

# NORTH AMERICAN INTERCOLLEGIATE Dairy Challenge

Tomorrow's Dairy Leaders

Dear NAIDC Sponsor:

The Board of Directors of the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge would like to thank you for your generous donation to the Dairy Challenge and the Dairy Challenge Academy. With the addition of the Academy, more students have the opportunity to learn and network with the leaders in the dairy industry - certainly making this a valuable event for all parties. We'd like to invite you to join us for our 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Dairy Challenge and the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Dairy Challenge Academy. These events will be held in Visalia, California April 12-14, 2018 and hosted by the Western Regional Dairy Challenge Committee.

We are building our list of volunteers to help with the event on Friday and Saturday. Being involved and working directly with the students gives you a first-hand view of the students in action, plus a large volunteer pool helps the event run smoothly. If you have questions about volunteering your company's time at the event, please communicate with volunteer coordinators Jen Gisler [Jennifer\\_Gisler@cargill.com](mailto:Jennifer_Gisler@cargill.com) and Jessica Lawrence [jlawrence@alltech.com](mailto:jlawrence@alltech.com). To volunteer, submit the online Volunteer Registration Form at [http://www.dairychallenge.org/national\\_contest.php](http://www.dairychallenge.org/national_contest.php) by **Wednesday, March 28**.

For 2018, you'll find many opportunities to work directly with students, including:

- Dairy Challenge Academy: educational program open this year to as many as 150 sophomores, juniors and seniors from 4-year dairy programs, as well as undergraduates from community colleges and technical schools.
  - Career and Innovation Fair: Opportunity for sponsors to recruit *and* educate from their booths - explore job opportunities and share latest innovations with students who will either be your future employees or customers.
  - Friday night student/sponsor event
- **SCHEDULE:** Enclosed you will find a listing of the scheduled events for this year's event. Activities will be held in the Visalia Convention Center. Please complete the online [Volunteer Registration Form](#) by Wednesday, March 28 if you are planning to attend and/or send representatives to the event. Please ensure every individual from your organization that is planning to participate completes a registration.
- **HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:** There is a block of rooms available to NAIDC Sponsors and Volunteers at:

Comfort Suites Visalia  
210 E. Acequia Avenue  
Visalia, California 93291 USA  
<http://www.comfortsuitesvisalia.com/>  
To reserve a room, call: 559/738-1700

Sponsor rooms are \$129 plus tax per night for Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. **The block is being held until March 28, 2018** at which time they will be released for general sale. Please contact the hotel no later than March 28 to book a room in the block at the negotiated rate.

*Phone reservations:* Call Comfort Suites at (559) 667-9527 to make your reservations, identifying yourself as a Sponsor for Dairy Challenge – this is the name on the Sponsor block.

- **REGISTRATION:** Sponsor attendees should submit the [Volunteer Registration Form](#) by March 28; then check in at the Dairy Challenge Central office at the Visalia Convention Center upon your arrival. You will be given your sponsor packets and name badges.
- **MEALS:** Meals are a considerable portion of our expense each year. In an effort to minimize waste and ensure accurate meal counts, we are asking each volunteer sign up for meals on the [Volunteer Registration Form](#) and pay a modest suggested donation of \$5 for each meal per volunteer. You can pay for the meals online following the link on the Dairy Challenge website, or mail a check to **Dairy Challenge at 3310 Latham Drive, Madison, WI 53713**. We highly encourage our sponsors and volunteers to eat with the students - this allows interaction and improves the overall student/sponsor experience. We appreciate your help with this!

- **FRIDAY NIGHT STUDENT/SPONSOR DINNER:** Platinum and Gold Sponsors (donations of \$2,500 or more) are invited to our Friday night Student/Sponsor event. **Platinum and Gold Sponsoring companies who register by March 28 will be assigned dinner tables with students.** Registrations received after March 28 will be assigned a table based on remaining availability. This will be a fun and interactive evening that will allow you time to get to know the students as they wind down from a busy day on the host farms and from preparing their presentations. Platinum and Gold Sponsors can also register to attend Saturday's Award Dinner.
- **CAREER & INNOVATION FAIR:** We invite our Platinum and Gold Sponsors (\$2500 and above) to set up a display to not only meet/recruit students, but to also share with our students - your future employees and future customers - information on the latest innovations in your field. This event will be open to the anticipated 275 contest and Academy students. The Career and Innovations Fair is planned for Saturday, April 14, 2018. Set up will be on Friday between 2:00 and 5:00 PM and again on Saturday morning between 6:30 and 8:30 AM; breakdown will be at 5:00 PM Saturday. You will be provided with a 6' covered table with access to electrical outlets. However, you will need to provide your own electrical cords. Wireless internet will be available at no cost. **You must reserve your space by March 28 using the online [Volunteer Registration Form](#).** *We cannot guarantee that a space will be available if you do not request it by the March 28 deadline.*

You may ship your booth/materials to the Visalia Convention Center. Shipments should arrive 3 days before the event and should be addressed as follows:

Hold for <your name, your company>  
 Exhibitor, North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge  
 April 12-14, 2018  
**Visalia Convention Center**  
 303 E. Acequia Avenue  
 Visalia, CA 93291

All sponsors are encouraged to interact with university coaches and view the teams' presentations on Saturday, but remember because of the number of teams, there will be several presentations going on simultaneously.

We look forward to meeting you and/or your representatives in Visalia, CA April 12-14, 2018. Again, thank you for your kind support of this special event.

Sincerely,

Jen Gisler [Jennifer\\_Gisler@cargill.com](mailto:Jennifer_Gisler@cargill.com)  
 Volunteer Coordinator

Jessica Lawrence [jlawrence@alltech.com](mailto:jlawrence@alltech.com)  
 Volunteer Coordinator

**For complete contest information including registration, hotel, and to pay for meals, go to [http://www.dairychallenge.org/national\\_contest.php](http://www.dairychallenge.org/national_contest.php)**