



Navigating the Future

37th National Conference

October 31 - November 3, 2018 Gurney’s Newport Resort & Marina Newport, Rhode Island

Conference Justification Materials

You recognize the value of attending the AAfPE 37th National Conference, but how do you communicate that to those responsible for approving your professional development requests? We know that travel and professional development budgets are tight, and that it is difficult to get approval to attend events and conferences, which is why we’re here to help!

One of the best ways to get approval is to connect your responsibilities, goals and challenges in your daily work life to your conference experience. Listed here are some goals common to our attendees, as well as the ways in which AAfPE meets those needs, so you can make a strong case for attending.

This justification toolkit provides everything you need to “make the case” to your supervisor for attending the AAfPE 37th National Conference.

In this packet, you’ll find:

* A letter/email template
* Benefit worksheet
* Expense worksheet
* A “Q&A” fact sheet
* Sample post-conference report

Feel free to tailor these materials for your unique needs and the needs of your institution. If you need any other information or would like additional support, don’t hesitate to email your AAfPE headquarters staff. We’re here to help you!

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Dear [Supervisor],

I’m writing to request permission to attend the AAfPE 37th National Conference held October 31 – November 3, 2018, at Gurney’s Newport Resort & Marina, Newport, Rhode Island. The National Conference promises to be filled with informative, cutting edge sessions for all levels of learners in diverse formats.

The AAfPE National Conference is the optimal place for benchmarking with other institutions and learning new and improved ways to assess program effectiveness. The 25+ educational sessions reflect research and assessment findings and are presented by paralegal and legal studies educators and thought-leaders in the field and beyond who incorporate new ideas relating to both curriculum and instructional method. Several sessions are directly applicable to my work and the needs of our program. With sessions focused on areas of <fill in topic areas>, I will gain tools and resources that can immediately be put to use in improving the <project(s)/issue you are working on>. Attending the Conference also affords me the opportunity to go deeper in the exchange of information and ideas by connecting with other faculty and program directors. Following the Conference, I’ll multiply the benefits of attendance by offering a short presentation on everything I learned; I will also bring home all session materials to share. While I am out of the office I plan to have <who/how cover while out of the office> see to any urgent requests.

The AAfPE Conference is the only national educational event dedicated specifically to paralegal and legal studies professionals and, as such, represents the best opportunity for me to obtain the professional development required by the ABA Guidelines for Approval of Paralegal Programs. Gaining knowledge in this concentrated format will greatly reduce the time and costs otherwise necessary, making it an excellent value that will serve our institution well. I am seeking approval for the registration fee, travel expenses to the Conference and minimal food expenses during the Conference. I’ve included a [fact sheet, conference benefits, and estimated expenses] for your review. This opportunity is an investment which will yield dividends throughout the year for our whole team and for <name of your organization/ employer>.

Thank you for considering this proposal. Please let me know if there is additional information I can provide to help make your decision.

Sincerely,

<Your Name>

CALCULATE CONFERENCE VALUE

A proposal for allocation of resources in your organization should include the two elementary components of decision-making: benefits or return on investment (ROI) and expenses (the “investment”). This toolkit provides simple steps for calculating the investment and identifying the return(s).

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| **YOU NEED:** | **AAfPE PROVIDES:** |
| **Affordable professional development.** | * **Saving up to $100** on your registration rate when you register before September 21, 2018. * **Save on your hotel room** when you book your room through the AAfPE block at the rate of only $159/ night, single/double, at Gurney’s Newport Resort & Marina! |
| **Access to the latest industry trends and knowledge.** | * Attend a variety of sessions to improve your skills as an educator in a paralegal or legal studies profession * Become equipped with the latest techniques, technology, and evidence-based information that give you **tangible takeaways**! |
| **Information from a variety of industry leaders.** | * Our numerous speakers will provide you with the **big picture knowledge** you are looking for! * Attend a **variety of session styles** from workshops, discussions, research presentations, competitions, and so much more! |
| **Quick and efficient networking time with key companies.** | * Our **robust and extensive exhibit hall** will provide you with face-to-face time with leading companies in the industry. * Enjoy **multiple times to network** with colleagues during our Welcome Reception, breakfasts, breaks, and casually scheduled city outings. |

UNDERSTANDING CONFERENCE EXPENSES

Conference expenses are affected by a number of factors. Before you begin to justify expenses, you need to calculate what those expenses are. To do so, use the worksheet to develop a cost estimate for attending. We have included some of the information for you to get you started.

*< Insert travel cost numbers>*

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| **EXPENSES WORKSHEET** | | |
| **Expense** | **Guideline** | **Cost** |
| Conference Registration | Discounts for Early and Member registration | **$** |
| Title IX – Sexual Harassment | Pre-Conference Workshop and CLE | **$** |
| Flight | Use a web travel service for quick estimate | **$** |
| Lodging | Discounted rate with the hotel x nights =  *Gurney’s Newport $159 night + tax* | **$** |
| Transportation: Airport to Hotel | Taxi, Car rental or Bus  *Taxi: minimum $76 one way; LYFT: estimated at $40 one way; RI Public Transit Authority busses from Airport to Newport, West Bay Bus 14, $2 one way* | **$** |
| Mileage Reimbursement | Driving to conference or airport? Find exact driving distance online, then multiply miles by the $/per mile allowed by your organization | **$** |
| Parking | Complimentary | **$** |
| Food Per Diem  Breakfast and lunch for Thursday - Saturday are included in the registration fee. Attendees are responsible for dinner in the evenings. | See organization guidelines for allowed rates and meal expenses. | **$** |
| Subtotal | | **$** |
| Multiply by number attending | |  |
| Total = | | **$** |

WHAT IS AAfPE?

Recognizing the need to increase and improve access to the legal system, AAfPE promotes quality paralegal and legal studies education, develops educational standards and encourages professional growth, in order to prepare graduates to perform a significant role in the delivery of legal services. AAfPE strives to:

* Promote high standards for paralegal and legal studies education
* Provide a forum for professional improvement for paralegal and legal studies educators
* Plan, promote and hold annual conferences and seminars
* Provide technical assistance and consultation services to institutions, educators and employers
* Promote research and disseminate information on the paralegal profession
* Cooperate with the American Bar Association and other institutions and professional associations in developing an approval process for paralegal and legal studies education programs
* Promote the goals of the Association through cooperation with other national, regional and local groups and organizations interested in paralegal and legal studies education

WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE?

The AAfPE National Conference is the only national educational event dedicated specifically to paralegal and legal studies professionals. The meeting provides opportunities for educators to acquire essential and cutting-edge information and resources to ensure that paralegal and legal studies students are as knowledgeable and marketable as possible in the continuing challenging legal market.

WHAT WILL I EXPERIENCE AT THE CONFERENCE?

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION — balanced selection of workshops and professional growth/development opportunities eligible for CLE credit. Topics cover diverse themes, including: ABA Approval, Technology and Educational Software, Program Management, Pedagogical Training and Trends, and Research and Publication Opportunities.

INCREDIBLE NETWORKING — with contacts and collaborate for years to come. Connect “face-to-face” with more than 300 fellow paralegal education and legal studies professionals. The Conference is delivered by knowledgeable and experienced peers; it is an exciting forum for creativity and innovation, fostering multi-disciplinary connections, professional development and mentoring, and furthering/inspiring scholarship and research collaborations.

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE — targeted specifically to the world of paralegal education. The Conference is host to vendors with products and services you use or may be evaluating for future use. Vendors are knowledgeable and friendly — see products, compare tools, learn about new innovations and services.

DOES THE CONFERENCE MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BUDGET?

The Conference is an excellent value. With a reasonable registration fee, special room rate just for attendees and multiple meals included in the registration fee, it provides a cost-effective source for education.

Overview of Event:

The Conference was held at Gurney’s Newport Resort & Marina in Newport, Rhode Island. The focus was program development, ethical issues, teaching techniques, and software training. It was very well organized and the speakers provided candid opinions on the subject matter at hand. The Exhibit Hall was onsite, allowing for multiple opportunities to investigate new products and services, and meet with exhibitors. The first day featured a pre-conference CLE workshop. The remaining three days featured breakout sessions and competitions. All sessions were led by experts and offered ample time for questions. All conference materials and access to the Exhibit Hall were included with the registration fee. The provided meals and refreshment breaks allowed me to save on my travel budget.

Why Did I Choose To Attend?

This Conference is the premier conference for paralegal and legal studies educators and is dedicated to providing solutions and best practices for paralegal education. It attracts hundreds of paralegal or legal studies education professionals. The opportunity to learn from such a diverse group of peers was invaluable. I was particularly interested in sessions on < insert customized list here > since they directly relate to < insert aspects of your job or projects here >. In addition to the sessions, the chance to network with other colleagues in similar situations was an extremely valuable experience. I was also able to interact with vendors in the Exhibit Hall, research new solutions and discuss current technologies with service experts. < List specific people, vendors you interacted with and the benefits of those discussions. >

What Sessions Did I Find Most Valuable?

During the Conference, I was able to attend numerous sessions. I had the opportunity to focus on topics that directly relate to my position at this institution and find solutions for ongoing projects. <Insert Name, Speaker and Subject - List sessions and include detailed descriptions of what you learned and how it will apply to your organization.>

Overall Summary of Conference Experience

I was very pleased with the Conference and felt it was well worth the expense. I learned new solutions and best practice strategies that can be implemented in our program. I gained valuable experience that could not be obtained elsewhere. I was able to speak with several experts who provided tips and useful information for my particular needs. I was very pleased with the AAfPE National Conference and hope to attend again next year.