

PRE-CONFERENCE TOUR



Don't Miss Your Chance to Experience Grand Rapids!



All registered NCSA 2025 attendees are invited to join us Friday December 5 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to visit THREE of the iconic sites you'll find in Grand Rapids. Motor coach transportation will be provided for this special tour.

The first stop will be the **Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum** located in downtown Grand Rapids on the shores of the Grand River. The museum highlights the life and legacy of one of Grand Rapids favorite sons, the 38th president of the United States and his wife, First Lady Betty Ford. President Ford's integrity, honesty and patriotism led America through the post-Nixon era. Betty Ford redefined the role of the first lady with her activism for women rights and her openness regarding her health issues.

LINK TO THEIR WEBSITE:

<https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/visit/museum>



The second stop will be the **Christkindl Markt**, a traditional German-style Christmas market that often features festive holiday decorations, artisan vendors, delicious seasonal foods, and live entertainment. Visitors can enjoy authentic German treats such as bratwurst, pretzels, and mulled wine, as well as shop for unique gifts, handcrafted ornaments, and holiday décor. These markets are known for their cozy atmosphere, twinkling lights, and community spirit, making them a popular destination for families and holiday enthusiasts. You'll experience a Christmas village lined with artisan gift and food vendors (you'll be able to eat lunch there), and holiday entertainment. Inspired by traditional European Christmas markets, the Christkindl Markt has become a Western Michigan tradition during the holiday season. It even has curling sheets with synthetic ice!

LINK TO THEIR WEBSITE:

<https://christkindlmarktgr.com/>



The final stop will be the **Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park**. This 158-acre botanical garden, art museum and outdoor sculpture park has been voted the #1 Sculpture Park in America by *USA Today* in 2023, 2024, and 2025. You'll take a narrated 30-minute tram ride that will provide a unique view of the world-class sculpture collection and gardens. Their annual Christmas & Holiday Traditions exhibition honors cultures and traditions from around the world with 46 unique displays depicting fact and folklore from the past and present, as well as a stunning display of over 40 decorated trees.

Strolling through the grounds or by taking a narrated tram ride, guests encounter a harmonious blend of horticultural artistry and striking works of art. The carefully curated landscapes showcase a variety of plants, flowers, and trees, while the sculpture collection features pieces from both established and emerging artists. The park serves as both a peaceful retreat and a source of creative inspiration, reflecting a commitment to the celebration of nature and the arts.

LINK TO THEIR WEBSITE:

<https://www.meijergardens.org>



*The motor coach will return to the hotel in time for participants to attend the NASSCED/NA4SA Speaker Showcase. You will be able to sign up for this optional Pre-Conference Tour for an **additional fee of only \$45.00** (lunch is not included) when registering online for the NCSA. Space will be limited for this special tour, so be sure to register as soon as possible!*