

Anthro Weekend Utah 2026 Updates

2026: Animal Warrior Unit (aka AWU)

The battle looms, the Wasatch Front rumbles beneath the surface. Our Animal Warrior Unit is gathering in preparation for the biggest kaiju vs. mech battle ever on this side of the Rocky Mountains! As we prepare for AWU 2026, we wanted to let you know of the exciting updates and improvements we have planned for this year!

Dates

- Anthro Weekend Utah 2026 will take place July 31, 2026 - August 2, 2026.
- Registration opens January 30th at 6 pm MST!
 - This opening is for our regular registration (Basic, Ultimate, and Alpha tiers), as well as
 - Dealer's Registration
 - Panel Registration
 - Volunteer Registration
- Other registration and event signups to follow soon

Staff Updates

Dealer's Den Director: We would like to announce a new Dealer's Den Director for 2026, Luna Starbright! Luna has worked closely with Anthro Weekend Utah (AWU) for several years already. Luna was initially a featured Artist before becoming a Dealer's Den volunteer lead in 2024 and Dealer's Den staff member in 2025. Meaning that many of our prior dealers will already be quite familiar with them as well 😊 We are incredibly thankful to them for being willing to dedicate another year to the AWU Dealer's Den, and they've already been hard at work planning to make 2026 our best year yet! Their incredible attention to detail, as well as their experience as an artist with Dealer's Dens at multiple different conventions, make them a huge asset!

Theme Director: We are thrilled to announce that Milo, our seasoned RPG designer and D&D expert, is transitioning to lead our Theming team! While he steps away as the Dealer's Den Director Milo will continue to spearhead our high-energy dance competition, and has hinted at some awesome puppetry projects in the works. We've loved and appreciated the work he put in as Dealer's Den Director in prior years, and can't wait to see him bring our "Mech vs. Kaiju" theme to life through immersive designs and our signature theme game!

In addition to some main lead changes, we have several new staff volunteers on every internal team, from A/V to Security, meaning AWU 2026 will have the most coverage of any year yet!

We are excited to bring all this new talent into play as we move into the heavy planning phase of our convention!

Policies

A few important changes this year, see our “Policies & FAQ” page on our website for the full verbiage.

AI Policy: We have further defined our AI policy to clarify that we will not accept vendors who sell art created by AI, and reserve the right to remove AI artists from our den, in line with most major art-based conventions around the U.S.

Modern Military & Tactical Gear: To ensure all attendees to Anthro Weekend Utah (AWU) feel safe and comfortable during our 2026 event, we have updated our Dress Code:

1. We kindly ask that you leave realistic modern military, paramilitary, or tactical outfits at home this year. We define "modern" as anything from within the last 30 years.
 - a. Combat or tactical pants are permitted but may be subject to a security sweep.
 - b. Law Enforcement/First Responder uniforms - Any uniform that gives the appearance of an on-duty law enforcement or first responder - is not permitted

Why the change? We truly value the incredible creativity and hard work you put into your characters and costumes. However, given recent events in Utah and safety concerns at other regional conventions, we want to make sure no attendee is ever mistaken for a real-world first responder or uniformed officer.

Our goal is to keep AWU a welcoming, stress-free space for our entire community. If you have a specific outfit in mind and aren't sure if it fits these guidelines, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at contact@anthroweekendutah.org. We are happy to help!

Hotels

Hotel blocks will be opening **AFTER** our Dealer's Den applications have closed and acceptance notifications have been sent to recipients.

Anyone who registers as an Alpha-level attendee before the hotel block opening or is accepted as a dealer will get the first chance to select hotel rooms. We will post more details regarding the hotel blocks once we get closer to the opening.

We have **FOUR** Hotel blocks this year!

1. Hilton Garden Inn (attached to the Davis Conference Center)
762 West Heritage Park Blvd, Layton, Utah, 84041
2. Home 2 Suites
803 West Heritage Park Blvd, Layton, Utah, 84041
3. Courtyard by Marriott

1803 Woodland Park Dr, Layton, UT 84041

4. TownePlace Suites by Marriott
1743 Woodland Park Dr, Layton, UT 84041

There are other hotels that are near Davis Conference Center, but are not part of the Anthro Weekend Utah block booking.

1. Best Western.
798 W. 1425 N., Layton, UT 84041
2. Hampton Inn
1700 Woodland Park Dr, Layton, UT 84041

Registration

Great news for 2026. We are keeping our registration tiers affordable while offering a new way to join the fun:

We are happy to share that there will be no price increase for Basic, Ultimate, or Alpha registration this year! As a special bonus, every registration—including Day Passes—now comes with a free lanyard to display your badge in style!

Flexible Day Passes: One-day passes are available for \$55. If you decide you can't get enough of Anthro Weekend Utah (AWU), you can upgrade to a Basic full-weekend pass on site by simply paying the price difference.

Please note that Day passes are available for purchase only at the con and are not sold online.

Events

DJs & Music

Get ready to turn up the volume, because the beats are back and louder than ever!

The LollapAWUza Music Festival is back for 2026, and we want YOU to take the stage! We are looking for bands and performing groups ready to wow their fellow attendees with a high-energy performance. Performers get a 45-minute set to rock the house and show us what they've got. Upon the successful completion of your set, solo artists will receive \$100, and groups will receive \$200. Keep a close eye on our social media and the official Anthro Weekend Utah website; applications for performers will be opening very soon.

Don't miss your chance to be a part of the soundtrack for our Mech vs. Kaiju year!

We are amping up the energy by adding parking lot raves to our 2026 lineup! These outdoor sessions are generally scheduled between 6:00 PM and 9:00 PM (depending on the date), meaning you can catch these high-energy sets and still have plenty of time to head inside for our mainstage DJs. It's the best of both worlds, double the music, double the fun!

Panels

We are starting the party early, and added a special lineup of Thursday night events to help us kick off the Anthro Weekend Utah (AWU) with a bang!

Early Programming: Enjoy a selection of early panels and a Thursday night dance (pending DJ signups) to get into the con spirit right away.

Faster Check-In: To get you into the action sooner, Ultimate and Basic attendees can now pick up their registration on Thursday night.

Priority Pickup: Early Registration for Alphas will be shifted earlier in the day on Thursday. Dealers and Artists can also pick up their badges during this early window to make Thursday night setup even smoother.

Lastly, to help our creative community plan their submissions, we are introducing an online accepted panels list for 2026! You'll be able to view a public list of panel names and descriptions as they are approved, making it easier than ever to see what's already on the schedule to help alleviate potential duplicate panel applications.

Arcade

We are beyond excited to announce that we've secured a brand-new arcade vendor for 2026, Arcade Solutions, LLC! Known for their incredible work alongside the BLFC Arcade team, they'll be bringing a massive fleet of consoles and authentic arcade machines to the Davis Conference Center.

This isn't just a new gaming room; it's a total transformation. Prepare for a wider variety of high-quality machines and expanded gaming options compared to previous years. We want every attendee to get in on the action! The arcade will be available throughout the weekend. Whether you're a rhythm game pro or a casual console fan, the 2026 arcade is going to be a must-visit destination.

Artist's Alley

Vendors and artists now have the flexibility to choose their own path for 2026. When applications open, you can elect to sign up directly for either the Artists Alley (a more "impromptu" and flexible space designed specifically for individual artists and makers) or the Dealers Den (the traditional commercial marketplace of the convention)! This change allows you to select the space that best fits your brand and setup needs right from the start.

Thank you

We can't wait to see you all at Anthro Weekend Utah 2026.

To our returning attendees, we want to share our deepest gratitude for your continued support. You are the heart of this community, and we are so excited to bring some fresh "new flavor" to the 2026 experience to make your convention weekend more thrilling than ever. To our first-time attendees, a massive welcome to the AWU family! We are honored you've chosen this year to join us, and we can't wait to show you what makes AWU so special.

Whether it's your first year or your eighth, get ready for an unforgettable adventure, and join us for the battle of the century!

-The Anthro Weekend Utah Organizing Board

