



**FUNERAL SERVICE
FOUNDATION**
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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February 14, 2024

The Funeral Service Foundation Announces More than 175 Academic and Professional Development Scholarships in second half of 2023

The Foundation prepares to launch its Spring scholarship season on February 15

Brookfield, Wis. – Looking forward to launching its spring scholarship season on February 15, 2024, the Funeral Service Foundation is proud to announce that it awarded more than \$165,000 in summer and fall 2023 academic and professional development scholarships.

In December, 23 students of funeral service earned academic scholarships ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000. Thirty-six professional development scholarships were awarded to funeral professionals and funeral students to attend three major conferences across the country in summer and fall 2023. Additionally, 119 students at four ABFSE-accredited institutions participated in Foundation-supported NFDA Arranger Training Seminars.

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS FALL CLASS OF 2023

Each year, the Foundation awards academic scholarships to students excelling in coursework in funeral service education programs at ABSFE- and Canadian-accredited institutions. Awarded in two cycles and paid directly to institutions, the scholarships offset the costs associated with tuition, fees, books, and supplies. Applications will be accepted again for the spring semester from February 15 – April 1, 2024.

“We believe that a strong academic foundation is the hallmark of a strong career – whether it’s your first calling or you have found it meaningfully later in your career,” said Foundation Chair Mark Krause. “By creating opportunities for students of funeral service, the Foundation hopes to invest in the future of the profession that has meant so much to all of us.”

Academic Scholarship Fall Class of 2023:

Foundation '45 Scholarship | \$5,000

- **Kyrstal Cousins**, Channel Port aux Basques, Newfoundland and Labrador (Canadian College of Funeral Service, Winnipeg, Manitoba)
- **Emilie Delcorde**, Chelsea, Massachusetts (North Shore Community College, Danvers, Massachusetts)
- **Lauren Esdale**, West Kelowna, British Columbia (Canadian College of Funeral Service, Winnipeg, Manitoba)
- **Alexandra Kaske**, Mississauga, Ontario (Humber College, Toronto, Ontario)
- **Kaleb LaCanne**, Windom, Minnesota (Des Moines Area Community College, Ankeny, Iowa)

- **Isabella Rioux**, Nashua, New Hampshire (North Shore Community College, Danvers, Massachusetts)
- **Madeline Rothrock**, New Philadelphia, Ohio (Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
- **Heather Vandegjuchte**, Ocala, Florida (Florida State College at Jacksonville, Jacksonville, Florida)

Bob Horn Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Zharia Herring**, LaVergne, Tennessee (John Gupton College, Nashville, Tennessee)

Dennis Schoepp Memorial Scholarship | \$5,000

- **Samantha Powers**, Missoula, Montana (Arapahoe Community College, Littleton, Colorado)

FDLIC Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Kyle Nipper**, Alexandria, Virginia (Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service, Houston, Texas)

Harry Pontone Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Parry Roy**, Calgary, Alberta (Canadian College of Funeral Service, Winnipeg, Manitoba)

Harry Pontone Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Hannah Thompson**, Auburn Hills, Michigan (University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, Oklahoma)

Jack Springer Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Kayla J. Carpenter**, Dallas, Texas (Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, Dallas, Texas)

John Carmon Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Victor Xiong**, Antelope, California (American River College, Sacramento, California)

Joseph E. Hagan Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Joao Pozzi Arcaro**, Marquette, Michigan (SUNY Canton, Canton, New York)

Louis & Josephine Pontone Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Payton Fleszar**, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)

Mark Hornibrook Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Oscar Monroe**, Satellite Beach, Florida (St. Petersburg College, St. Petersburg, Florida)

Mark Hornibrook Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Noel Pratt**, Glendale, Arizona (Chandler-Gilbert Community College, Chandler, Arizona)

Memorial Classic Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Casandra Free**, Regina, Saskatchewan (Canadian College of Funeral Service, Winnipeg, Manitoba)

Shipley Rose Buckner Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500

- **Makenzie Hawkes**, Winnipeg, Manitoba (Canadian College of Funeral Service, Winnipeg, Manitoba)

Steve Lang Scholarship | \$2,500.00

- **Mary Katherine Setzer**, Fuquay Varina, North Carolina (Fayetteville Technical Community College, Fayetteville, North Carolina)

Steve Mack Memorial Scholarship | \$2,500.00

- **Jim Shackelford**, Salem, Massachusetts (North Shore Community College, Danvers, Massachusetts)

Passion and Gratitude

“I am currently pursuing my dream of becoming an embalmer and hope to go into the field of ownership one day. There were times when my dream of pursuing a higher education seemed impossible, but the financial assistance you have provided me has helped me tremendously and kept me going. Because of what you have done for me, I can follow my dream and graduate with my mortuary degree in 2024.”

- *Kayla J. Carpenter*

“This scholarship serves as a source of inspiration and motivation for me to continue striving for excellence in my studies and contributing meaningfully to the funeral service profession. I am deeply touched by the Foundation’s dedication to supporting aspiring individuals like myself who are passionate about making a positive difference in the lives of others during times of grief and loss.”

- *Zharia D. Herring*

“Growing up I [have] yet to face a significant loss within my family, still, me and my father like to walk through cemeteries when we spend time together. It is a place to reflect, it is a place demonstrating the universal love and purpose of our lives. It is a reflection of humanity. Life is not easy, but having this privileges to receive help through the Funeral Service Foundation’s generous scholarship, reaching my goals becomes more accessible.”

- *Alexandra Kaske*

“Beyond the financial assistance, the impact of your donations goes even further. The Funeral Service Foundation has been instrumental in providing invaluable resources and education for industry experts... Your contributions have not only provided me with a scholarship but have also empowered me to pursue a career that aligns with my professional aspiration and personal values.”

- *David “Kyle” Nipper*

“Thank you again for your generosity in making this scholarship possible. I will dedicate my education to being able to help others through the process of grieving with integrity, and I will serve families with pride and honor.”

- *Isabella Rioux*

View photos of all the academic scholarship winners:

<https://www.funeralservicefoundation.org/scholarship-opportunities/academic-scholarships/>.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIPS – SUMMER AND FALL 2023:

Professional development scholarships offered by the Foundation provided opportunities for funeral professionals or students of funeral service to attend national events to further their careers to the next

level, igniting their passions and purpose. Each scholarship covered registration fees, hotel stay, and included a travel stipend.

2023 NFD&MA CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIPS:



For the second consecutive year, the Foundation awarded 10 scholarships to funeral professionals and students of funeral service to attend the National Funeral Director & Mortician Annual Convention in Atlanta, Georgia from July 29 – August 2.

Through the Foundation's support, 20 professionals and students have now attended the NFD&MA Convention through the Foundation scholarship program.

2023 National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association Convention Scholarship Recipients:

- **Kayla J. Carpenter**, West Gate Funeral Home, Natchez, Mississippi
- **Alexis Collins**, Joe Morris & Son Funeral Home, Pensacola, Florida
- **Keonni Dimpson**, Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, Dallas, Texas
- **Kevon Gee**, Restland Funeral Home, Dallas, Texas
- **Rianna Knoll**, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- **Rachel Leverett**, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Fayetteville, North Carolina
- **Benjamin Robinson**, Paradise Memorial Funeral Home, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- **Jaleesa Sturdivant**, Cypress School, Cypress, California
- **Jasmin Tuggles**, Progressive Funeral Parlor, Chicago, Illinois
- **Dillan Williams**, TR Dallas Funeral and Cremation Services, Clearwater, Florida

2023 CANA CREMATION INNOVATION CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIPS:



In addition to administering the inaugural Jack Spring Academic Scholarship Award with funding from the Cremation Association of North America (CANA), the Foundation was honored to provide five scholarships for funeral professionals and students to attend the 105th CANA Cremation Innovation Convention in Washington, D.C., from August 9 - 11.

2023 CANA Cremation Innovation Convention Scholarship Recipients:

- **Suzanne Baumann**, A Life Tribute Funeral Care, Largo, Florida
- **Ashley Johnson**, St. Petersburg College, Saint Petersburg, Florida
- **Rachel Mackey**, DeVol Funeral Home, Washington, D.C.
- **Sam Waltermeyer**, The Cremation Center, Wauseon, Ohio
- **Allyse Worland**, Flanner Buchanan – Decatur, Indianapolis, Indiana

2023 NFDA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & EXPOSITION SCHOLARSHIPS:



Closing out the 2023 convention season, the Foundation was honored to provide 21 scholarships to licensed funeral directors to attend the NFDA International Convention & Exposition in Las Vegas, Nevada from September 10 - 13.

2023 National Funeral Directors Association International Convention & Exposition Scholarship Recipients:

- **Krystle Balance**, Cropo Funeral Chapel, Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada
- **Christine Banks**, Caldwell and Cowan, Covington, Georgia
- **Kevin Byron**, Carnes Funeral Home, Texas City, Texas
- **Megan Fischer**, Care Center Cremation & Burial, San Diego, California
- **Katie George**, Washburn McReavy Funeral Chapels, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- **Bridget Halfyard**, Pierson's Funeral Service, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- **Cyrise Hall**, Forest Lawn Funeral Home and Cemetery, London, Ontario, Canada
- **Bryan Harper**, Kiser Funeral Home, Cheraw, South Carolina
- **Rachel Hauck**, Harvey-Engelhardt Funeral & Cremation Services, Fort Myers, Florida
- **Gina Hooper**, Cañada College, Redwood City, California
- **Lindsay Huffman**, Baue Cave Springs, St. Charles, Missouri
- **Dominique Johnson**, The House of Johnson Funeral Home, Detroit, Michigan
- **Ashley Kroll**, A.H. Peters Funeral Home, Grosse Pointe Woods, Minnesota
- **Sydney Laakso**, Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- **Jesse McElroy-Torquato**, Perman Funeral Home and Cremation Services, Inc., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- **Jodie McGinley**, Smith North Little Rock Funeral Home, Little Rock, Arkansas
- **Dawn Nelson**, Zacherl Funeral Home, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin
- **Anna Nesbit**, Soxman Funeral Homes, Ltd., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- **Katie Schubel**, Baue Funeral Home, St. Charles, Missouri
- **Jess Wakefield**, Keaton's Mortuary, San Rafael, California
- **Douglas Wilson**, Pinecrest Funeral Home, Little Rock, Arkansas

ARRANGER TRAINING:



The Funeral Service Foundation awarded four ABFSE-accredited institutions with NFDA Arranger Training Seminars in 2023 benefiting 119 students of funeral service. Offered virtually or in-person, the interactive program provides tools and resources to make the most of the arrangement conference. The schools that received funding for Arranger Trainings in 2023 were:

- **Jefferson State Community College**, Birmingham, Alabama
- **Mercer County Community College**, Trenton, New Jersey
- **Ogeechee Technical College**, Statesboro, Georgia
- **Tidewater Community College**, Virginia Beach, Virginia

SPRING SCHOLARSHIP SEASON OPENING SOON:

The Foundation will be opening three scholarship opportunities on February 15 for the spring. Please visit <https://www.funeralservicefoundation.org/scholarship-opportunities/> to learn more and apply for scholarships listed below.

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Dozens of academic scholarships are awarded annually in two application cycles. Scholarships range from \$2,500-\$5,000 and are open to full-time or part-time students in good standing who are enrolled in ABFSE- or Canadian-accredited institutions/programs. Candidates must be attending classes and actively pursuing a degree in funeral service at the time of application. Academic scholarships are also available for US and Canadian military veterans.

Applications for Academic Scholarships open February 15 and close April 1 at 11:59 p.m. CT. All applicants will be notified of their status by the end of April.

CERTIFIED CELEBRANT TRAINING

Ten Funeral Service Foundation scholarships will be awarded for Certified Celebrant Training, hosted by NFDA and offered in partnership with Insight Institute. Open to all those who are verifiably affiliated with at least one funeral home and are interested in becoming a Certified Celebrant, the training will be held at NFDA headquarters in Brookfield, Wisconsin from June 19-21, 2024.

Applications for Certified Celebrant Training will open February 15 and close April 15 at 11:59 p.m. CT. All applicants will be notified of their status by the end of April.

NATIONAL EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM

The Funeral Service Foundation is proud to sponsor the NFDA National Emerging Leaders Program. Created to attract, develop, and retain transformational leaders, this strategic early-career leadership program is designed to give talented people the skills, tools, support, and opportunities they need to succeed in their business, their community, state, and nationally.

National Emerging Leaders Program participants will have the opportunity to be mentored and network with other funeral service professionals and leaders outside of funeral service as they sharpen their skills.

Applications for the National Emerging Leaders Program will open February 15 and close April 15 at 11:59 p.m. CT. All applicants will be notified of their status by the end of April.

LINKS:

- **Academic Scholarship Winners:**
<https://www.funeralservicefoundation.org/scholarship-opportunities/academic-scholarships/>
- **NFD&MA International Convention & Exposition Scholarship Recipient Photo:**
<https://www.funeralservicefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-NFDMA-Scholarship-Recipients.jpg>

- **CANA 105th Cremation Innovation Convention Scholarship Recipient Photo:**
<https://www.funeralservicefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/CANA-2023-720x490-1.jpg>
- **NFDA International Convention & Exposition Scholarship Recipient Photo:**
<https://www.funeralservicefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-NFDA-Scholarship-Recipients-scaled.jpg>
- **Arranger Training Photo at Ogeechee Technical College Photo:**
<https://www.funeralservicefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-Arranger-Training-Ogeetee-Tech.png>

About the Funeral Service Foundation – FuneralServiceFoundation.org

Since 1945, the Funeral Service Foundation has served as the philanthropic voice of the funeral profession and has identified as the charitable arm of the National Funeral Directors Association since 1997. Donors and volunteer leaders profession-wide support the Foundation in its mission of lifting up grieving communities by investing in people and programs that strengthen funeral service.

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