



# Southern

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MAGAZINE

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## Education in the Funeral Profession

More Than a Job - by Madison Spann daughter of a funeral director and guest writer

Earning the CFSP Designation by Patty Hutcheson  
Continuing Education is a Must!

by Patty Hutcheson, CFSP

Jefferson State College Student Essays by Kenny Rogers, Dr. Tommy Jordan and Shaniah Section

John A. Gupton Student Articles by Brianna Gesler and Jadie Click

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John A. Gupton Alumni Reunion Summary

Getting Your Website Built in 2020 by Wendy Harris

Keys to Service - Personal Examples Can Hinder Foundation Partners, Security National Life and Investors Heritage Press Releases

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## *notes from the editor*

Special Guest by Madison Spann

### More Than a Job

Take a moment to remember being in elementary school and getting asked about what you parent does for a living. It was a child's pride and joy to explain all about their parents' jobs, whether they were doctors, lawyers, contractors, teachers, etc. In my situation, the answer always had a twist considering my dad's profession. I would start with my mom's job, certified public accountant, to soften the blow. Then, I would brace myself to have to explain my dad's job, and the reactions were the best part. Even as a small child, I would get reactions from kids and adults alike of shock, amusement, and sadness. To make things better, I would always feel the need to explain and answer numerous questions even to the extent how does it work, has he seen dead people, or my personal favorite: is your dad similar to Dracula? So if you didn't know by now, hi my name is Madison Spann, and I am the daughter of a funeral director.

Growing up, I never realized how different my Dad's job was. I didn't think twice about walking through the casket showcase room whenever I walked in the back door or riding in the passenger seat of the hearse with my dad as a kid. Sometimes I marvel at how I found it so normal, but when you know nothing else why should it feel different. People would sometimes ask me if I saw myself following in my Dad's footsteps. Up until about eighth grade, I would consider the idea but not give it much further thought. However, all that changed when at 14 my previous ideas about wanting to be a doctor or nurse vanished as I saw myself one day owning the funeral home. To most, the thought that a 14 year old girl wants to grow up to be a funeral director is unusual if not quite strange. However, those people didn't grow up with my dad.

Ever since I can remember, I have watched as his profession is not solely a job but a large part of his life. He devotes so much of his time to it, including waking up at 2 A.M. to go on a house call or skipping church to meet with a family. To him, his job means helping people in some of the most difficult moments of their

life and being there for them when they have to make the tough decisions without their loved ones. For me, I saw how my Dad put so much of himself into his work, so it was no question that I wanted to do that as well. I desired to help people as he does and continue the family business that my Dad started.



As a result of this decision, I told him I wanted to start working at the funeral home after my freshman year. To my surprise, he agreed, and I began working there whenever I had the opportunity. Since I was not a licensed funeral director, I worked at the front desk. I wore the formal funeral attire and opened doors for people, printed memorial folders, brought in flowers, answered phone calls, etc., and I truly enjoyed it. Many people I knew in Dickson would come in, see me working, and say to my Dad, "Steve, you think she is going to take after you?" He would always laugh and usually just shrug, because all of my life my Dad has never pressured me into taking over the funeral home. Instead, he would always say, "Madison, this job takes up so much of your life, so you only need to pursue it if you love it."

Now that I have shared a glimpse of how the funeral business holds a dear place in my heart, I must also share the one of a kind memories it has given me. One thing to know about my Dad is that he is an extroverted, people person, and through his job he knows numerous

people who live in Dickson and the surrounding areas. Almost every time we walk into a restaurant, he visits at least three tables of people we know, and sometimes my mom and I will go and talk as well, leaving the waiter or waitress to wonder where the people at her table went. I can't count the number times I have been asked, "Oh, you are Steve Spann's daughter right?" It is almost impossible for me to go anywhere in Dickson without people knowing who I am.

For instance, a twenty minute trip to Kroger turns into an hour once you include the 30 minutes I spend talking to someone while looking for ice cream. Going to CPA High School was such a different experience for me as people no longer knew me as Steve Spann's daughter. They had no idea who my Dad was or what he did for a living. I was just Madison Spann or sometimes, still to this day, the curly haired girl. It was like two different worlds: one brand knew and the other familiar. I finally began to understand why I loved being the Dickson girl at CPA, and it was largely due to my Dad's impact on my community at home which I am able to share at school. Something I am most proud of!



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## Also in this issue of “Education in the Funeral Profession:”

A special thanks to Madison Spann for proving up such youthful insight to her father, Steve Spann, and his profession as Mr. Spann has been the President of John A. Gupton College in Nashville, TN for 25 years and also owner of Spann Funeral Home in Dickson, TN and Humphreys County Funeral Home in Waverly, TN. This issue will include the John A. Gupton Annual Alumni Reunion which attracted over 100 attendees for their summer reunion. We are also grateful for contributing articles on “Education” from Patty Hutcheson, CSFP, and Executive Director of AFSFP and co-owner of Hutcheson Memorial Chapel and Crematory in Buchanan, GA and Hutcheson-Croft Funeral Home in Temple, GA. In addition, Jefferson State College, Birmingham, LA, offered student essays from Kenny Rogers, Dr. Tommy Jordan and Shaniah Section.

As well as Mortuary College profiles from the Piece Colleges of Gupton-Jones, Decatur, GA; Mid-America, Jeffersonville, IN and Dallas Institute in Dallas, TX. Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science also shared some graduate photos and award in “Celebrants” and “Excellence,” and Worsham College presented a “\$2,500 donation to the “Kenyan Embalming Education Fund” over in Africa.

In closing, we are proud to present a tech savvy article from Wendy Harris from DeathCareWebsites.com entitled “Getting Your Website Built in 2020.”



## Earning the CFSP Designation: A Commitment to Families and Funeral Service

Buchanan, GA — Since July 1976, the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice has provided a voluntary certification program for funeral service practitioners to accomplish educational, professional, and community oriented goals in an organized fashion. The Academy recognizes funeral directors who raise and improve the standards of funeral service by awarding the Certified Funeral Service Practitioner (CFSP) designation. As we reflect on our history, it is with pride in the realization that many of the leaders in funeral service in the past 43 years use the initials, CFSP, after their names.

We are often asked, “What will earning the CFSP designation do for me?” After talking with many of our current CFSPs, the most commonly cited reasons to earn the designation have been the following.

1. Academy members realize the commitment to the CFSP program refines special qualities including acknowledging leadership skills and academic achievement, as well as recognizing their efforts in developing public awareness about the funeral service profession.
2. Upon reflection and documentation of career histories and activities, many of our members

feel a greater sense of personal accomplishment by their commitment to learning and increased participation in their communities;

3. By stretching their base of knowledge and information resulting from completing continuing education programs, Academy members feel they are better equipped to position themselves in an increasingly competitive market;
4. The Academy transcript serves as a central point of documentation for all continuing education activities, which can serve as a helpful tool in the event that continuing education is required for relicensure; and finally
5. Many Academy members realize they regularly participate in activities that will either qualify them in meeting the requirements of earning the CFSP designation as well as maintaining it thereafter. Simply stated, if you’re doing it already, why wouldn’t you want the recognition of being a Certified Funeral Service Practitioner?

For more information about the Academy of Professional Funeral Services’ CFSP program, please visit our web site at [www.apfsp.org](http://www.apfsp.org). Or contact Patty S. Hutcheson, CFSP, Executive Director, toll free at 866-431-CFSP (2377).



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# Continuing Education

By: Patty S. Hutcheson, CFSP

Dr. Seuss said, “Oh the things you can find, if you don’t stay behind.” And behind we get, if we are not learning every day. Learning is a conscious decision to use our brain and understand something, something new. Now, some would argue that in funeral service no two days are alike, so you are always using your brain to learn something new. But I beg to differ. Sometimes after many years of helping grieving families we get in a rut and lose our creativity. Where can we recharge and see outside our small world to new options and opportunities that exist? Continuing education offers some of these opportunities.

Continuing education, or life-long learning as I like to call it, has been offered in funeral service for decades. Professional associations and conventions have been around since the 1800’s, but of course, attendance at these meetings was not a requirement for licensure. There was a time when funeral professionals came together to enjoy one another’s company and to learn from each other – what we call today “networking.” In the midst of that networking, classes were held on various subjects. Even our formal education for funeral service was not a requirement for many years. Yet, if you go back in time and research the history of funeral service education, you will find that schools were enrolling students in the early 1900’s. Why? It wasn’t required. I propose that those who chose to go to school and those who chose to attend conventions back then desired to know more. They desired to learn all they could about funeral service and the opportunities to serve their families in better, possibly more creative, ways.

Many professions today require, and have for years required, continuing education. Why? Because as we all know the world is changing rapidly. Possibly in some professions those changes began many, many years ago, but for funeral service the rapid changes

began around the mid 1980’s. With the governmental requirements, the FTC Rule in particular, coming into play, funeral directors began to see that their small world was changing. States began looking at formal education as a licensing requirement. Of course some states already had that requirement and some states took longer to enact an educational proponent. But the need to be up-to-date on federal laws, state laws, and rules of the profession was a necessity. And the science side of the profession, embalming, also had new laws and rules imposed, not the least being the OSHA requirements. And, of course, we have new drugs on the scene that can play havoc with our usual embalming techniques. Families expect more and many need our guidance and expertise in dealing with a situation that is totally new and foreign to them. Once again, where can you receive the most recent information about these changes, needs and requirements? Continuing education.

In researching requirements from around the country, I found that 9 states have no continuing education requirement and one state has no licensing requirement (Colorado). Why not? Some states require 3 hours of continuing education yearly, some 4, 5, or 6 hours, and some states require 12 hours (Arizona, Illinois, and Iowa). Today, continuing education, or life-long learning, is offered in various forms of delivery. Seminars and workshops are still very popular today. Many funeral practitioners enjoy the camaraderie at conventions and meetings as well as the information that is delivered. Relationships are formed and we learn from one another. And in some of these settings exhibits of the newest and greatest products are shown enticing the practitioner to attend. These instructor-led offerings, with many times a question and answer period, help us to better understand the challenges ahead of us as well as the opportunities out there. But some practitioners find the constraints of the profession lending less time for leaving their businesses and acquiring this type of education. So there are those who prefer online continuing education or home study courses. These courses can be instructor-led videos, real time webinars, or printed materials. These types of offerings usually end with an exam that one takes for proof of attendance and, hopefully, proof of knowledge gained.

What do you want or need to learn more about? As well as various forms of delivery, there are a great



number of topics offered. Practitioners can learn about new business practices ranging from accounting practices to merchandising solutions. Legal matters such as governmental compliance are important topics for us all. Professional conduct and ethics courses are requirements by some state boards. Pennsylvania requires a Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting course every 2 years. Today's funeral practitioners are using many forms of media and a great many of the educational topics deal with the technology that can help advertise our businesses as well as inform our consumer families or make their funeral experience more memorable. Course offerings that help us understand the families as they try to handle different types of deaths are valuable. And courses offering different ways to embalm the troublesome types of cases dealing with trauma and drug/chemical interactions are always well attended. We need to look at these offerings as professional development as we work to be the best we can be for our own personal enrichment and for the families we serve.

So what's in it for me? We have so many topics available, yet I continue to hear funeral directors profess that the course material is stale and not valuable to them. At some conventions, there are programming issues with desirable topics being offered at the same time. And one issue I hear often in my position is that the speaker is trying to sell a product. So who decides on the topics that are available at conventions and conferences? Some organizations have education committees who solicit CE proposal requests. Continuing education usually comes with a cost. Some companies have on staff speakers who can deliver information for various topics, and the company pays for the speaker's expenses. That fine line of giving information or subliminally selling a product has to be carefully monitored. If a topic is of interest to funeral service practitioners, then they need to let their organization know their desires. When was the last time your funeral service organization asked for suggested topics from its members? When was the last time you offered suggestions without being asked? Maybe you have a topic you could polish and offer as a presentation.

Our formal funeral service education was only the tip of the education iceberg with a large part of our learning in on the job training. In either educational setting, there had to be a desire to know more. Without that desire the mind retains basically nothing. We can

be told over and over how to do something, but we must choose to truly listen and use that knowledge in order to accomplish the task.

The old adage that "you get out of something what you put into it" holds true for continuing education. If the practitioner attends a seminar with the belief that there will be at least one new idea or helpful hint derived from the process, then learning has occurred and something was gained. But if that practitioner does not expect to learn anything, guess what, nothing will probably be learned. So the proper attitude is also important when researching continuing education opportunities available. Look for that topic that stimulates your mind and maybe answers a question you have. Look for those courses that can make your business better and make you a more effective funeral practitioner. If we want the most memorable funeral experience for our families, then we must be best. And being the best means continuing to learn and grow and achieve. One final thought from Dr. Seuss: "You'll be on your way up! You'll be seeing great sights. You'll join the high fliers who soar to high heights." And you just thought he wrote children's books.

*Patty holds a master's degree from the University of West Georgia, is a graduate of Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service, and is a funeral director and embalmer in Georgia. She and her husband, Danny, own and operate Hutcheson's Memorial Chapel and Crematory in Buchanan, GA, and Hutcheson-Croft Funeral Home and Cremation Services in Temple, GA. Patty taught Restorative Art at Gupton-Jones College for 26 years as well as other courses including Funeral Service Psychology, and was president of the College from 2000 until she left the college in August of 2014. She currently serves as the Executive Director of The Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice, an international organization that recognizes lifelong learning and awards the Certified Funeral Service Practitioner designation (CFSP) to those funeral directors who accumulate 180 hours of continuing education. The Academy also approves continuing education offerings for funeral directors. Patty was in her third term on the Buchanan City Council and is a member of Buchanan United Methodist Church. She and Danny have one daughter, Kathryn, who works at the family firm as a funeral director/embalmer, along with her husband Chase. You can contact Patty at [www.apfsp.org](http://www.apfsp.org) or by calling 866.431.CFSP (2377).*



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# Jefferson State Community College Student Essays



Kenny Rogers is 49 years old and has been married to the love of his life, Sherri, for 28 years. They have 4 sons and 3 grandchildren. Kenny is actively involved in his church and in the school that

his grandson attends. He has been an ordained minister since 1997. He enjoys playing the piano, organ, and bass guitar. His hobbies also include hiking and backcountry camping. He has a warm personality and truly cares for people and it shows in the families that he serves at Hightower Family Funeral Homes of Carrollton, GA.

I became seriously interested in the funeral profession at the age of 15 in Hogansville, GA. The Claude A. McKibben & Sons funeral home had served our family for as long as I could remember. At 16, I went by and talked with Mr. Claude Sr. and expressed my interest in coming to work for them. They did not have any openings at the time, but about 3 years later Claude Jr. and John McKibben offered me a job and I anxiously accepted. I learned a lot about the funeral profession from these two gentlemen and am forever grateful to them for giving me my first opportunity.

About a year later I got married and moved away and left the profession, but it never left me. Deep down inside I knew that one day this is what I would be doing. In 1994 I went to work for Martin & Hightower Funeral Home in Carrollton, Ga and worked there for nearly three years before accepting a Pastoral position in South Georgia. In 2015 I found myself back in the Carrollton area and in June 2017 answered a call from Mr. Bryant Hightower offering me a place with Hightower Family Funeral Homes.

Once again, I gladly accepted. I'm honored to get to work alongside Mr. Hightower and glean from the

years of experience that a 3rd generation Funeral Director/Embalmer has to offer. Often, I am asked, "Why did you choose this profession?" My answer to them, "I feel that it is more of a calling and a ministry." I've always had a desire to help people in times of

need and show compassion no matter what they are going through. The funeral profession affords me this privilege. To earn the trust of the families we serve and walk with them through their journey of grief is truly fulfilling. I have completed my apprenticeship and am enrolled as a full-time student at Jefferson State Community College in Birmingham, AL. I am scheduled to graduate in December.



Times have changed from my first introduction to the profession in 1990 to what we have today. Some are for the good, and some the not so good. It used to be that when a person died, people took the time to grieve with the family, to attend funeral services with the body present; to honor and celebrate a life lived. Today, it seems to be the accepted norm to hurry up and do everything on the same day; to just accept or choose cremation over burial/entombment and not do any service at all.

I understand schedules, time constraints and financial situations, but I believe we as funeral directors and apprentices need to get back to our roots and promote funeral services of all types. We need to encourage and enable our families to take time and celebrate the life lived and memorialize the memory of their loved one with a service. If we just sit idly by and not do anything to steer the direction we want our businesses to go, the funeral profession as we know it will be just a memory too.

**Jefferson State  
Community College**



Dr. Tommy W. Jordan is 64 years of age and lives in Blue Ridge, Georgia. He retired from full-time pastoral ministry in May 2017, after 42 years of ministerial service. He has a Bachelor's degree in religion

and psychology from Mercer University Atlanta, a Master's of Divinity in Pastoral Care from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Master's in Communications from Louisiana Baptist University, a Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Care and Counseling and a Doctor of Philosophy in Biblical Studies, both from the Southern Baptist School for Biblical Studies. He has spent almost 50 years in ministry and the funeral profession in both Georgia and North Carolina. He is currently completing his funeral service apprenticeship with Cochran Funeral Homes, while attending Jefferson State Community College in Birmingham, Alabama pursuing a Funeral Service Associate's Degree.

I am probably one of the oldest serving funeral service apprentices in the state of Georgia. I will be turning 65 in January 2020 and if I make that mark, I will have been working in funeral homes in Georgia and North Carolina for 50 years. I backed into funeral service when I was 15 years of age. I had a fear of death and my father taught me that one way to overcome a fear is to face the fear. I applied for a summer job with Tom M. Wages Funeral Home in Lawrenceville, Georgia. Mr. Wages was an icon in the funeral profession throughout the state of Georgia. To my surprise, he hired me and the rest is history. I found that I was drawn to the ministry of funeral service and it has stayed with me for the past 50 years.

But God had another ministry in mind for me as well. I retired after 42 years in pastoral ministry in 2017 serving only three churches during those years; 1 year, 12 years, and 29 years respectively in those three

churches. After retirement from pastoral ministry, I wanted to continue in ministry supply and in funeral ministry as well. So, while doing supply for churches without pastors, I applied for a position with Cochran Funeral Homes in North Georgia where I am currently serving my funeral service apprenticeship.

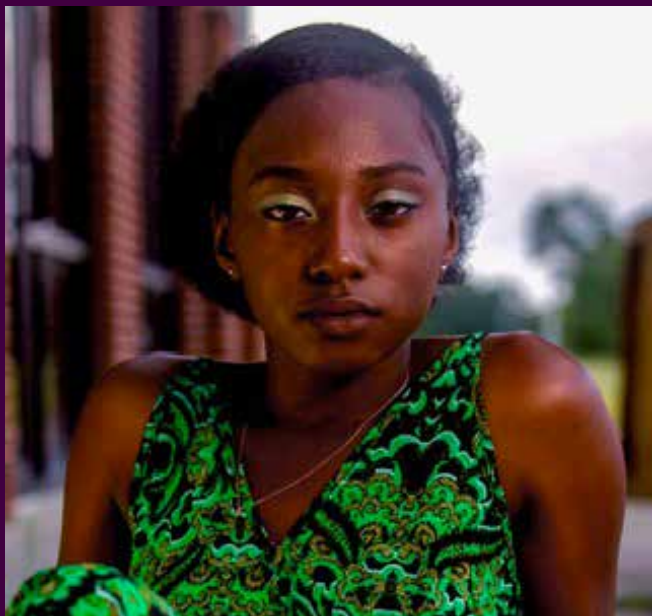
I am currently enrolled in the Funeral Service Program at Jefferson State Community College in Birmingham, Alabama. Colonel Sanders did not open his first restaurant until he was 65 years old. So, why not give it a try? I am completing a goal now that was delayed while education in pastoral ministry took first place in my younger years.

The instructors and staff at Jefferson State are highly qualified and put funeral service education on a level of practical application. I am truly enjoying the educational program, after getting my feet wet again as a student. I finished my Ph.D. in the 1990s and getting back into student mode took some effort. But the faculty and staff at Jefferson State have been there to help me make the transition and it is exciting to be pursuing a goal that I postponed for many years.

I truly believe that funeral work is a calling of personal service and sacrifice. It is a ministry to people during one of the most difficult times in their lives. Other groups might sell funeral products, but they cannot sell personal service and care that is found in the traditional funeral home setting.

To me, one of the rising challenges in funeral service today is cremation or direct dispositions without any viewing and/or memorialization of the deceased. I believe that this trend is hindering the journey needed in grief and mourning that needs to take place. If the traditional funeral is not going to be conducted, some form of acknowledgment of the reality of death and memorialization needs to take place through adaptive funeral rites. I believe funeral homes need to step up to this challenge and inform consumers that options are available to allow the needed journey of grief and mourning to take place even with cremation or other dispositions.

**Jefferson State  
Community College**



Shaniah Section is 20 years old and she is from Evergreen, AL. She is currently an apprentice funeral director/ embalmer at Presely Fluker Funeral Home and attends the Funeral Service Education Program at Jefferson State Community College in Birmingham, Alabama. As a licensed funeral director and embalmer, she plan to continue serving her community and providing families with care and dignity.

Just like most that have chosen to enter the funeral profession, a death of a loved one drew me into the curiosity that everyone has about this line of work, what happens after a person dies? I was nine years old when my grandfather passed, this was my first experience of losing someone close to me. I remember going back and forth visiting him in the hospital leading up to his death. At the time I did not know how much it meant to my grandmother to see the hospital staff take care of him as if it was their loved one. I was aware of a doctor's purpose in helping and caring for the living but did not know who was responsible for caring for the deceased, I could not help but wonder who was going to care for him now.

This was my first encounter of what a funeral home was, although I use to visit there often with relatives to see those in the community or family friends who have died, I did not know why we were there or why it was important to see that person one last time. I remembered going to the funeral home that evening to his wake and seeing how peaceful and at rest he looked

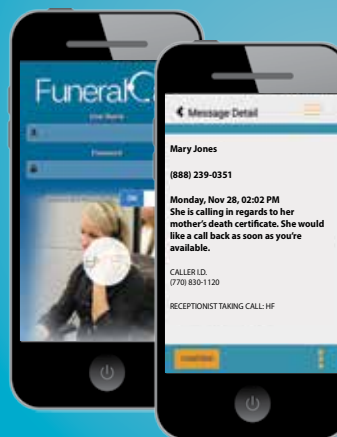
and how the funeral director counseled our family during the time of bereavement. Although I was saddened that he was no longer here with us, seeing him one last time in his best suit made the grieving process a little less difficult. At that moment I knew that

I wanted to help grieving families and give them one last opportunity to see their loved one as if they were alive. The death of my grandfather left the community, family and close friends in shock, he was well known and had a huge impact on everyone he met.



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## Jefferson State Community College



# Profile on Pierce Mortuary Colleges

Pierce Mortuary Colleges is a group of private colleges teaching funeral service education:

- Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, Dallas, TX
- Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service, Decatur, GA (Atlanta area)
- Mid-America College of Funeral Service, Jeffersonville, IN (Louisville, KY area)

Under one management team, Pierce Mortuary Colleges offer a student an outstanding educational background to enter the funeral service profession. The curriculum offered at Pierce Mortuary Colleges addresses the changing needs and expectations associated with funeral services and inclusive to the high accreditation standards of the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Each of the colleges offers a Mortuary Science Program that prepares students for a career as a funeral service professional. The curriculum's strong theoretic basis is complemented with practical training, resulting in a well-rounded curriculum. In addition, there are other programs that are offered at the respective colleges.

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## About Dallas Institute

Dallas Institute traces its roots to 1900 with one of the first schools of embalming in the United States, the Barnes School of Anatomy, Sanitary Science and Embalming later called The Dallas School of Embalming. In 1945, the school was succeeded by Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science founded by W.H. Pierce and L.G. Frederick. Dallas Institute of Funeral Service is the longest continuous operation under the same general management of any funeral service educational institution in the United States.

## Curriculum

- Associate of Applied Science (On-Campus & Online) Designed to meet the prerequisites for licensure and employment in funeral service. Fulfills the requirements of accreditation and approval agencies. Curriculum offers both theoretical and practical fundamentals of funeral service.
- Bachelor of Science in Funeral Service Management (Online) Allows Dallas Institute of Funeral Service graduates to seamlessly transfer to our sister college, Mid-America College of Funeral Service, to earn a bachelor's degree in funeral service management.
- Funeral Director's Program (On-Campus & Online) Designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required.

**DALLAS**  
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**OF FUNERAL SERVICE**  
*The Wilbert Group*  
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**Dallas, TX 75227**  
**(214) 388-5466**  
**[www.dallasinstitute.edu](http://www.dallasinstitute.edu)**

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## About Gupton-Jones

The Gupton School of Embalming was founded in 1920 by Mr. L. A. Gupton in Nashville, Tennessee, for the purpose of teaching the art and science of embalming and funeral directing. It began with a faculty of two, teaching from the chapel of a Nashville funeral home. In 1922, Mr. Gupton was joined by Mr. W. G. Jones and the college was named Gupton-Jones College of Embalming.

In 1954, Gupton-Jones College was merged with Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science becoming the Dallas Institute-Gupton Jones College of Mortuary Science in Dallas. By 1969, growth demands led to re-establishing Gupton-Jones as a separate school in Nashville.

## Curriculum

- Associate of Science (On Campus & Online) Designed to meet the prerequisites for licensure and employment in funeral service. Fulfills the requirements of accreditation and approval agencies. Curriculum offers both theoretical and practical fundamentals of funeral service.
- Bachelor of Science in Funeral Service Management (Online) Allows Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service graduates to seamlessly transfer to our sister college, Mid-America College of Funeral Service, to earn a bachelor's degree in funeral service management.

# GUPTON-JONES COLLEGE OF FUNERAL SERVICE

The *Wilbert* Group

**5141 Snapfinger Woods Dr,  
Decatur, GA 30035  
(770) 593-2257  
[www.gupton-jones.edu](http://www.gupton-jones.edu)**

## About Mid-America College

Mid-America College began as two separate mortuary colleges - the Kentucky School of Mortuary Science founded in Louisville in 1895, and the Indiana College of Mortuary Science, founded in Indianapolis in 1905. In 1972, the Kentucky School of Mortuary Science became part of Dallas Institute, followed in 1978 by the Indiana College of Mortuary Science, which changed its name to Mid-America College of Funeral Service in 1979. At this time the non-profit corporation was changed from Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science to Pierce Mortuary Colleges, Inc., and each of the satellite schools assumed its individual identity.

## Curriculum

- Associate of Applied Science (On-Campus & Online) Designed to meet the prerequisites for licensure and employment in funeral service. Fulfills the requirements of accreditation and approval agencies. Curriculum offers both theoretical and practical fundamentals of funeral service.
- Bachelor of Science Degree (Online) Allows an ABFSE funeral service associate degree graduate, who has passed both National Board Exams or is a licensed Funeral Director/Embalmer, to enroll in the program.
- Funeral Director Certificate (On-Campus & Online) Designed to meet specific state or professional needs. Not accredited by ABFSE since it does not include instruction in embalming, related science courses, or general education courses.
- Certificate in Thanatology for End-of-Life Professionals (Online) This certification promotes understanding of death and how it affects individuals. Relates to careers supporting those confronting end-of-life and loss issues.
- Certificate in Death Companioning for End-of-Life Professionals (Online) This certification offers end-of-life professionals a framework to expand their area of practice in end-of-life support and knowledge within modern American deathcare.

# MID-AMERICA COLLEGE OF FUNERAL SERVICE

The *Wilbert* Group

**3111 Hamburg Pike  
Jeffersonville, IN 47130  
(812) 288-8878  
[www.mid-america.edu](http://www.mid-america.edu)**

## What makes Pierce Mortuary Colleges unique?

Pierce Mortuary Colleges promote excellence in the 21st century practice of mortuary arts and sciences. In addition to standard courses required for licensure as a funeral director and embalmer, their degree also provides students with two certifications: Cremation Arranger Certification and the Crematory Operations Certification. When students enter a Pierce Mortuary College classroom, they are enrolled with other students seeking an education in funeral service. The students are taught by licensed professionals who have undergone the same requirements that the students will undergo. Instructors not only teach theory and principles but also impart their practical perspective that better positions graduates for the real world. The three Pierce Mortuary Colleges have a rich history in tradition and their success can be measured by the number of outstanding funeral directors who are alumni.

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# Mortuary Colleges

## ALABAMA

JEFFERSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM, (205) 856-7841

## ARIZONA

CHANDLER-GILBERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE - Mortuary Science Program (Mesa), (480) 988-8501

## ARKANSAS

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY - MOUNTAIN HOME FUNERAL SERVICE PROGRAM, (870) 508-6157

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT HOPE FUNERAL SCIENCE PROGRAM, (870) 722-8523

## CALIFORNIA

AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (916) 484-8145

CYPRESS COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, (714) 484-7278

## COLORADO

ARAPAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (303) 797-5716

## CONNECTICUT

LINCOLN COLLEGE OF NEW ENGLAND - MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (860) 628-4751

## FLORIDA

FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE - FUNERAL SERVICE PROGRAM, (904) 766-6622

MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM, (305) 237-1244

ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICES PROGRAM, (727) 341-3781

## GEORGIA

GUPTON-JONES COLLEGE OF FUNERAL SERVICE, (770) 593-2257

OGEECHEE TECHNICAL COLLEGE - DEPARTMENT OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (800) 646-1316 or (912) 681-5500

## ILLINOIS

CARL SANDBURG COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (309) 345-8501

MALCOLM X COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (312) 850-7214

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY MORTUARY SCIENCE AND FUNERAL SERVICE, (618) 453-5698

WORSHAM COLLEGE OF MORTUARY SCIENCE, (847) 808-8444

## INDIANA

IVY TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE - CENTRAL INDIANA MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (317) 921-4325

IVY TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE - NORTHWEST MORTUARY SCIENCE, (219) 392-3600 FAX: (219) 392-3609

MID-AMERICA COLLEGE OF FUNERAL SERVICE, (812) 288-8878

VINCENNES UNIVERSITY - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM, (812) 888-5469

## IOWA

DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (515) 964-6244

## KANSAS

KANSAS CITY KANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, (913) 288-7607

## LOUISIANA

DELGADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (504) 671-6245

## MARYLAND

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF BALTIMORE COUNTY - CATONSVILLE MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (443) 840-4924

## MASSACHUSETTS

FINE MORTUARY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE, (781) 762-1211

CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Approved to teach students enrolled in the Mount Ida College at the time of Mount Ida closing in May 2018.

**MICHIGAN**

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY - MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (313) 577-2050

**MINNESOTA**

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA - PROGRAM OF MORTUARY SCIENCE, (612) 624-6464

**MISSISSIPPI**

EAST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE TECHNOLOGY, (662) 476-5101  
HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (601) 605-3327

NORTHWEST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE FUNERAL SERVICE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM, (662) 280-6136

**MISSOURI**

ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT FOREST PARK - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (314) 644-9327

**NEW JERSEY**

EASTWICK COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE PROGRAM, (201) 494-5062

MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE CURRICULUM, (609) 570-3472

**NEW YORK**

AMERICAN ACADEMY MCALLISTER INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (212) 757-1190  
HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, (518) 629-7334

NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, (516) 572-7277

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK - AT CANTON FUNERAL SERVICES PROGRAM, (315) 386-7170

**NORTH CAROLINA**

FAYETTEVILLE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (910) 678-8301

**OHIO**

CINCINNATI COLLEGE OF MORTUARY SCIENCE, (513) 761-2020

**OKLAHOMA**

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA - FUNERAL SERVICE, (405) 974-5001

**OREGON**

MT. HOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL

SERVICE EDUCATION, (503) 491-6940

**PENNSYLVANIA**

NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (610) 861-5576  
PITTSBURGH INSTITUTE OF MORTUARY SCIENCE, (412) 362-8500

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (864) 941-8774

**TENNESSEE**

JOHN A. GUPTON COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE PROGRAMS, (615) 327-3927

**TEXAS**

AMARILLO COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE, (806) 354-6035

COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE, (281) 873-0262

DALLAS INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE 3909, (214) 388-5466

NORTHEAST TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (903) 434-8314

SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, (210) 486-1137

**UTAH**

SALT LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - MORTUARY SCIENCE PROGRAM, (801) 957-6205

**VIRGINIA**

JOHN TYLER COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICES PROGRAM, (804) 706-5066

TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNERAL SERVICE PROGRAM, (757) 822-7074

**WASHINGTON**

LAKE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY - FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, (425) 739-8155

**WISCONSIN**

MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE - WEST CAMPUS FUNERAL SERVICE PROGRAM, (414) 456-5432

PROGRAMS in CANDIDACY Status

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

University of District of Columbia Community College, (202) 274-5858

## PIMS Students Become Certified Celebrants

PIMS newest group of InSight Certified Celebrants proudly display their certificates! A Funeral Celebrant serves by providing a funeral service, memorial service or tribute that is personalized and individualized to reflect the personality and life-style of the deceased.

Celebrant training is part of our campus program and online students have the option to become certified as well. Congrats everyone! #PIMSpride.





## DPIMS Dean Receives “Mortuary Education Excellence” Award

Dr. Joe Marsaglia recently returned from Mobile, Alabama where attended the NFD&MA 82nd Annual Convention. Dr. Joe had the privilege of addressing the 100 Black Women of Funeral Service at their Awards ceremony.

He was then presented the “Mortuary Education Excellence” Award by 100 Black Women and Men of Funeral Service.



Dr. Joseph Marsaglia, CFSP, attending Western Pennsylvania Funeral Directors 2019 Convention and Expo in Erie, PA, with other current and graduated students.

## Worsham Gives \$2,500 for Kenyan Embalming Education Fund

WHEELING, IL – Worsham College of Mortuary Science has contributed \$2,500 to support the Kenyan Embalming Education Initiative, a project started by Dominick Astorino, CFSP, MBIE, in 2019. The contribution of \$1,250 from students, students' families, and Worsham alumni was matched in whole by Worsham College, for a total of \$2,500 donated to his initiative. Worsham College raised the funds for Mr. Astorino's mission to provide embalming education and teach the funeral workers of Kenya best practices for handling remains.

The situation in Kenya is challenging there are only 300 mortuaries for a population of 50 million and the funeral industry has a complete lack of oversight, regulation and support. The average Kenyan funeral professional is regularly exposed to deadly diseases with no education, training or personal protective equipment.

Worsham students participated in a bake sale, a pizza party, a pumpkin carving party, t-shirt sales and an instructor even dyed his hair green in support of Astorino's Kenyan project. Leili McMurrough, Program Director at Worsham, was very proud of the students coming together to support this worthy project. "After speaking with Mr. Astorino, learning more about the goals of his mission and hearing his passion for this project, I knew Worsham College needed to support him and this very important work," said McMurrough.

Worsham students were excited about the project and loved being able to support a funeral director's mission. "As an organization, Worsham is committed to supporting education and furthering standards of care internationally," said McMurrough. "Thanks to the generosity of our students and many others who donated, we are able to help fund a meaningful effort to bring embalming best practices to Kenya."

Dominick Astorino is on faculty at Wayne State University School of Mortuary Science where he oversees the lecture and laboratory of all the restorative art courses. Mr. Astorino has been a licensed funeral director and embalmer since 2003 and is the managing director at Wujek-Calcaterra & Sons, Inc., a fourth-

generation family owned firm handling 1,500 funerals a year in the suburbs of Detroit.

Leili McMurrough is a licensed funeral director and embalmer as well as a licensed attorney. She is the Program Director at Worsham College and on staff at McMurrough Funeral Chapel in Libertyville, IL.

### About Worsham College of Mortuary Science

Since 1911, Worsham College of Mortuary Science was founded by Professor Albert Worsham. It is the mission of Worsham College to inspire students to achieve academic and professional excellence by providing quality instruction aimed with the highest of ethical and moral standards, while remaining innovative in the quest to continually strive to advance the funeral service profession as a whole.





## Funeral Service Foundation Welcomes New Trustees

BROOKFIELD, Wis. - The Funeral Service Foundation's Board of Trustees welcomed three new trustees and elected its 2019-20 executive committee at its annual fall meeting held during the NFDA International Convention & Expo in Chicago in October. Voted onto the board in July, Stephen Phelps, vice president and director of marketing, National Guardian Life Insurance Company, Madison, Wisconsin, and David Falconer, senior vice president and funeral and cemetery trust manager, Regions Bank, Houston, Texas, began three-year terms as Foundation Trustees at the October meeting. Christopher Robinson, vice president and general manager, Robinson Funeral Home, Easley, North Carolina, joined Foundation trustees as the NFDA liaison, an NFDA Board-appointed role. Funeral directors and allied professionals alike serve on the 17-member volunteer board and offer their expertise and insight to advance to Foundation's mission to support meaningful relationships with families and communities.

"David, Steve and Chris are solid and inspiring additions to the Board," said Anthony Guerra, who was elected as the Foundation's 2019-20 Chair. "They are respected leaders within the funeral service profession and have been longtime supporters of the Foundation's mission."

In addition to electing Guerra, vice president of Guerra Gutierrez Mortuaries in Los Angeles, California, as 2019-20 Chair, the Board of Trustees elected Allan Cole, president and owner, MacKinnon and Bowes, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, as chair-elect. Cole is the

first-ever international board member to serve on the Foundation's executive committee. The Board also re-elected Eric Tanzberger, senior vice president and CFO, Service Corporation International, Houston, Texas, as treasurer. Bob Arrington, owner, Arrington Funeral Directors and Crematory, Jackson, Tennessee, serves as immediate past president.

"We are honored to have such a strong and dynamic executive committee, including our first international board member serving in a leadership role," said Foundation Executive Director, Lee Wiensch, CFRE. "The Foundation has great projects on the horizon, and our executive committee and board will lead us to new heights."

Jay Dodds, chief operating officer, Park Lawn Corporation, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and Dave McComb, chairman and owner of Inman Shipping Worldwide and Eagles Wings Air, Fort Wayne, Indiana, transitioned off the board after six years of dedicated service to the Foundation.

### About the Funeral Service Foundation

Since 1945, the Funeral Service Foundation has served as the profession's philanthropic voice. As the charitable arm of the National Funeral Directors Association since 1997, the Foundation receives operational support from NFDA and donors across the profession to help advance its mission to support funeral service in building meaningful relationships with the families and the communities it serves.

[www.funeralservicefoundation.org](http://www.funeralservicefoundation.org)



### 2019-20 Board of Trustees

*Front row (l-r): NFDA Liaison Christopher Robinson, NFDA CEO Christine Pepper, 2019-20 Chair-elect Allan Cole, 2019-20 Chair Anthony Guerra, Immediate Past Chair Bob Arrington, Foundation Executive Director Lee Wiensch, 2019-20 NFDA President, R. Bryant Hightower. Back row (l-r): Steve Gackenbach, Dave McComb (emeritus), Kelly Milberger, Steve Phelps, Kim Medici Shelquist, Jay Dodds (emeritus), Joan Billman, David Falconer, Bill Wappner, Kurt Soffe, Chris Trainor, J. Mark Busch and Mark Krause. Not pictured: Treasurer Eric Tanzberger and Brad Speaks.*



# John A. Gupton Annual Alumni Reunion Sets Record Attendance



Dear Alumni -  
WOW!!! What an incredible showing by the **Alumni** at this year's reunion. A big thank you to all who attended and the sponsors who support this event every year.

They always say, "The older you get, the faster time goes by". I think about this as it relates to many things in each of our lives. From my time at **John A. Gupton** in the early 90's, my kids being born and now off to college or to the passing of the seasons during the year. Of course, with age comes wisdom.....well that's what they say. I believe we all become a little wiser with age as we begin to really notice what's most important. I'd encourage everyone to take a moment and truly reflect on what's most important in your life. If you're passionate about it, then by all means go after it.

The one passion each of us as Alumni of **John A. Gupton** share, is the passion to serve. But what we find in life is where we are called to serve. I've spent almost 25 years of my funeral service career on the vendor side of our industry. Some of you may ask, "How is that serving"? It's very simple, I found my passion helping funeral home owners, directors and assistants become better funeral professionals by providing them both products and solutions that advance our profession. A few years ago, I attended a 2-day class at the Ritz Carlton Institute. The Ritz Carlton is known for their unparalleled service to their customers and creating an "experience" from the time they pull in the drive to the time they leave. It's created by one simple belief that **"Emotionally Engaged Employees attract Emotionally Engaged Customers."** Our profession today is reliant to the customer experience. The experience is created from the time the phone rings all the way through the grieving process.

So, whatever your daily responsibility, your Emotional Engagement is felt by each person you touch during this very special time of serving a family. From the


immediate family to the funeral guests, your passion is relevant.

Enjoy every day of the passing seasons and share your passion with each other daily.

Bill Hudson  
Class of 1991


2019-2020 Alumni Officers (L-R) President, Bill Hudson; Treasurer, Keith Stapleton; Immediate Past President, Delbrita Greene; Secretary, Tim Bond and John A. Gupton College President, Steve Spann...(Not pictured: Bobby Cook, 1st Vice President and Chris Jefferson, 2nd Vice President)





## CONTINUING EDUCATION ON-LINE

John A. Gupton College has developed online continuing education courses. These courses have been approved for CEU hours by both Tennessee and Kentucky Boards. The online subjects range from funeral service history, embalming techniques, funeral home management, grief psychology and bereavement counseling. **For information concerning cost and program call 615-327-3927, go to our website at [guptoncollege.edu](http://guptoncollege.edu) or email [admissions@guptoncollege.edu](mailto:admissions@guptoncollege.edu).**



### JOHN A. GUPTON COLLEGE

**1616 Church Street | Nashville, TN 37203  
615-327-3927 | [www.guptoncollege.edu](http://www.guptoncollege.edu)**



Steve Spann with Jeff Murphy after Jeff and his brother Steve presented a check for \$10,000 as a donation gift to the school



Steve Spann presenting "50-Year Graduation Pin" to Ronnie Ray, Commerce, GA



(L-R) Wayne Day congratulating Bill Perry, Centre, AL, for celebrating his "70-Year" tenure as a graduate from John A. Gupton College as Class of 1949 to 2019



The school gave a 25-Year celebratory Birthday Cake



(L-R) Gene Pike presents to President, Steve Spann, 25-Year Service Plaque for his outstanding "Commitment and Dedication" to John A. Gupton College



25-Year Service Plaque for President, Steve Spann

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## Getting your website built in 2020

By: Wendy Harris, DeathCareWebsites.com

The year is now 2020. The world as we know it has progressed. Consumers are mobile and they expect what they have become accustomed to – information and products readily found at their fingertips from their cell phones. This is not just the millennials but seniors too. This search for information includes knowledge about death, memorial services, and pre-planning.

Society is more transient. They have left the family compounds, moved out of the state of origin. They are now looking for a funeral home in their home town to take care of their deceased loved ones. They are making purchase decisions online.

People are searching online looking for a funeral home for deceased family members. Can they find you? Do you have a website? At the very least a FaceBook page? If not, you may not exist to them.

Even 80 % of local consumers, will shop for a local business online. They expect to be able to get to know you and see where your funeral home is without actually driving to your facility.

The good news is, according to the National Funeral Directors Association's (NFDA.org) 2018 Consumer Awareness and Preferences Study, people are not shopping around once they find you. Only 8.3% of respondents visited more than one funeral home when they planned a funeral. However, it is imperative that you be found with a professional and informative website. If you don't have one, or yours is woefully dated, there is help available. Here we will break down the myriad of website building options to find the one that is right for you.

Facebook is the #4 search engine (behind Google, YouTube and Amazon) according to searchenginejournal.com and it will bring your website traffic. If you don't have the time or the budget for a full-blown website, you can still easily create a FaceBook page that you can control. If you have the time or means to take it further, let's find the best way to build your website. Pros: be found, fast and free. Cons: not a website, cannot track visitors, fixed template

Technology companies. Don't expect a technology company that specializes in websites to understand your industry. It's different. Most people don't really understand. We are the unsexy, the taboo, the misunderstood. The gaffed response to the answer to "what line of business are you in?" We are underserved. Should you choose this route, ensure that you have all of your content written and give clear directives and you should be fine. Do not expect a general technology company to be able to speak our language or understand our needs without explicit directives. Pros: knowledgeable, done by professionals Cons: Expensive, language barrier

Death Care Industry Technology Companies. There are several technology companies that have been in the death care industry for many years. They know their craft and are a one-stop-shop that services many. This is a great option for those who need the other services that come with the website. For example, you may find yourself in need of accounting software and online stationery, payment options, tribute videos and much more. Sometimes a one-stop-shop is essential. In this case, you will need to review the large companies and write down the offerings. From there, make a list of what services you would like, and which services you

actually need. If there is a good match you have found your developer. If not, you may be buying services that you simply don't need and will not use. In those cases, it does not make sense to purchase the package deal, because you will be losing flexibility. With the larger technology companies, they have developed and built their proprietary software and you need to use what they offer. This is nice in that there are no decisions that you need to make. However, you will not be able to have the control that you may have in other settings. This may mean that you cannot add a certain design element if it is not in accordance with available parameters. Pros: One-stop shop for all of your industry needs, understands your business Cons: templates, not as flexible, additional benefits expect to pay more, no control

Some examples: FrontRunner.com, Batesville.com, frazerconsultants.com, mkjmarketing.com, funeraltech.com, there are more! These are just top of mind. You would simply need to google funeral home websites.

Some will offer to build the site for a percentage of your floral sales. It sounds great, but I would be cautious here on many levels. Firstly, what if the floral sales are viewed as offensive to your clients and you want to take that option off. Do you lose your website altogether? Pros: free, understand business Cons: no control, data loss if you leave.

Content Management System (CMS) platform. A content management system or CMS is a software that facilitates creating, editing, organizing, and publishing content. WordPress is a Content Management System, that allows you to create and publish your content on the web. I suggest WordPress because it is open source (free) people are crazy about it (WordCamps take place all over the globe and people are always available to help).

WordPress powers over 40% of the web (New York Times, Rolling Stones are examples). It was built in a way that makes it automatically Search Engine Optimized (SEO). It was built to democratize the web and give everyone a voice (internet press) regardless of their access to expensive software and knowledge. Pros: free, open-source, SEO Cons: customer service is a community, learning curve. Drag and Drop website builders. For some who have

time and would like more control and less expense, there are drag-and-drop website builders. Wix, GoDaddy, SquareSpace to name a few. There are limitations, but maybe that is okay for you. You get what they have to offer and no more. You cannot add functions or plugins, nor can you control the SEO. SEO is important in that some text needs to be given an H1, H2 or H3 header value. Similar to an outline for a term paper. Many of the limitations won't be discovered until you are knee-deep into the build. For example, there was an e-commerce store that wanted to have similar products populate. Wix was only able to accommodate one add-on item at that time. SquareSpace is limited in data that you can add. We hit the wall at 80 posts, but you may not intend to include 80 posts! These sites can be beautiful right out of the box. If you like their templates - Square space is especially design-savvy, then you will be happy with these. Pros: beautiful, fast and impressive, Cons: limited function, SEO not great, no control you lose it when you leave.

The host. This depends largely upon the CRM you are using. For example, if you are using WordPress, you will want to use a host familiar with that platform. SiteGround is one of the best for WordPress. The sites are fast and the customer service is awesome. Amazon is growing in popularity as an effective and affordable host. This will need to be researched so you use the right one at the start. It can be arduous to move a site to a new host, although some will do it for you (SiteGround) at no cost or new accounts.

If you are using drag-and-drop builders it is part of the "deal" that you host with them in perpetuity. Should you choose to leave their services, you lose your website, its content and any data. You cannot take it with you.

URL ownership. Another best practice is to keep your hosting separated from your email. In other words, sometimes your host site will offer free email or webmail. This is good, you want a professional email that uses your url site name instead of jerrylikesbutta@aol.com. However, you should keep it separate from your host. Otherwise, if your site goes down for maintenance or other issues, guess what else goes down? Eeek!

In the industry, a best practice is to keep things separated and in control. For example, it is essential



that you purchase and control your url or website address. [www.yourfuneralhome.com](http://www.yourfuneralhome.com). There is only one registrant allowed and it needs to be you. This is essential. Otherwise, you don't actually own your website! If you don't own it, you have no control over it.

In summary, there are many options available to suit your needs. The trick is to define your needs and get your website online asap so your funeral home may be found by those looking for your services.

Windy Harris brings over 20 years' experience in the death care industry. She started her career in market research and branding. She then worked at Curtis-Mitchell Associates marketing for funeral homes and cemeteries. This entailed direct mail marketing, print collateral and ad designs. She worked as Marketing Director for preneed fund management company for 15+ years overseeing the budget, designing all collateral, managing convention logistics, website design, advertising, direct mail marketing, promo materials, print collateral and copyediting articles. She is the owner of [DeathCareWebsites.com](http://DeathCareWebsites.com) and uses her industry knowledge to design websites for death care clients such as funeral homes, cemeteries, monument companies and associations. [info@DeathCareWebsites.com](mailto:info@DeathCareWebsites.com), 800-245-3079.



15

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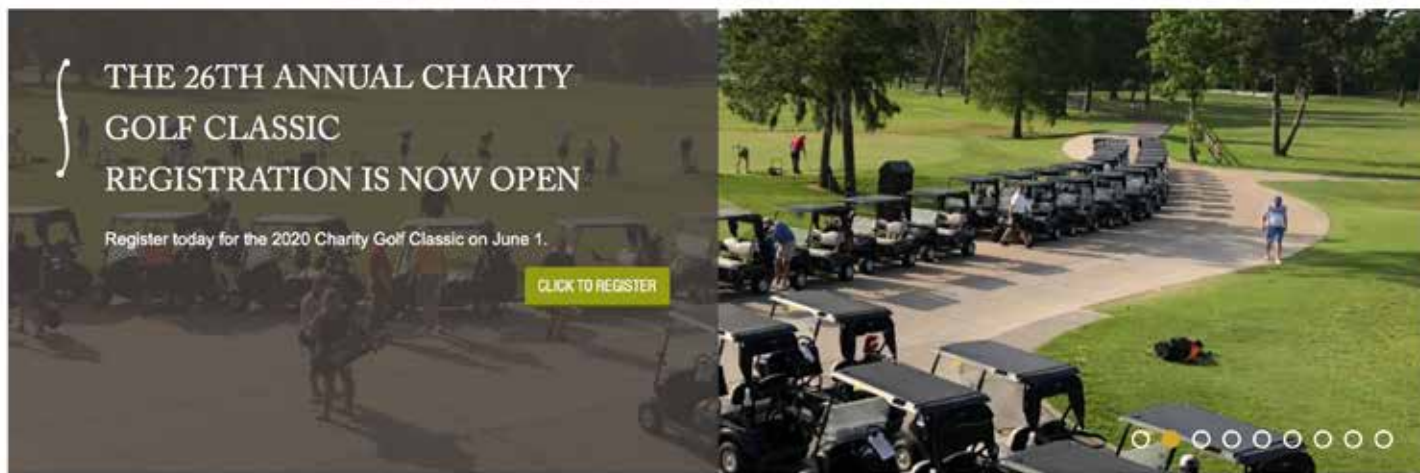
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## Working with the Media

## Keys to Service = Personal Examples can Hinder

By: Todd Van Beck, Director of Continuing Education, John A. Gupton College, Nashville, TN

My experience in the use of personal examples (from my funeral service career) is that such memories which hold great meaning for me might not hold that much meaning for others, so I have concluded that as tempting as this activity might be it ought to be used cautiously.

Personal example's from a funeral career is not the same thing as relying on experiential expertise as a professional internal navigator and guide. For instance I have had some of the most hilarious things happen on death calls, funeral, burials and cremation, but if I would share those personal examples probably the clients would faint dead away!

It seems a safe way to go that if we are not convinced that it will help for the client family (our personal story), a safe rule is to be conservative with career history storytelling (and to be sure funeral directors do like to tell stories, myself included).

Now if the client family solicits these experiences the situation is thereby changed, and we may well choose to comply with this request. But even then it is prudent to qualify words with a remark such as: "This has worked for others, but I can't say whether it will work for you" or "This helped other clients, but I wonder how you feel about it as regards to yourself." In this way, we indicate that it is the client family who is central in the situation and that they need not copy my example or anyone else's examples. The client family will also realize that we do not look upon our experience or examples as necessarily providing the solution for them.

One approach which is less confronting is to draw upon the experiences of others by means of distant generalizations and depersonalizations. For example: "I have known clients who when faced with a similar

situation have found it helpful to . . . . How do you feel about this?" or "People do come up against problems like this. They often feel better when they are able to . . . How does this strike you?" There still remains the danger that the client family will think they ought to adopt the course mentioned because others have and particularly because we have pointed this out, but I have discovered this is only a minimal danger.

One great skill which contemporary funeral/cemetery professions have embraced and have I believe excelled at is making suggestions. Let's explore this a moment.

A suggestion is a mild form of advice. It is offering an idea that another person has not thought of before. Its overtones tend to be tentative and vague. In it the funeral professional proffers possible lines of actions. A suggestion does not demand compliance nor threaten the client family with consequences should they decide not follow it through. I am speaking of true suggestions, and not of masked commands.

Suggestions provides the client family with the funeral professionals considered opinions but leaves them free leeway to accept, refuse, or propose ideas of their own. Indeed its purpose may be to stimulate the client family to think and plan for themselves. When this is the funeral professional's sincere intention, a suggestion communicates this silent thought: I think my suggestion is a good one and may work. It's up to you, of course, to decide. If clearly stated as a suggestion and genuinely intended as such, it is an open form of communication rather than closed, it is provisional rather than final.

It is equal speaking to equal, by one of whom hopefully may possess more information, knowledge, or experience, as most funeral professionals possess, but is not determined to force it on the other. I firmly



believe at the beginning of the 21st century funeral/cemetery professionals must absolutely include the professional's ability, skill and interest in taking on a new job: That of the suggestion maker.

The more suggestions the better!

Finally concerning suggestions two items loiter in the background of too many funeral interviews and need to be put to rest. The first is, "If I were you, I would. . ." The client family's reaction may well be: "Well, I just don't believe it. If you were me, you'd feel just as confused and unsure as I do, and so there would be two of us, neither knowing what to do." "If you were me, you wouldn't say that!" "If you were me, you wouldn't know what to do any more than I do!"

The second point concerning suggestions needs only a coup de grace in funeral service. His name is "I know just how you feel and I did . . . . ." The client family thinks: "I'm not taken in. How can you 'know' how I 'feel'? Is your child also dead right now? And if you do know, so what" You don't feel the way I feel or you would never think of saying that you know." This funeral interview suggestion approach is very cold and very remote. If a funeral interviewer saying such a thing has a mind, then they surely have no heart, and so away with them is my vote.

What I do believe is that the funeral professional must gently and quietly lead and question and make wise and valid suggestions to such an extent that the role of the client family is positively affected as the experience of their loss and hopefully in the end expresses itself in meaning, but what is meaningful for them – not us.

However I have no mixed feelings about the following attempt at encouragement in the funeral interview. The funeral professional should avoid it like the plague. Here are several examples of the interview plague: "Well, you know, everyone has to go through this sooner or later." "Every cloud has its silver lining, and by tomorrow morning you'll feel much better." "A good night's sleep always helps, so why don't you try that?" As ridiculous as these responses sound they nonetheless have been used in funeral interviews in the past. This type of encouragement expressed to a client family is in the end belittling to the professionalism which is expected from all funeral professionals.

If we genuinely feel with the client family what he or she is feeling, if we can let them know by our behavior that we are feeling with them and interested in them just as hard as we can, and if we are able to show this without getting in their way, we shall not need to tell them, for they will already know. They will understand that we shall never know just exactly how and what they feel but that as another human being we are trying our best and showing them that we are trying.



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## Security National Financial Corp. Finalizes Acquisition of Kilpatrick Life Insurance Company

MURRAY, Utah, Dec. 23, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Security National Financial Corporation (NASDAQ: SNFCA) announced today the closing of its purchase of Kilpatrick Life Insurance Company. Kilpatrick Life is a Louisiana domiciled life insurer having a strong insurance base in the Southeastern United States. After receiving approval from the Louisiana Department of Insurance on December 12th, the Company closed the transaction on December 13th. Kilpatrick Life had approximately \$193,000,000 in assets and \$10,000,000 in collected premiums as of September 30, 2019, on a statutory accounting basis. Scott M. Quist, President of Security National commented, "We view this acquisition as strategic with regards to our combined overall growth in the region. Kilpatrick Life's products and marketing are similar to Security National's and thus with the introduction of updated products and improved sales support, we expect to achieve considerable economies of scale over time."

Over the recent past Security National has experienced

solid growth in all segments that it operates. Security National noted that it grows its insurance operations both organically by direct sales and through acquisitions. The Company noted that this is its third business acquisition in the last 3 years. Security National noted that as of September 30, 2019, its assets were \$1,160,000,000, stockholder's equity was \$181,072,000, gross revenue was \$205,320,000, and pre-tax profitability was nearly \$12,000,000. Security National operates in three main business segments, life insurance, mortgage banking, and cemetery mortuary operations.

This press release contains statements that, if not verifiable historical fact, may be viewed as forward-looking statements that could predict future events or outcomes with respect to Security National Financial Corporation and its business. The predictions in these statements will involve risk and uncertainties and, accordingly, actual results may differ significantly from the results discussed or implied in such forward-looking statements.



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# The Next Generation of Funeral Directors - From a Student's Point of View



My name is Brianna Gesler and I am from Hernando in Northern Mississippi and Memphis, TN. I have a three year old bull dog and an eight month old Akita. My preferred company is animals. I am

currently a medic in the U.S. Army, which is another passion of mine. My main goal in life is to try to help as many people as possible, while staying humble. I want to be successful and skilled in multiple aspects. I love making music(singing), painting, going to the gym, cooking, working on cars, and just about anything that is outside. Funeral Service is something I've always felt, in my heart, was my mission in life.



We live in a world today where we are more connected world-wide than we have ever been, yet we are so disconnected from each other. The need for funerals comes from letting go of those deep psychological attachments once our loved ones pass away. The loss of loved ones can often be a reminder to people to not take what we have for granted and, in a way, rip people out of their technological realms and back to reality where their true emotional selves could possibly be exposed. Often, people will use their phones as a distraction from the reality of death leading to denial and complicated bereavement. I believe that this psychological distance between our virtual selves and real selves may cause the emotions felt during loss to almost feel foreign.

It's important, as their funeral director, to understand that this may become an issue and we need to be able to help comfort and guide these people through the mourning process. Another possibility in the advancements of the funeral industry could be the possibility of the usage of apps for first calls, as opposed to using the phone. This would take away the sensibility of the initial, social interaction between the bereaved loved one and the funeral director. Having said that, there are positive aspects of technology in funerals. For example, we have much easier access to people's information, their pictures, videos, and accomplishments. This gives us so much more opportunities when celebrating the life, the decedent lived. Just about everyone has a camera in their pockets now leading to more pictures and videos. This can make the grieving process a little easier and can be very useful for the embalmer when major

The world around us has changed significantly in the past two decades and is going to continue to change for many years to come. What does this mean for the generation coming through to become the new funeral directors? There are a few factors that I believe are so important to the future of our field that they may shape the way we do things. Some of those factors includes the psychological impact of technology on the world, the increasing popularity of cremation, and new methods of disposition arising. Technology has many pros and cons, including anything from the amazing medical advances to the issues of insecure records. Everything is going digital, including the way we store our records, do our finances, and even advertisement. I strongly advise that if we are going to digitalize all records, there needs to be paper copy for backup, as well as, assuring proper security over them. As the new generation of funeral directors, we will have to accommodate to technology as it advances and learn how to use any new equipment.

restorative art is required. We are changing our views of funerals from a dark time of mourning to more of an uplifting celebration of the life that was lived. I aspire to keep pushing the positive perspective, so that mourning over lost loved ones doesn't have to be harder than it already is.

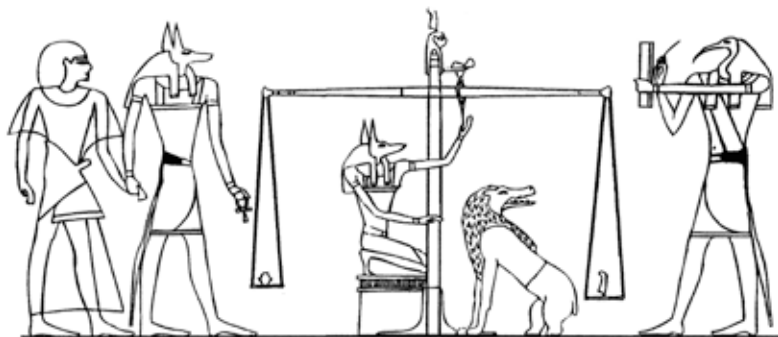
With modern environmental concerns increasing rapidly, a lot of technology revolves around helping the ecosystem. It's no secret that the planet struggles with particulate matter increasing pollution rates and an increasing population growth rate of 1.14%. This means that the population doubles every 61 years.

A large portion of people have noticed the potential problems and are making constant efforts to alleviate the problems. One way of doing this, is by changing the way we do funerals. Lots of traditional funerals include burials, often with metal caskets and other non-biodegradable pieces. This has raised concern in the "green" community to start figuring out more innovative methods of disposition. Cremation, the reduction of a dead human body by intense heat, is one of the most popular, modern processes for disposition.



In 2001, only 27 percent of the US population chose cremation over burial. According to CANA, the cremation rate increased to 53.1% by 2018. This could be the result of environmental concerns, cost efficiency, and the ability to give the families time to decide what to do with the cremated remains. At times, just having a little more time to make decisions can be very helpful for families that are grieving. This could also be an alternative to assist with the overcrowded cemeteries.

Promession and Alkaline Hydrolysis are other modern



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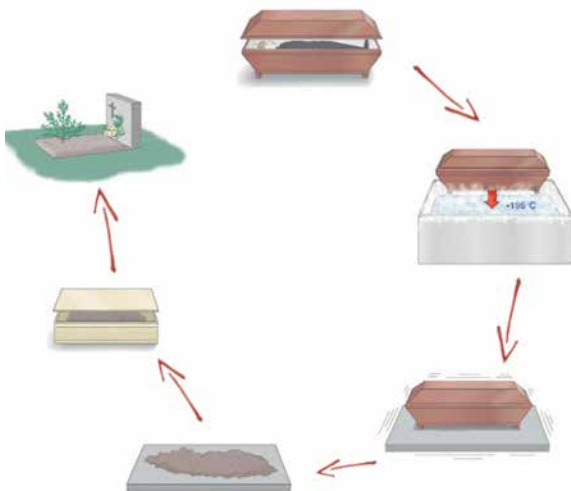
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alternatives for people who want to be cremated, but are worried about the emissions released during the cremation process. Promession is an ecofriendly burial that neither pollutes the air or water. During this process, the body is placed in the casket and freeze dried in liquid nitrogen at -196 degrees Celsius. After this, the body and the casket are very brittle and can be shaken to a powder-like form which is placed in a biodegradable casket that will decompose within six to eighteen months.

Basically, it speeds up the process of natural decomposition, so the body will eventually replenish the soil around it. Alkaline Hydrolysis is, also, an ecofriendly means of disposition using water and potassium hydroxide to decompose human remains into bone ash. It works by circulating the water at approximately 148 degrees Celsius which dissolves the soft tissue. These new, interesting methods of disposition could be the future of our profession, so it is important to keep an open mind and be willing to learn.



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Jadie Click, 24, is from Bellefonte, PA and is currently enrolled at John A. Guppton. She is a Marine Corps veteran, theatre nerd, paintball enthusiast, and owner of an unruly Welsh Corgi. She

recently relocated to Tennessee with her husband of five years from San Diego. Her passion for funeral service is rooted in her death positivity and love of public service.

I am a newcomer to the funeral industry. Before a few years ago, I had never given a second thought to the tradition surrounding our modern funeral practices, let alone the individuals who chose to make this their life's endeavor. As part of this new generation of funeral professionals, I've found that my perspective on the industry as a whole is much more rooted in the personal relationship each of us has with death, rather than rooted in traditional standard. That isn't to say either side of the coin is of lesser importance than the other, or that they don't complement each other. It is saying, however, that in a culture of death denial and disconnected grief, the industry is changing.

It has been my observation so far that "cookie cutter" funeral services had for some time been the most common. Religion plays a great part in that trend, as does the expectation of those families that have always done things a certain way. Now, however, more individualistic and personal efforts seem to be the driving force behind the choices of the family. Even in a religious sense this shift is prominent. Less of the population is religious in nature, and statistically even fewer are devout in their beliefs. In some ways, these changes are threatening to the traditions Americans have practiced for quite some time. In other ways, this new generation of funeral directors, of which I feel privileged to be a part, seems uniquely equipped to handle these renovations in support of the professionals who have learned this practice in a different world.

Take the rise in cremation rates as an example of this



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cultural shift. Cremation is indeed less expensive than more traditional embalming or viewing choices. For many families, the financial position they're in makes their decision for them. The other points I've tried to consider are environmental impact, and the desire for a loved one to be moved or carried with them. Being able to take a loved ones' ashes to a new home, or divide them among family members, brings an opportunity for healthier familial grief that I believe is not often considered. Even the opportunities for personalization of cremated remains through jewelry, mementos, and stones are reasons for a family to make the cremation choice. The environmental impact of a cremation tends to be far less than the resources and chemicals required for embalming, casketing, and burial in a vault in a cemetery. A more environmentally aware population are becoming client families.

Beyond cremation, alternative methods of disposition and funeral practices are just as much a part of this impending funeral service renaissance, and just as much for the same reasons. Green burials or a natural burial in a shroud or casket made from natural fiber are only some of the choices. Some researchers are developing ways to-as unorthodox as it may seem-turn human remains into compost, so the deceased can be used to fertilize trees or crops. Even the way we choose to die is becoming much more of a personalized, individual affair with the assistance of death doulas or even funerals. For a person who has worked in funeral service most of their life, not all of these options seem to be in line with the standard. That is of course, not to say that when requests like these are made by the client families they are not honored to the best of our ability. All of the elements of an untraditional disposition can match the elements of the traditional. The ceremony of acknowledging the death, the marker at the site of burial, and a person being honored for their life are all still there. The difference now is that the individual is being recognized more so in funeral practices than ever before. Memorial services that are centered around the deceased's interests, Celebration of Life services, a simple direct cremation with a family focused wake or memorial to follow, are all funeral options being preferred by the modern consumer.

As I've said previously, we live in a culture of death denial. To pretend that the dead body in front of a person is not their loved one is simply easier. But what role do funeral directors play in this denial? I

believe that the "cookie cutter" funeral service has contributed greatly. On this note, I'm drawing from personal experience. Nearly every funeral or memorial service I've attended has had at least three elements in common. The deceased, if not cremated, was embalmed in an open casket, the same flowers, and the same prayer cards or memorial folders. Again, this is not a bad thing. The family's choice should, in all things, take precedence. Also, the amount of choices needing to be made by a grieving family can be extremely overwhelming. This creates a 'stick to what you know' scenario. It is startling to me though how little any of the people whose services I've attended had in common. Radically different lives, and radically different deaths, yet their services were essentially the same. Consider how funeral service has become the 'industry' that it is. We work in a profession that is unique in its juxtaposition of a corporate operating structure and the deeply personal, powerful emotion of grief. It's possible to me that the lack of an individual presence at a ceremony is why some people can deny the reality of their situation. This would be especially true if they've attended more than one funeral in their life.

Let's include the factor of overcoming death denial being easiest through the physical viewing and touching of the deceased, a theory I believe to be absolutely true. But at what point did other aspects of a "traditional" funeral become a part? Consider the expensive caskets, embalming to preserve for indefinite time instead of just for viewing or transport, the extensive fees tacked on to an overwhelming cost to a bereaved family. Ideally, these things are purchased in the name of giving the deceased what they believe is the best. The changes in how Americans are grieving, however, are a reflection that the standard funeral isn't working for them anymore. Now the bereaved are finding other ways to lay their loved one to rest. At the end of the day, the family's choice is what matters the most. It is their decisions, religious beliefs, and preferences that make each funeral service unique to honor the life lost. Why are their choices starting to shift? Let's return to what creates the atmosphere of funeral service. Religion and spiritual nature play a key part in what is considered standard. With religion being the defining force in less of the population, versus how it governed cultural trends 100, even 50 years ago, "tradition" is becoming more fluid. The other key factor in our funeral standard is public opinion. The idea of what is expected when

we lose a family member guides many of our choices. This public opinion consideration is not just important for what shapes our expectation of a funeral but can also be a major part of the shift in the culture as a whole. I don't mean this in the way I've seen it presented before, where we as funeral service professionals are seen as the morbid neighbor the people avoid. I mean this in a much more expanded sense. The unsavory truth is the funeral industry is just that-an industry. When we approach each arrangement conference with a menu of packages to be selected for purchase, complete with upgrades and luxury options, the public sees that corporate giant lurking in the background. Because of this, a grieving family's church, opinion on embalming, or considerations not related to efficiency are no longer at height of their priority, where they are meant to be. Barely 100 years ago, to ask someone outside your family to care for your loved one was unspeakable. The ceremony, sacredness of your beliefs, and how you cared for your dead was very much in your hands. With our current industry being so far removed from this idea, the tide is shifting away from "standard" options, and more towards something that personally reconnects. How does this cultural shift affect us, and

why does the next generation of funeral directors matter in the grand scheme of things? The simple answer is a generation's experience shapes the cultural tide. As American culture goes through changes, so must ours. Being new to the profession, my intention is to develop my relationships with families under the guidance of personal choice. By consistently reinforcing a default of what would be considered standard, I would only be doing a disservice to the family and to myself. How are we to overcome our death denial if we attempt to do what has always been done? When you make arrangements with a family, present them with the options you offer, but inform them of the others they may not know exist. If they lean toward choices you can't facilitate, help show them how they can get exactly what they need. I fully intend to embrace the changes in our industry, and because the industry is still only an acquaintance rather than an old friend, I don't have the habit of defaulting to what I know. The families we serve come before all else, and the new age of funeral practices will ask us to keep up. I may be a part of a different generation, but I am so grateful to join you in a new age of funeral directing, where the standard of what we do includes even more.

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## 90 Worsham Students Sponsored by Live Oak Bank Attended NFDA Convention

Chicago, IL— Nearly a hundred students from Worsham College of Mortuary Science received sponsored registration provided by Live Oak Bank to attend the 2019 NFDA International Convention and Expo in October. Leili McMurrough, Worsham College program director, stated “We are so grateful to Live Oak Bank. They provided an incredible opportunity for our students to experience the convention. Live Oak understands that investing in the students is an incredible way to encourage and inspire the next generation of funeral directors.”

Tim Bridgers, senior vice president at Live Oak Bank, recently joined the Worsham College of Mortuary Science Advisory Board and was instrumental in coordinating the sponsorship and partnering with Worsham College to provide world-class learning experiences to students.

Students expressed their appreciation for the opportunity on social media, including Jessica Ellsworth-Foster, who said, “Great experience! Thanks Live Oak Bank!” Macki Dameron shared, “A big thank you from me



as well! It was an experience of a lifetime!” And Alexandra Simunic added, “A huge thank you from me as well. An experience I’ll never forget!”

Worsham College of Mortuary Science is a leading funeral director and embalmer school located outside Chicago offering an on-campus Associate of Applied Science degree and an online Associate of Science degree. Worsham students have one of the highest post-graduate employment rates in the country.

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## Foundation Partners Group Adds Musgrove Family Mortuaries & Cemeteries

Orlando, FL – December 18, 2019 – Foundation Partners Group, a leading provider of innovative funeral and cemetery experiences and products, has announced that the company has added Musgrove Family Mortuaries & Cemeteries to its growing network. Musgrove Family Mortuaries & Cemeteries consists of five business locations – three funeral home/cemetery combos and two funeral homes – and a state-of-the-art care center all in the Eugene OR area. “We are very excited to be able to serve more families in Oregon with this premier funeral home and cemetery organization that features such outstanding leaders,” stated Bob Bukala, Foundation Partners Group President and CEO. “Musgrove Family Mortuaries & Cemeteries not only complements our existing presence in the state, but the company boasts a strong reputation throughout our profession for innovative and highly personalized services. We are pleased that the Musgroves have elected to become part of the Foundation Partners family.”

The original funeral home was founded as Day and Henderson in 1883 in Eugene, and in 1952, Wayne Musgrove joined the firm to begin his professional funeral career. Wayne and his wife, Kay, purchased the mortuary in 1973 and their two sons, Mark and Jeff, joined the business in the 1980s. Over the last 35 years, the company grew substantially through acquiring numerous local funeral homes and cemeteries. Mark and Jeff, along with their wives, Diane and Sharon, have continued to carry on the family tradition of service to their community while growing the company to be the premier funeral service brand in western Oregon.

“Early on, we determined that Foundation Partners was the right fit for us, our staff, and for our company,” commented Mark Musgrove. “Over our careers in funeral service, Jeff and I have been very active in state and national funeral associations. I previously served as President of the National Funeral Directors Association and Jeff is currently serving on the NFDA Policy Board. Throughout that time, we had consistently heard that Foundation Partners had a reputation as ‘people that care’. We have no doubt that they will continue our tradition of care for our employees and the families we serve.”

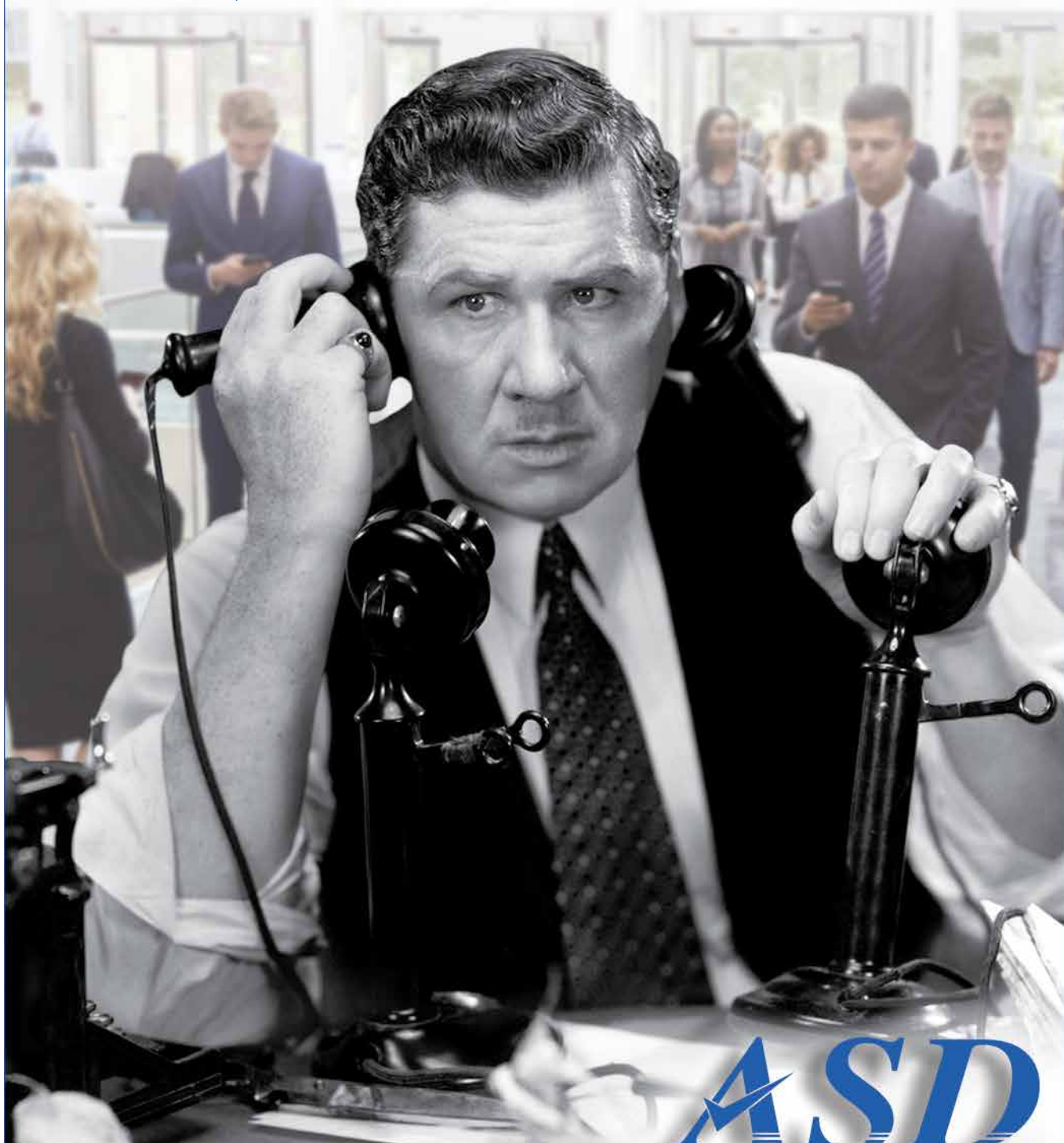


“Even though we have chosen Foundation Partners for our transition, we are keenly aware that our name will remain on the buildings,” added Jeff Musgrove. “Therefore, it was imperative that we partner with a company committed to continuing our legacy. After completing our due diligence, it was clearly apparent that Foundation Partners was the logical choice.”

“Foundation Partners Group’s strategy is to team up with likeminded independent operators in the funeral profession who believe in serving their communities with compassion, innovation, and a people focus,” stated Erin Whitaker, Senior Vice President of Business Development at Foundation Partners Group. “Musgrove Family Mortuaries & Cemeteries has an exceptional reputation in the Eugene/Springfield area and throughout our profession, and we look forward to our partnership.”

About Foundation Partners Group: Foundation Partners Group is a leading provider of innovative funeral and cemetery experiences and products. As one of the largest privately-owned funeral and cemetery operators, Foundation Partners owns and operates funeral homes, cremation centers and cemeteries in 20 states and is actively seeking to expand its presence throughout the U.S. With headquarters in Orlando, Florida, Foundation Partners is committed to revolutionizing the funeral profession through its innovative ShareLife® customer experience-centered approach and harnessing the power of relationship and partnership. For more information, visit the Foundation Partners Group website at [www.foundationpartners.com](http://www.foundationpartners.com).

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## Investors Heritage Names Brian Ege Regional Preneed Manager, Indiana & Michigan

FRANKFORT, Ky. – Investors Heritage strengthened its preneed division with the addition of Brian Ege as the regional preneed director for Indiana and Michigan. Ege is a licensed funeral director, embalmer, and insurance agent.

“We look forward to Brian getting out into the field to meet with our current clients and also introduce Investors Heritage to new funeral homes throughout Indiana and Michigan,” said Garth Waterfield, vice president of sales and distribution. “We continue to focus on making preneed easy for the funeral directors we work with, and Brian’s direct knowledge of the industry furthers our commitment to that.”

Ege has worked as a funeral director and embalmer for the past seven years in northern Indiana after graduating from Mid-America College of Funeral Service. Since 2015, he has been the managing funeral director of Riverview Funeral Home in his hometown of Peru, Indiana. He also served as the funeral home’s licensed preneed agent, helping the people of Miami County pre-arrange and pre-fund their chosen funeral services.

“The men and women working in the funeral industry are a special group, and their needs are unique,” said Jay Slatton, director of preneed development. “Brian has first-hand experience with the challenges facing our industry and can offer the necessary service and solutions to our funeral home partners.”

Ege and his wife, Natasha, will continue to live in Peru, where he has served as the president of the city parks board, a member of United Way Board, and a member of the Rotary Club.

“I’ve enjoyed serving the families of Peru as their local funeral director and have always taken great care to give every person that walks through the door the time and attention they deserve,” Ege said. “It’s my goal to bring that same level of dedication and personal care to every one of our funeral home partners in Indiana and Michigan.”



Ege is the second funeral director hired by Investors Heritage in the last six months. His appointment is part of a continuous effort by Investors Heritage to expand its stake in the preneed market. Part of that effort has come through creating competitive products that are designed to be easy to use and understand.

“We’ve been growing our preneed business for the last 20 years, and hiring Brian is another major step in that growth,” Waterfield said. “Our commitment to service is what sets us apart. Continuing to hire people with intimate knowledge of the industry to support our funeral home partners across the country makes all the difference.”

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