

# Ideas for DECA Socials

## Introduction

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Socials are a great way to raise money and awareness about your local DECA chapter. Not only can they raise funds for those trips to ICDC, but they can also showcase to your community the skills you have developed through your participation in DECA. You can also use these activities to demonstrate Civic Consciousness by donating proceeds to charity. Put the money you make towards a good cause such as MDA and show your community that DECA members are not only the best student leaders, but that they also care about the society they live in.

However your chapter chooses to use the proceeds from DECA socials, it is important to promote the events throughout the community. Be sure to write a pitch letter before to media outlets and a press release following the event so members of the community can see how successful your DECA events are. The publicity generated by doing so will increase interest in your next social and may reignite alumni's interest in helping out your chapter's program.

## Dances

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Dances are an awesome way to raise money for DECA! Most students in high school enjoy them and will go to one if it is well organized and publicized. Dances are great because they involve your chapter members and their friends. Events like this work as fundraising, marketing, and recruiting tools!

You may be thinking, "Our schools dances are already planned." If this is the case, you only need to get creative. Has your school ever had a post-game sock hop? What about a Halloween dance? A father-daughter dance? An underclassmen prom? If administrators are reluctant to hold another dance, tailor your approach in a way that will benefit the school. If the proceeds are going to charity, they may be more likely to support the activity. Also, include information about chaperones, security, and maintenance/clean-up in your proposal to show that your chapter has planned every aspect of the event.

Dances also must include music, food, and decorations. There are several ways to economize in these areas. First, the DJ will probably be the most expensive component. Check who your school uses for other dances because many times they will offer a discounted price due to the number of times your school uses them. Also, ask around the school. Nowadays, it

isn't hard to find somebody with the equipment and music library to be a full-fledged amateur DJ. Finding somebody your chapter knows also makes it easier to create playlists that you know the audience will enjoy. One way to make more money during the dance is with food. All those

students trapped in a dance are a great market for water, soft drinks, and snacks. Due to a lack of options, they will buy even if the cost is greater than it would be in a store. Also try selling DECA memorabilia, items from the school store, or fun dance items like glowsticks. Finally, decorations are an optional and relatively inexpensive addition. While they are not the most important, they can help create the atmosphere you are trying to set.

Make sure to market the event well in advance. Put up posters, write scripts for your school's announcements, and offer a discounted pre-sale price. You should determine the ticket price only after you know the costs of the DJ, decorations, food, and miscellaneous expenses.

## Concerts

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Just like dances, music events are a great way to bring people together. Planning a concert requires many of the same principles used in organizing a dance. Rather than finding a DJ, though, you must find a live band. If you can't find one that fits in your budget or that you think will draw an audience, why not host several bands? Battle of the Bands is a popular program that allows the audience to choose a winner from a number of acts. In a high school, it is even more effective if some of the bands are made up of peers that the audience will know. Still, make sure to audition every band and set a firm set time for them to play.

There are several benefits to using bands of your peers. First, much of the advertising will be free. Word-of-mouth by the bands will encourage their friends and fans to attend. Also, it is more exciting for students to see people they know performing rather than a band they have neither seen nor heard before. Encourage bands to put up their own advertisements and assure them you will do the same for the event.

The small price of a prize for the winning band will be offset by the money raised through ticket and food sales. Again, make sure to offer pre-sale prices and a slightly higher price at the door to encourage attendance. If the event is large enough, you might also be able to profit by making concert t-shirts or other concert items. There will need to be time between bands for setup, so plan small intermissions or programs between them. This is a great time to inform the audience about DECA, show off items from your school store, or just have fun while they are waiting.

## Auctions

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Auctions are also a great way to raise money and promote DECA. The first thing to do in organizing an auction is to solicit local businesses for donations. Many times business people are more than happy to donate a gift certificate or other item from their inventory, especially if the proceeds are going to a charitable cause. While soliciting, be sure to bring a letter from your advisor on your school or DECA letterhead that briefly explains the event. Remind them that their business will be

receiving free publicity with everyone that attends the auction and they can also write off the donation on their taxes. Also, bring flyers with you while picking up the donations and ask if you can display it in their storefront. Now, not only do you have items for your auction, but every business person you contacted knows about DECA and your chapter program!

A silent auction may be an option. You simply lay out the items on the tables with a piece of paper next to them describing the object and its value if you like. People then place their bid, providing a name, address, and phone number. At the end of the auction you notify the people with the highest bid for an item or service. Arrangements are then made for delivery and payment of the item.

You should also consider auctioning off services. If people wanted a carwash, they could simply go and pay for one, but a car wash by your school's basketball team is something they cannot buy. Parents will be especially more likely to spend more money putting their children's friends to work!

## Work Exchanges

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Contact local service-oriented businesses about collaborating on this fundraiser together. With a little planning, some manual labor, and a lot of promotion, your chapter can raise funds while having a great time. For one afternoon or night, members from your chapter work in a business under the agreement that they will receive a certain cut from the profits. For example, if your town has a popular pizza hangout, for every pizza that is sold, your chapter will receive \$1.

Work exchanges like this have many benefits to both the DECA chapter and the business. For the business, they have extra help and a large amount of free promotion. As a chapter, members will be able to see a different work environment than they are used to, reach out to the business as a prospective sponsor, and promote their program to the community. By inviting their friends to the event, members make the event more social and create a better chance for dialogue with other guests throughout the night.

Fundraisers like this are also good because they can be repeated several times in a school year and at different businesses. Every work exchange is a new chance to learn about a different organizational setup and raise money for the chapter or charity!

## Golf Outings

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If raising big bucks is your goal, consider planning a golf outing in your community. Events as big as this are usually most successful if they are for charity causes. First, you must be sure that there is a nearby, accessible golf course. It is also necessary to get the administration of the course on your side during the planning process. The next most important step is signing up golfers. Work with the golf course to determine a suitable admission price for the charity event before you begin promoting it. Promotions should reach out to the entire community, with

special attention to golf and sporting businesses. These places could quite possibly be the donators of the prizes as well.

DECA members can contribute during the actual event by serving as free caddies to golfers. This is a way for chapter members to meet individuals from their community and possibly market DECA on a one-on-one basis. Also, create a booth or outdoor area with information about the DECA program and your chapter's contributions to the area you live in. Then, invite the charity to set something up as well. A collection area at one of these booths will allow non-participants to donate to the cause.

Another good time to engage the participants is by providing a free lunch. Here, you can say a few words about DECA, encourage them to support your chapter in the future, and make business connections for upcoming projects. With a charity event, always try contacting several local businesses to have things donated. Lunch can become a weighty cost, but if it's for charity, many restaurants will be more willing to help.

\* Variations of this activity can be created with almost any sport or recreational activity.