field, and make connections to help you with your future in the professional diabetes space. While there will definitely be opportunities for you to talk about CDN, and we encourage you to do so, we also want you to use this time for yourself. From these receptions could come an internship opportunity, a possible mentor, or just meeting some like-minded people who share the T1D bond!



These receptions are hosted by either a diabetes organization or a pharmaceutical company, and these can range from an intimate wine and hors d'oeuvres evening to an enormous dinner and dancing party. Depending on the timing of the day's events, hotel proximity to the reception, and a variety of other factors, be prepared to either wear your conference outfit into the evening or to wear business casual/evening business formal to the event. As there will likely be alcohol served, we encourage you to stick to one or two drinks if you are over 21, and remember that you're there to make professional connections (nobody wants to see you dancing on a table at 9pm)!



Since these receptions are hosted by companies or organizations, we advise that you look up the organization that you'll be meeting and get to know their latest products, proposals or projects. With this information in mind, you'll be able to interact with others not only about yourself and your goals, but also share your insights into new ideas in the diabetes space.

You may have questions about networking itself: appropriate ways to start and end a conversation, how to navigate these interactions, and ways to keep the conversation going. Read more in the Networking Tips and Tricks document in the [Google Drive folder](#)!

# Packing and Prepping



## Dress code

We've mentioned "conference apparel" multiple times in this guide already, but what do we really mean by that? Well, for a typical day, we expect that you will wear khakis and either a button down shirt or a CDN polo. When you are staffing the booth in the exhibit hall, we ask that you always be wearing something CDN branded; whether that be your CDN polo or fleece. When you are attending any receptions, it's likely that there will be time for you to change out of your conference gear and into business casual (a nice dress, dress pants and a blouse, button down shirt and dress pants, etc.). You will see people wearing a mix of conference outfits and business casual outfits at the receptions that you attend, so it is entirely up to you if you want to change or not. Below, and throughout this guide, are some examples of what CDN students and staff have worn to previous conferences. Another thing that we suggest you prepare for is all of the walking: it's probable that you will walk a few miles a day (conference centers are huge, and there's a lot of back and forth), so please remember to bring shoes that you are comfortable wearing for long periods of time over several days.



## Diabetes Supplies

As you already know through your own experiences, traveling with diabetes requires a ton of supplies! When you're packing, we advise that you also pack extra low supplies, or plan to buy some when you arrive at your conference. Because of the increased amount of walking and the abrupt change in schedule, NextGen students have dealt with lots of lows in the past while at conferences, so we want you to be as prepared as possible.



## What to Pack

When you're at the conference, we suggest that you bring a notebook and pen with you to take notes, a bag to carry around all of your daily needs and any goodies you get from the exhibit hall. It's likely that you will be carrying this around all day (even to receptions at night), so don't bring something that will be too cumbersome to manage all day!



## Tips and Tricks: From previous student attendees

- Make sure to get a lot of sleep leading up to the conference/ the last thing you want to do is arrive at the conference already exhausted.
- Bring a notepad – scribble down notes about what you do during the conference, what you see, and who you meet... as the days progress, the days will blur together/ Looking back at your notes will ensure you don't forget any important contacts or information.
- When exchanging business cards, write notes on the back of the cards to remind you or the individual you're connecting with what you talked about.
- Prepare your elevator pitch – both for the College Diabetes Network when you're tabling/at receptions and one for yourself while networking.
- Do your research – know who's going to be at the conference and what sessions are happening when. The last thing you want to do is miss out on any opportunities.
- Don't be afraid to put yourself out there! You'll be surprised by how much everyone wants to know about you and what you're doing for the College Diabetes Network.

## Evaluation

At the conclusion of the conference, CDN staff will contact you about filling out an evaluation of your experience at the conference. Through this, we can better perfect our student attendee experience and provide valuable feedback to the conference hosts. We will also send you a pre-evaluation survey before you attend as well!

You'll also be asked to write a blog reflecting on your experiences at the conference. This is where taking notes comes in handy. We will send along more info about blogging for CDN once the conference gets closer.

*To hear about past student attendees' experiences, check out [our blog!](#)*

***With all that said, we're so excited you're able to accompany us! Your presence at the conference is a huge part of our goal to provide networking opportunities for our young adult members through our NextGen program and we couldn't be happier that you'll be attending with us!***



on your own but not alone

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