

FAQs for 2018 ACE/AMS Conference “Everything Under the Sun”

Updated July 19, 2018

What is the Ag Media Summit?

It's billed as the “largest gathering of agriculture's top writers, editors, photographers, publishers and communication specialists in the U.S.” with more than 800 expected to attend. Besides ACE, this year it will include members of the American Agricultural Editors' Association, Livestock Publications Council and the Connectiv Agri-Media Committee. And there is typically a strong contingent of students who belong to the National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow. The summit's website is <http://agmediasummit.com>, where updates will be posted.

Why is ACE holding its annual meeting as part of the Ag Media Summit (AMS)?

Members said they wanted to hear from more “outside of ACE” voices during the annual conference to expand professional development. Some were worried about high registration fees and/or hotel fees. By partnering with the Ag Media Summit, ACE members can choose from 80 different breakout sessions, many of which are being offered by people outside of our organization. Because of the larger number of attendees, organizers were able to negotiate a lower room rate at a top-notch resort. The registration fee is kept lower by the many AMS sponsors. As a result, the registration fee and the hotel room fee is the lowest in many years.

What is being retained from the ACE annual meeting?

Most, if not all, of the traditional events will take place at the Ag Media Summit. We will have State Rep and Learning Community Leader trainings. The first timer and the welcome receptions will take place, in conjunction with our AMS partners. Our past presidents and retirees will still get together. ACE will have its own business meeting and awards dinner (which is included in the conference registration fee) on Tuesday. We are planning the Joe Marks Memorial Fun Run/Walk, a silent auction in conjunction with AMS, a Gary Hermance speaker, and a Rueben Brigham award winner, and we're also planning with a post-conference workshop on diversity in communications materials.

Can I attend both AMS and ACE sessions?

Yes, all the sessions are open to anyone. Participants should look at the descriptions (<http://aceweb.org/resources/Documents/2018%20Conference/AMS-ACESessionDescriptions%204-11-18.pdf>) ahead of time to decide which sessions to go to. The 10 breakout session blocks are offered on Monday and Tuesday of the conference. Some sessions are sponsored by AMS; some by ACE; and some are being co-sponsored. Each block has between five and nine sessions offered, including Learning Community meetings.

What is the InfoExpo? Why should I attend?

You could think of it as a trade show for ag-related organizations to display their goods and services. The participation runs the gamut from governmental agencies to equipment companies. It also is a networking opportunity as receptions are held in the same space. Many ag journalists attend looking for story ideas or sources. Booths are available to let ag media know about what your institution can offer them. A list of exhibitors from the last AMS is online at http://agmediasummit.com/info_expo.php. For more information about hosting an exhibit, visit <http://agmediasummit.com/sponsors.php>.

What is the dress code at the Ag Media Summit?

Business casual, but the awards dinner is usually dressier. As with any large hotel, the meeting rooms might be cold, so dressing in layers is a good idea. And you can always take a step outside to warm up.

What is the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT)?

It's an organization of college students that encourages interest and relationships in agricultural communications. National ACT meets every year during AMS. Faculty from many land-grant institutions bring students who belong to ACT. They take part in AMS sessions and workshops. They also meet on their own and network at the Info Expo, hoping to find jobs or internships.

Where is the conference?

At the Westin Kierland Resort and Spa in Scottsdale, Arizona, part of the Phoenix area, which is also called the Valley of the Sun. It is offering a special group room rate of \$149, which is available until July 2, subject to availability. Keep in mind that the additional \$29 per night (value of \$65) resort fee is optional. You can make reservations online at: <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1712080087&key=3667158>

What meals are included with the conference?

Included in the full conference registration fee are breakfasts and lunches on Monday and Tuesday, and dinner (the ACE Awards banquet) on Tuesday. Also included is the AMS “Famous Welcome Party” on Sunday evening, which isn’t a sit-down meal but will provide heavy hors d’oeuvres. And during the Grand Opening of the AMS InfoExpo on Monday evening, light appetizers will be served. When you register for the conference, be sure to check the boxes for the Famous Welcome Party, the Monday ACE luncheon, the Tuesday luncheon, and the Tuesday ACE Awards Banquet to get your admission tickets (required) for these meals with your registration materials.

What if I have dietary restrictions?

Be sure to include any dietary restrictions in the “Notes” box when registering for the conference.

Are families welcome?

Yes, the (smoke-free) Westin Kierland Resort and Spa has many activities to appeal to spouses and children. There is an extensive pool area, including a FlowRider™, and opportunities for other outdoor activities, such as tennis and golf. There are seven on-location restaurants. The resort schedules many indoor and outdoor activities through the week for children and adults:

<http://kierlandresort.com/fun-things-to-do-in-scottsdale/activities-schedule/>

What are the fees for parking at the Kierland resort?

For self-parking the fee is \$6 up to 10 hours and \$14 for overnight. Valet parking is available for \$10 daily and \$31 overnight.

Is there shuttle service to and from the airport?

The resort recommends Transtyle Transportation for rides to and from the airport (<https://www.transtyle.com>), which charges \$60 per sedan (up to 4 riders) for one-way airport transportation. Its phone number is 480-948-6131.

There are several other options listed at:

<https://www.skyharbor.com/ParkingTransportation/TaxisAndShuttles>.

SuperShuttle vans operate 24 hours on a scheduled basis, with vans departing every 15 minutes from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Its phone number is 602-244-9000 and web site is <http://www.supershuttle.com/>

Rates are zone based and typically cost \$24 one way, and \$18 for each additional passenger. Wheelchair-accessible vans are available by request. All major credit cards are accepted.

Ride share services, such as Uber and Lyft, are available at the airport 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Taxi service is available outside all airport terminals. Estimated fees for taxi to the resort are \$50 to \$60.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car is located at the resort; call 480-624-1000.

What is the time zone in Arizona?

Arizona is in the Mountain Standard Time (MST) zone, but most of the state doesn't recognize Daylight Saving Time, putting it in the same time as the Pacific Daylight Time zone in the summer. During our conference, we will be two hours behind the Central and three hours behind Eastern Daylight Saving time zones.

Is Wi-Fi free at the resort?

The resort will provide AMS registrants with free internet access.

What is there to do in Scottsdale?

Here are a few sites not far from the Westin:

Heard Museum (26 minutes/19 miles)

<http://heard.org/>

Desert Botanical Garden (28 minutes/18 miles)

<https://www.dbg.org/>

Musical Instrument Museum (13 minutes/6 miles)

<http://www.mim.org/>

Taliesin West (20 minutes/7.7 miles)

<http://franklloydwright.org/taliesin-west/>

Boyce Thompson Arboretum [University of Arizona, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, Experiment Station] (1 hour, 6 minutes/66 miles)

<https://azstateparks.com/boyce-thompson/>

The resort also has a list of area attractions and Arizona adventures at:
<http://kierlandresort.com/the-westin-kierland-resort-and-spa-a-scottsdale-resort/scottsdale-arizona-area-attractions-adventures/>

Is there a hashtag for the conference?

Yes! It's #AgMediaSummit.

How will I survive the Scottsdale heat?

It's a dry heat, more like an oven than the sauna-like conditions in the Midwest or South. As you learned in science, the lack of humidity helps keep you cooler as sweat evaporates. The mornings and evenings can be very comfortable, but the midday is brutal. And be sure to keep hydrated. The dry climate has the tendency to dehydrate you, but you don't feel thirsty.

What's happening with the auction?

ACE is teaming up to host a joint silent auction with AMS this year. Funds earned from the auction will be divided evenly among the participating organizations. If you have an item(s) to donate, contact Donna Sheffield at dsheffie@ksu.edu for more information.

Will there be a Service Project in connection with AMS?

The Ag Media Summit is teaming with Literacy Connects, a nonprofit that promotes literacy in Arizona, to raise funds for its programs. It seeks books as well as monetary donations. If you have books to donate, please bring them to the conference and they will be distributed to Literacy Connects. Some ideas for books are available here (<http://literacyconnects.org/donate/donatebooks/>).

Checks can be made payable to, and mailed directly to:
Literacy Connects, 200 E. Yavapai Road, Tucson, AZ 85705

What should I pack?

Light clothing that can be layered. It might be cold inside, but it will be hot outside. Every building is air-conditioned in the area. And don't forget the sunscreen! A wide-brimmed hat would be a good idea when venturing outside.

What is the location of the 2019 ACE conference?

ACE 2019 will be held at the Westin River Walk, San Antonio, June 24-27, 2019.

How do I ship items to the resort?

If you must ship items ahead of time, the best option is to ship them to yourself in care of the resort, including your arrival date and any other pertinent information on the label. Be sure to keep your tracking number handy. The resort's address is:

Westin Kierland Resort and Spa
6902 E. Greenway Parkway
Scottsdale, AZ 85254

Note: You will be billed a receiving charge of 50 cents per pound for shipping items to the hotel.

Shipping items back home can be done at the FedEx Office®, located on the lobby level of the resort. It also offers printing, copying and other business services and is staffed daily.

Contact info:

FedEx Office at The Westin Kierland
480-624-1220
usa1060@fedex.com

Do I have to register separately for the post-conference session?

Registration for the post-conference workshop on diversity in communications materials is an add-on in the conference registration materials. There is an extra \$50 fee for the workshop, being held 8:30-11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 8. The fee includes a continental breakfast. The workshop is limited to 50 people, and is currently at capacity. To get on a waiting list, contact Martha Filipic at marthafilipic@gmail.com.

Is there an app for the conference?

Yes! Just search the App Store or Google Play for AgMediaSummit.

Have more questions?

Contact conference co-chairs Martha Filipic at marthafilipic@gmail.com or Lori Greiner at lgreiner@vt.edu.