

THINGS TO DO IN DES MOINES

We are so excited to welcome you to Des Moines! While we'll keep you busy at the conference, we have some suggestions for places to explore and activities to enjoy in our vibrant city. From scheduled events and historical landmarks, to beautiful outdoor attractions, there's something for everyone.

Events in the DSM Area						
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
					Iowa Cubs with Friday Fireworks	Farmers Market Iowa Cubs
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Iowa Cubs			Zoobrew	Iowa State Fair Opening day	Iowa State Fair	
<i>SWCS 78th Annual Conference</i>						

DETAILS FOR SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

Downtown Des Moines Farmers Market

Showcasing the best of local produce, artisan goods, and much more. Downtown Des Moines' Farmers Market is a bustling hub of activity where visitors can support local vendors and enjoy a vibrant community atmosphere. It would be a great place to start feeling those Iowa summer vibes for any early birds. Saturday, August 5, from 7:00 AM - 12:00 PM in the East Village near the Capitol Building.

Iowa Cubs Games

Check off a must on your summer bucket list and join locals to cheer on the Iowa Cubs as they take on the Toledo Mud Hens throughout the weekend. There will be games on August 4, 5, & 6, with an extra treat of fireworks on Friday the 4th. Situated in downtown Des Moines, Principal Park, offers scenic views of the city skyline perfect for an Iowan summer sunset! Ticket prices vary, but start as low as \$15 for a decent seat.

Blank Park Zoo: Zoobrew

A relaxed event that combines live music and refreshing drinks in the delightful setting of Blank Park Zoo. It offers a fun-filled evening to enjoy great tunes while exploring the zoo's animal exhibits. 11 minutes from downtown, Zoobrew would be a great way to close out your last day at the conference on Wednesday, August 9, from 7:00 - 9:00 PM. Tickets can be purchased on [Blank Park Zoo's website](#). As they say, "when you buy a brew, you support the Zoo!"

Iowa State Fair

The Iowa State Fair is one of the largest and most iconic events in the state. It's a celebration of Iowa's rich culture, agriculture, entertainment, and mouthwatering food options that visitors eagerly anticipate each year, and opening day is right after the conference! Thursday, August 10, at 8:00 AM, a wide range of events, including concerts, livestock competitions, art exhibits, rides, and much more, begin. With the large crowds, we would advise you to buy tickets in advance to avoid wasting time you could be exploring!

DES MOINES STAPLES

Iowa State Capitol Building

A truly surprising architectural masterpiece in the heart of Iowa, the Capitol is a must-visit for history and politics enthusiasts. There are guided tours available, but taking some time on your own is also a great option for meandering through the intricate halls. The building is free to enter from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Monday through Friday, and Saturdays, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM.

East Village

Across the river from the conference center, the East Village is known for its unique boutiques, art galleries, and diverse dining options. It's a great place for shopping, trying local cuisines, and exploring the local arts scene. Adjacent to the downtown area, we've mentioned it quite a bit and have several restaurant recommendations in this area!

Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

A slice of paradise, the botanical garden showcases a vast collection of exotic plants from around the world. With serene walking paths just east of downtown, it's a delightful 12-acre escape into nature in the heart of the city. Open 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Tuesday – Sunday, admission is around \$12.

Des Moines Art Center

The art museum boasts an impressive collection of modern and contemporary art; the center's architecture itself is a work of art, providing a unique setting for the displays. It is located near Greenwood Park, a tranquil green space. Entry is free, making it a perfect place to spend some free time between activities!

OUTDOOR ATTRACTIONS

Pappajohn Sculpture Park

The perfect place for a walk, the Sculpture Park has numerous impressive, thought-provoking pieces. There's even a free audio tour, available through [this link](#), to help you get the full experience. Make sure to stop by before leaving town!

Gray's Lake Park

This picturesque urban park provides a delightful escape into nature right in the heart of Des Moines. The park surrounds a serene lake, southwest of downtown; the park features walking and biking trails that meander along the lakeshore, providing a scenic route for a leisurely stroll or a refreshing bike ride. Gray's Lake Park is a beloved recreational spot that captures the essence of outdoor enjoyment in Des Moines. Bicycles and watercrafts are available for rent daily from 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM. [View more information](#).

High Trestle Trail

A scenic recreational trail for cyclists, hikers, and nature enthusiasts. One of its main highlights is the breathtaking High Trestle Bridge, a 13-story high bridge that spans across the Des Moines River valley, providing stunning views of the surrounding landscape. Visitors can access different points of the trail for various starting and ending points. There are countryside views, limestone bluffs, and numerous art installations that celebrate the region's coal mining history and natural beauty. The trail stretches across several towns and counties in Central Iowa, with the main trailhead located in Ankeny, making it a great activity to add to an SWCS Office visit!

