## **UWO** sees an increase of Zimride participants

by Audralynn See - Friday, February 11, 2011

http://www.uwosh.edu/today/9108/uwo-sees-an-increase-of-zimride-participants/

Zimride, the newest way for University of Wisconsin Oshkosh faculty, staff and students to save money, help the environment and possibly make new friends, is increasing in popularity.

"Zimride is a website that makes it easy to share rides with one another," said Brandon Heise, tech services coordinator for Reeve Memorial Union. "Either road trips or daily commuting can be shared."

UW Oshkosh students started sharing rides through Zimride in June 2010 and user activity has only increased since then. There are now 1,030 registered users since the full launch of the site to students in September 2010.

"The highest number of daily commutes originates in Appleton, Neenah, Menasha and Oshkosh," Heise said.

Besides finding rides around the Oshkosh area, Zimride also helps students who plan to travel longer distances.

"There is currently a student looking for a ride to a destination about an hour north of St. Paul, Minn.," Heise said. "That is about the longest trip I have seen so far."

Signing up for Zimride is easy to do and completely free of charge. Faculty, staff and students can sign in using their Facebook account, or their UW Oshkosh email account. Either way, it takes less than 10 minutes to sign up, add a trip and log back out.

Once an individual is signed up, they can view driver or rider profiles, browse through existing rides or post their own ride. Profiles contain a picture, the vehicle type, smoking preference, music preference, gender and a short bio. If the user is connected through Facebook, their public Facebook page is also available to look at.

Heise is expecting the usage of the site to continue increasing as more students hear about it and as gas prices continue to rise.

"If you drive, you can make a little money," Heise said. "If you ride, it's a cheap way to get where you're going. Riders and drivers can arrange prices with one another from free to whatever they want to charge."

According to Zimride, when participants share a ride and split the cost with others, that could save the average person around \$5,000 a year for car costs. As Zimride puts it, that is enough money to buy 416 burritos, 25 small goats or a seven-day Hawaii vacation for two.

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Any students, or faculty that are interested in signing up for Zimride should visit http://zimride.uwosh.edu/.