



Scholarship Information (updated February 1, 2012)

“The paradox of AA is that financial independence and the support of our Fellowship by alcoholics and alcoholics alone not only enhances AA’s importance to each of us, but stimulates our engagement in our own recovery AA is ‘our thing,’ from our group’s treasury to the balance sheets at the General Service Office.”

From AAWS, F-3

Conferences, such as Western Roundup Living Sober, are self-supporting; no outside group money is used to pay for the event. The cost of the event is paid mostly through registration fees. Attendance is voluntary and as responsible AA members “We are self supporting through our own contributions” and “We do pay our own way.” Please help us carry the message to as many people as possible by registering.

In order for Living Sober to be fully self-supporting in accordance with the 7th Tradition, the Conference continues the scholarship application process established last year, and that must be completed in advance of the conference. *Scholarships will not be given at the conference itself.*

The Scholarship policy is need-based – if you are in *financial need* of a scholarship. Also, we have extended the scholarship deadline to **June 1st**. All scholarships must be fully funded by member donations.

Why Was The Way Scholarships Given Changed?

Living Sober has been operating at a substantial loss for the past few years, except 2011.

- This loss cannot continue. If we do, the conference will cease to exist. Other long standing LGBT conferences have had to dissolve and shut down.

One of the causes of our financial difficulty has been our scholarship policy in the past.

- Living Sober has operated under the practice that no one is turned away for lack of funds. The generosity of those paying registration and/or making donations, plus our fundraising efforts has subsidized the attendance of those who are unable or are not willing to pay registration. As other LGBT conferences pop-up, and our attendance declines while costs increase – this has now reached an untenable point. We cannot continue to lose money each year and expect the conference to survive.

Most AA conferences have no scholarships or scholarships are extremely limited.

- Living Sober has been in a small minority among AA conferences in its scholarship policy. For example, AA World has no scholarships, no sliding scale registration at all. All attendees pay the full registration. Other LGBT conferences have had some scholarships available, but none has had a policy as open as ours. AA conferences are special events, and people pay to attend these – they are different than our local AA meetings.
- Here is the quoted registration policy from the 2010 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous:
 - Q. Must everyone register? I thought I didn't have to pay to go to an A.A. event.
 - A. Yes. Everyone must register. Attendance at this special celebration is voluntary and, as responsible A.A. members, 'we pay our own way.' The International Convention is paid for by those A.A.s who participate in it.

Why do we have to pay?

Conferences are special events, not regular meetings. Most are held in hotels or convention centers, and there is a charge for these facilities. Along with the cost for the venue, conference expenses include travel and lodging for the speakers, printing of flyers and schedules, audio/visual fees, ASL interpretation, supplies and other expenses. A large event requires a substantial amount of money. There are also ongoing annual fees, such as: a) rent for our General Planning meetings, Fundraisers and Musical rehearsal space, b) taxes, c) insurance, and d) storage fees.

Living Sober is self-supporting. We do not accept outside contributions. Our costs are paid through registration fees and donations from members. For Living Sober to continue to be viable, at year's end we must break even. The move last year from the Hyatt to the Parc 55, allowed the Conference to show a profit, albeit a small profit.

General Planning voted to keep the Conference at Parc 55. This hotel is within our budget, but is smaller. Because of this, the registration guidelines are similar to last year:

- Registration at the Conference will be limited to 900 participants.
- All attendees (other than those receiving a pre-approved scholarship) will pay the same registration fee.
- Scholarship registrations are capped at 10%, and must be completely funded by member donations.
- Scholarships must be applied for in advance of the conference.
- Those receiving scholarships will be asked to pay some amount towards their registration, no matter how little.
- Those receiving scholarships will be invited to do service at the conference.

These changes have been difficult for all of us. Much discussion has taken place to find solutions that are both fair and compassionate. We realize these subjects are emotionally charged and therefore difficult to talk about. We encourage your input. All are welcome at our General Planning meetings (held at CPMC, Davies Campus, the 4th Sunday of the month, 3:30pm-5pm). All are welcome to participate on our committees. If you want to make an impact on the decision making process for Living Sober, please consider doing conference service and join one of our committees. Each year, we also discuss these issues at the Self-Support workshop at the conference itself, please feel free to attend.

Thank you for taking the time to read this important message. Your continued support of Living Sober is greatly appreciated.