

Dear Attendees of Shuto Con,

We have a few major announcements I would like to share with everyone before we open up our pre-registration for Shuto Con 2016 on May 1st. This is a huge announcement, and is a bit long, but please make sure you read through everything because it is all quite important!

Our first announcement is regarding our 2016 Membership Badge rates... For about two years now we have barely raised our Membership Badge rates because we wanted our attendees to have an affordable con that friends and families could take trips to and still be able to afford everything else. However, with the 2015 "privatization" of the convention and us renting out the ENTIRE Lansing Center (and Radisson), along with all the internal costs with renting more space, it left us with a rather large bill that we did not adjust for, and to be honest it left our 2016 budget a little thin. For this year we have decided, so we can keep things at the level they were last year, we will need to raise our Membership Badge rates by about \$10 to keep things running smoothly without an interruption to our budget. While this may seem like a large jump in prices, we have to be able to cover our costs for 2016, especially one our newest biggest costs, paying Staff/Volunteers for their time worked at our convention.

What? Did you say PAYING Volunteers (and Staff)???? Yes we did. Starting this year, due to the government recently cracking down on events like ours regarding unpaid volunteers, we have decided that starting in 2016 we are going to be PAYING our staff and volunteers at least minimum wage for their time worked at Shuto Con. While we still have a lot of structuring and planning to do, we have a base plan of allowing/scheduling Volunteers (while will later be known as another term like Seasonal Worker or something along those lines) to work up to 40 hours during the convention. Volunteers will still be responsible for their own food and lodging during the convention, but at least now they will be able to be paid for their time worked at our convention.

This leads me into the next announcement, Registration (and general convention updates that follow it). Since we are now a private con (meaning Badge Members Only), and since we are going to be paying volunteers for their time worked, we have decided on another big update to our convention... Registration. Starting in 2016 we will be trying out a new way of doing registration by putting it in the Grand Ballroom at the Radisson. By us moving Registration into the Radisson, we will not only be offering hotel attendees an easier way to access Registration, but we will be able to monitor the doors of the Lansing Center better by offering badge checking stations. By placing Volunteers at the major doors of the Lansing Center, we will eliminate the need for badge checkers at every door inside the Lansing Center (except for at Main Events, select Panels, and VIP Events). Also, since we had great success with the Thursday night pre-registration pickup, we are pleased to announce that we will be offering badge pickup on Thursday again (at a longer length of time) to help alleviate some of the pre-reg lines that will happen on Friday morning.

Now with us moving Registration into the Radisson, what does this mean for other events? Since one of our most popular events at Shuto Con is our gaming room, we have decided that we are going to move it over into the Lansing Center, and make the Lansing Center go 24 hours. Events like Artist Alley and Dealers Alley will still have the same amount of open hours as previous years, but now we hope to expand Panels programming into the wee hours of the night/morning, as well as some Main Events (like the Electronic Dance) and possibly other events. Once again though with more open hours comes a need for more paid shifts, so this is all the reason we have decided we need to raise our rates for 2016.

We hope our attendees will be understanding of our rate increase, but please understand that it is because we want to bring you the best convention experience possible! We have great things planned for Shuto Con 2016, but we can't do it without U!

Stefanie Shall
Chairwoman of Shuto Con

P.S. We do have a special promotion that we are going to be offering during the first month of pre-registration! Between May 1st - May 31st we will be offering an "Early Bird" special, with a pre-registration rate of only \$37 (plus fees). On June 1st rates will go up into the normal first tier of \$45, so pre-registering early will save you at least \$8! We also have a special "Combo" promotion going on at our other convention, Random Battle Con (www.randombattlecon.com), where if you purchase both a RBC badge and a Shuto Con badge, you will save an additional \$12 (each badge will only be \$32.50 plus fees)!