



NEW MIND TREKKER FAQ

FOR STUDENTS WHO WANT TO JOIN MIND TREKKERS

What is Mind Trekkers?

Mind Trekkers is a Michigan Tech's student organization, coordinated through the Center for Pre-College Outreach, that provides hands-on, traveling STEM outreach for K-12 students. Founded in 2010, the group brings the excitement of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) directly to young students. Mind Trekkers attends expos and events throughout the nation and in local regional schools to showcase engaging, hands-on experiments and activities. Undergraduate and graduate student volunteers serve as a pipeline, connecting thousands of prospective students to higher education and STEM career opportunities while enjoying one-of-a-kind opportunities and experiences. Mind Trekkers is inspiring our next generation of leaders to seek answers and get excited about STEM education and careers, nationwide.



What benefits are there to joining Mind Trekkers?

By becoming involved with Mind Trekkers you will gain skills in public speaking, time management, communication, and leadership, just to name a few. You will be working not only with a team of Mind Trekkers volunteers but also communicating ideas to people of all ages at our events. Time management is extremely valuable as a student and in your future career. You will learn how to be able to be involved on campus and still remain on top of your schoolwork. You will also have networking opportunities with the companies that sponsor our events. Lead sponsors will often have corporate dinners to showcase their company to you and recruit motivated students just like yourself!

What if I am going to miss classes?

The best thing you can do is talk to your professors early. Many Michigan Tech professors support the Mind Trekkers mission and are easy to work with to get caught

up on schoolwork. A Mind Trekkers event is not a University-excused absence; however, we will supply you with a letter to give to your professors to verify that you are attending one of our trips. CPCO Professional Staff are also available to proctor any quizzes or exams that are not able to be rescheduled. Additionally, you will have free time each night that you can use to do homework. We realize you are a student first and any free time on the trip is yours to spend as you wish. The bus ride down and back is also a great time to stay caught up. Each trip is optional, so if you cannot get excused from classes for any event, you are not required to attend anything that gives you a conflict. Over the course of the year, there will likely be some events you can attend without conflict.

How do I sign up for a trip?

When you hear about a trip you want to join Mind Trekkers on, email the Mind Trekkers President to sign up. We will ask you for some information to confirm your spot on the trip. Reminders and more information will follow as the event gets closer. We ask that you make sure you are able to attend a Mind Trekkers event prior to signing up though as cancellations can cause a lot of issues for the organization. We will also ask that you complete a training on Canvas at least a week before the trip is scheduled to leave.

Do I have to pay anything to travel with Mind Trekkers?

Travel and hotel rooms are paid for by the CPCO. Each volunteer will also receive a stipend to cover meals during that trip.

How will I learn my demonstration?

Each demonstration has a lesson plan included that covers not only the concepts behind the demonstration, but also any safety-related information you need to know. Reading through your lesson plan should clear up most confusion about your demonstration, but other Mind Trekkers and E-board officers are always available to help you set up any equipment or answer any other questions you have regarding your demonstration.



What if I get a demonstration that isn't directly related to my major?

All demonstrations are assigned by the E-board officers so you may not get a demonstration that directly relates to your major. However the lesson plans for each demonstration will provide the needed information on how to run that demonstration so you can teach and explain the concepts confidently. If you are still unsure about your demonstration after reviewing the lesson plans, a quick search online usually brings up a lot of useful tutorials and examples of how the concept relates to our daily lives. There are also opportunities to switch demonstrations each day of the trip, so if you find a different demonstration that you find interesting, there is a possibility you can switch.

How do I interact with students?

A majority of the students that Mind Trekkers' work with is are in the 6th-8th grade range. These students are very inquisitive and enjoy when STEM concepts are related to things in their daily lives. Even though you will be doing your demonstration repeatedly each day, it will always be the first time that a new group of students have seen it. Try not to get into the habit of just reciting a speech that covers the concepts of the demonstration. Instead ask the students questions, and lead them to figure it out for themselves. Interacting with each student will make the day much more enjoyable for both you and them. Try to adjust the level of complexity with which you are explaining the demonstration to best fit the age group you are working with. It is easy to tell whether the students understand your explanation or not by their facial expressions. Look for cues, if they seem confused, you may need to simplify your explanation.



What do we do in our free time on trips?

Scheduled free time activities differ with each trip. The trip hotels usually have a pool or are near stores or activities in town. If you are from the area, this is a great time to see family or friends and you can even spend the night at home, as long as you are able to get to the event on time the next day. Mind Trekkers are very inclusive and will



let you know if anything is planned for that night. Feel free to bring any games and invite other Trekkers to hang out in the hotel!

What if I don't know anyone else on the trip?

Mind Trekkers trips are a great way to meet new people and make friends! Mind Trekkers are a diverse

group of undergraduate and graduate students in all majors. You will feel like part of the family in no time.

What should I pack?

Some demonstrations require long pants and closed-toe shoes for safety reasons. Comfortable shoes are a must because you will be on your feet all day. We will provide you with a signature yellow jerseys to wear during the event, but please plan to wear an undershirt as you will need to turn this back into the E-Board when boarding the bus for the trip home. Bring comfortable, appropriate clothing for the events and some changes of clothes for nightly free time.

What else does Mind Trekkers do outside of trips?

Although Mind Trekkers are on the road frequently, we also do a lot of outreach to our local community. Local events include local science fairs, Pre-School fundraisers, recruitment events, Mind Trekker After-School Club events, and demonstration workshops. Local outreach trips usually only last a few hours, are located within a 10-50 mile drive of campus (we drive), and do not require any overnight stays. If you are unable to miss class on Thursday's or Friday's, these local trips are a great way to still remain active with Mind Trekkers.

Demo workshops are a great way to become more familiar with our various demonstrations. During these workshops we take steps to improving existing demonstrations and develop and test new demo ideas.

Sign up for local events and demo workshops occurs in the same way as roadshow events. All events will be announced at general meetings and through email. If you

aren't already on our email list and would like to receive updates, please email the President of Mind Trekkers to ask to be included.

Do Mind Trekkers events count as service hours?

Yes! You are doing amazing work spreading your enthusiasm for STEM across the nation to younger students. The world is in need of more STEM-trained professionals. The hours you spend at a Mind Trekkers event doing demonstrations will count for service hours. That means that just one event could be worth over 12 service hours! Please ask the CPCO Coordinator or any of the Pro-Staff on the trip to sign for you.



Where are some of the places Mind Trekkers has been in the past?

One of the best perks of joining Mind Trekkers is the travel! Mind Trekkers has been to 15 states and Washington, D.C. Most of our trips take place in the Midwest and are a great way to spend some time at home visiting with friends and family during the free time each day but we have traveled from coast to coast to events in Boston, MA to San Francisco, CA. We have also traveled to Houston, TX, Knoxville, TN, and New Orleans, LA.