

NFDA

NATIONAL
FUNERAL
DIRECTORS
ASSOCIATION

Lynn Ochiltree
Ochiltree Funeral Service & Aftercare,
Winterset, IA

15-time Pursuit of Excellence Award recipient
2012 Hall of Excellence Inductee



Pursuit of Excellence

2018 Registration and Application Materials

For more than 35 years, the NFDA Pursuit of Excellence Award has been a hallmark for funeral homes that are committed to providing exceptional service to grieving families and the community, while adhering to the highest ethical and professional standards.

If families trust you and your staff to exceed expectations before, during and after the funeral, you may already qualify for the Pursuit of Excellence Award.

www.nfda.org/pursuitofexcellence

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

Recognition Categories

Pursuit of Excellence Award

The program's principal recognition, the Pursuit of Excellence Award, is given to NFDA-member funeral homes that fulfill required criteria in six categories of achievement.

In addition to a certificate of achievement and a brass date plate, award recipients will receive a suite of promotional materials to help them publicize their achievement.

Best of the Best Award

In addition to qualifying for a Pursuit of Excellence Award, a funeral home is also eligible for the Best of the Best Award, which recognizes the profession's most novel and innovative programs and services.

As part of the entry process, all program participants are required to submit an essay describing the development and execution of a program or service that had a positive impact on those served (Category 1, Criterion I). These essays will be used to determine the winners of the Best of the Best Award.

The Pursuit of Excellence Committee will select up to 10 Best of the Best Award recipients. Essays will be judged on the uniqueness of the idea on a national and international level, quality of implementation, benefit to those served, benefit to the funeral home and how easily the idea could be replicated or modified by another funeral home.

Best of the Best Award recipients receive a framed certificate of achievement and a suite of promotional materials to help them publicize their award.

Hall of Excellence

Created to recognize long-term participation in the Pursuit of Excellence program and a consistent display of service excellence, NFDA-member funeral homes are inducted into the Hall of Excellence upon receiving their 10th Pursuit of Excellence Award.

Each inductee will receive a complimentary distinguished medallion on a neck ribbon, a framed certificate, a "brick" on the official Hall of Excellence wall at NFDA headquarters in Brookfield, Wisconsin, and a suite of promotional materials to help them publicize their award.

New: Richard Myers Pinnacle Award

As part of the entry process, all program participants are required to submit an essay describing the development and execution of a program or service that had a positive impact on those served (Category 1, Criterion I). To recognize funeral homes that develop an extraordinary program or service that far surpasses the definition of funeral service excellence, NFDA has established the Richard Myers Pinnacle Award, which is named in honor of the founder of the Pursuit of Excellence Program, Past President Richard Myers.

The award will be conferred at the discretion of the Pursuit of Excellence Committee and only when it encounters a remarkable example of excellence in the profession.

Honorees will receive a commemorative plaque and promotional materials to help them publicize their special achievement.

Commemorative Merchandise

Award recipients have the option of purchasing merchandise to commemorate their achievement. Participants will be contacted after they have been notified of their award status to order commemorative merchandise.

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

Registration and Entry Requirements

Registration

To enroll in the Pursuit of Excellence program, all participants must submit a registration form and payment by the entry deadline of July 15, 2018.

Those planning to participate in the program may register in advance – by February 16, 2018 – and receive a \$25 discount on the participation fee. Participants who register in advance have until July 15, 2018, to submit entry materials.

Any funeral home that was inducted into the NFDA Hall of Excellence in 2017 or earlier can register at a discounted price of only \$260 – a \$45 savings!

The registration form and payment can be submitted:

- **By mail**
Send the entry form in this booklet to:
NFDA
Attn: Pursuit of Excellence
13625 Bishop's Dr.
Brookfield, WI 53005, USA
- **By phone**
Call your NFDA member services representative at 800.228.6332 (262.789.1880).
- **By fax**
Send the entry form in this booklet to 262.789.6977.

Entry

The Pursuit of Excellence Award is not for individual practitioners; it is for **individual funeral home locations. Multiple-firm operations will have the opportunity to qualify each of their funeral homes or branch operations individually.** A separate registration form and entry must be submitted by each location seeking recognition. Entry materials for each location must be different and reflect the individuality of its service area and staff that work in each location. Duplicate entries will not be accepted.

All funeral homes that wish to qualify for Pursuit of Excellence recognition must organize and submit an entry that demonstrates proficiency in six key areas of funeral service. Participants must fulfill a certain number of criteria in each of the categories.

First-time participants can describe programs and activities completed in the past three years – July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2018 – for criteria fulfillment. Returning participants can only describe programs and activities completed in the past year – July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018 – for criteria fulfillment.

Please review each criterion carefully. Please take note of specific information required in your description and documentation that must accompany your entry. All descriptions of how a funeral home has fulfilled a particular criterion must be specific. Participants must provide names, dates, places, etc., indicating the “who, what, when, where,” etc., as applicable.

An activity may only be described once in a funeral home's entry (i.e., a single activity cannot be used to fulfill multiple criteria).

Incomplete or unsatisfactory descriptions for any criteria from the “Basic Requirements” category, or more than three criteria from the remaining five categories of achievement, will result in immediate disqualification. Three or fewer incomplete or unsatisfactory criteria descriptions from the last five categories of achievement will be brought to the attention of the participant. The participant may resubmit items for further review when requested by the Pursuit of Excellence Committee; if the participant chooses not to do so, they will be disqualified.

Most criteria do not require documentation; however, criteria descriptions can be supported by documentation (e.g., pictures, certificates, badges) if the entrant chooses. If documentation is required, it is noted in the criterion description.

Entries must be submitted in **English**

Entries that are mailed to NFDA must be assembled in an organized, **bound format** (e.g., folder, three-ring binder, scrapbook, etc.). **Loose materials will not be accepted.** Criteria descriptions and all accompanying documentation must be clearly labeled.

Firms that submit Pursuit of Excellence entries grant NFDA permission to use their firm's name and any materials that have been submitted as part of their entry to promote the Pursuit of Excellence program and in any other manner deemed appropriate by NFDA.

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

Submitting Your Entry to NFDA

Participants can choose one of two ways to complete and submit their Pursuit of Excellence entry. Entries will only be accepted via the two methods described below.

Electronic Entry

- Visit www.nfda.org/pursuitofexcellence and click on the “Registration and Application Materials” link. Read and follow all of the instructions in the electronic entry form carefully.
- The electronic entry form enables program participants to begin work on their entry, save their progress and return at a later date.
- Entries must be submitted in **English**
- Electronic entry forms must be finalized and sent to NFDA by **11:59 p.m. CST on July 15, 2018**. Please follow the instructions in the online entry form for details about how to submit your entry to NFDA. Entries not received by the deadline will not be accepted, no exceptions.

Entry by Mail

- Prepare your entry using a word-processing program like Microsoft Word or other comparable software.
- Entries must be submitted in **English**
- All entry materials must be assembled in an organized, **bound format** (e.g., folder, three-ring binder, scrapbook). **Loose materials will not be accepted.**
- Entries will not be accepted by fax.
- Mail your entry to:
NFDA
Attention: Pursuit of Excellence
13625 Bishops Drive
Brookfield, WI 53005
USA
- All materials (including the registration form, if not previously submitted) from U.S. firms must be **postmarked by July 15, 2018, and arrive at NFDA no later than July 23, 2018**. Entries arriving at NFDA after July 20, 2016, will not be accepted, no exceptions.
- Entries from firms outside the U.S. must be **postmarked by July 15, 2018, and arrive at NFDA no later than July 27, 2018**. Entries arriving at NFDA after July 30, 2018, will not be accepted, no exceptions.

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

Categories of Achievement

Please review each criterion carefully. Please take note of specific information required in your description and documentation that must accompany your entry.

Category 1: Basic Requirements

All participants must meet certain basic requirements in order to be considered for the Pursuit of Excellence Award. Incomplete or unsatisfactory information in this section will lead to immediate disqualification.

Complete *all* of the following criteria:

- A. Pledge of Ethical Practices signed by all licensed funeral directors and all full-time staff. See registration form on page 12 of this booklet.
- B. When a funeral home earns a Pursuit of Excellence Award, it is through the hard work of its staff. Submit a color photo of the funeral home's staff – the men and women who, every day, are working hard to serve grieving families and the community. The photo will be included in a video scrapbook shown during the NFDA International Convention & Expo. The photo can be included in the bound entry mailed to NFDA or emailed to pursuit@nfda.org (JPEG format only, please).
- C. Provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating the funeral home is in compliance with the requirements of the FTC Funeral Rule and has had its General Price List reviewed by an attorney or other expert within the last five years or whenever any substantive changes (excluding price changes) are made. **Documentation Required:** Provide specific details about when the firm's GPL was last reviewed and the name of the attorney or expert who performed the review. (Completing this requirement does not guarantee that your funeral home is compliant with the FTC Funeral Rule.)

Note: Funeral homes outside of the United States should provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager explaining your funeral home's or staff's specific licensing or operational requirements in your country or municipality. If your country or municipality does not have such requirements, provide a statement explaining this.

- D. Provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating all funeral home staff have received training related to the FTC Funeral Rule in the past year. Potential training sources include distance learning (teleconferences, webinars and online courses), convention workshops and home study (books, DVDs and CDs). **Required:** Include the name of the course, the name of the instructor and training date in your statement.

Note: Funeral homes outside of the United States should provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating the funeral home and staff are knowledgeable and compliant with the national and local funeral home regulations and laws.

- E. Provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating the funeral home is in compliance with all applicable OSHA standards. (Completing this requirement does not guarantee that your funeral home is OSHA compliant.)

Note: Funeral homes outside of the United States should provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating the funeral home and staff are knowledgeable and compliant with national and/or local occupational health and safety regulations and laws.

- F. Provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating all funeral home staff have received training related to OSHA regulations in the past year. Potential training sources include distance learning (teleconferences, webinars and online courses), convention workshops and home study (books, DVDs and CDs). **Required:** Include the name of the course, the name of the instructor and training date in your statement.

Note: Funeral homes outside of the United States should provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating funeral home and staff are knowledgeable and compliant with national and local occupational health and safety regulations and laws.

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

- G. Provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating the funeral home complies with all federal, state and local environmental laws and regulations. Examples of laws and regulations with which funeral homes may have to comply include waste management, recycling, water conservation, air quality (air pollution and emissions laws, especially concerning crematories), hazardous waste disposal, discharge of prep room wastewater and land management/wetland protection (in the construction/development of funeral home property). (Completing this requirement does not guarantee that your funeral home is compliant with environmental laws and regulations.)

Note: Funeral homes outside of the United States should provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating the funeral home complies with all national and/or local environmental laws and regulations.

- H. Provide a statement signed by the funeral home owner or general manager stating the funeral home gathers customer satisfaction feedback (e.g., via surveys, comment cards, letters requesting family feedback, NFDA's Family Satisfaction Survey program or an equivalent customer satisfaction survey program) regarding the quality of services. **Required:** Include the method of gathering customer satisfaction feedback and how the information is shared with staff in your statement.
- I. Submit an essay describing an innovative program, service or activity executed by your funeral home. (Participants are encouraged to describe a program/service other than a personalized funeral service.) **The essay must be a minimum of 400 words in length.**

Documentation Required: In addition to your essay, you must submit supporting documentation (e.g., photographs, advertisements, newspaper clippings, flyers, etc.).

Please address the following in your essay:

- o Rationale behind the idea.
- o Detailed description of the program, service or activity.
- o Benefits provided to families and/or the community at large.
- o Benefits provided to funeral home and staff.
- o If applicable, list any community organizations (e.g., church, hospice) that were involved with the development and/or implementation of the idea; describe the role the organization played.

Describing a program/activity from a previous year's entry will only be accepted if changes or improvements are noted within the essay. If you are describing this program or service in another location's Pursuit of Excellence entry, each location's essay should indicate what its staff did to participate in the activity and the activity's impact on those served.

The idea described in this essay can also be used to fulfill one criterion in Categories 2-6.

Participant essays will be featured on the NFDA website and used in other idea-sharing activities. This essay will be used to determine the Best of the Best Award winners.

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

Category 2: Leadership and Staff Professional Development

Attaining and maintaining excellence requires a commitment to ongoing education and professional development.

Training sources include Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice-approved organizations, such as NFDA or a state association; accredited schools, such as mortuary schools, community colleges or other institutions of higher learning; community adult-education programs; related government-sponsored training; or in-house training provided by qualified instructors with recognized credentials in the subject matter. Training can be classroom, workshop, online, home study, teleconference, webinar, podcast, etc.

Complete at least *four (4)* of the following criteria:

- A. Have at least one staff member receive training on a technical skill. Potential topics could include cosmetology, embalming, caring for infectious disease cases, restorative arts, handling special or difficult cases, and preparing organ and tissue donors. **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name of the course, the name of the instructor, training date, and a description of the course and the benefits provided to staff and/or the families you serve. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*
- B. Have at least one staff member receive training on a communication skill. Potential topics could include community or public relations, interpersonal communication, customer service, public speaking, phone etiquette, and social media. **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name of the course, the name of the instructor, training date, and a description of the course and the benefits provided to staff and/or the families you serve. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*
- C. Have at least one staff member receive training on forms of disposition other than burial, such as cremation, alkaline hydrolysis, whole body donation, green funerals, etc. Potential topics could include cremation arranging, marketing green funeral and burial services, performing alkaline hydrolysis and whole body donation best practices. **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name of the course, the name of the instructor, training date, and a description of the course and the benefits provided to staff and/or the families you serve. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*
- D. Have at least one staff member receive training on cemetery ownership and/or operations. Potential topics could include burial planning, cemetery profitability, cemetery marketing and cemetery management best practices. **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name of the course, the name of the instructor, training date, and a description of the course and the benefits provided to staff and/or the families you serve. You must also provide evidence of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*
- E. Have at least one staff member receive training on business operations. Potential topics could include strategic planning, accounting/financial reports and projections, human resources management, disaster planning, marketing, compliance and regulatory issues, eco-friendly business practices, and other topics related to business operations and performance excellence. **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name of the course, the name of the instructor, training date, and a description of the course and the benefits provided to staff and/or the families you serve. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*
- F. Have at least one staff member receive training on bereavement and family support. Potential topics could include aftercare, celebrant training, and bereavement programs and services. **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name of the course, the name of the instructor, training date, and a description of the course and the benefits provided to staff and/or the families you serve. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

- G. Have at least one licensee who has earned their Certified Funeral Service Practitioner (CFSP) designation from the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice. **Documentation Required:** *Include a copy of the current Academy membership card or proof that the individual has earned their designation.*
- H. Have at least one staff member who is an NFDA Certified Preplanning Consultant (CPC) or has completed an equivalent preneed certification program. (Note: NFDA CPC certification must be renewed every four years.) **Documentation Required:** *Provide proof of current certification.*
- I. Have your funeral home earn the NFDA Green Funeral Practices™ Certificate or an equivalent green funeral certification. (Note: funeral homes must renew their NFDA Green Funeral practices Certificate annually). **Documentation Required:** *Provide proof that your funeral home has earned the NFDA Green Funeral Practices Certificate or equivalent certification.*
- J. Have at least one staff member complete NFDA's Certified Crematory Operator Program or other equivalent crematory operator certification program. **Documentation Required:** *Provide proof of successful completion of a crematory operator certification program.*
- K. Have at least one staff member complete NFDA's Arranger Training Program or other equivalent arrangement conference training program. **Documentation Required:** *Provide proof of successful completion of an arranger training program.*
- L. Participate in a professional development program that does not fit criteria A-J. Potential topics include funeral arranging, pet services, preneed, etc. (Refer to Category 2's definition when deciding what to include.) **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name of the course, the name of the instructor, training date, and a description of the course and the benefits provided to staff and/or the families you serve. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*

Category 3: Family Outreach, Support and Services

Distinction in funeral service includes excellence in service to the bereaved. Criteria in this section will describe programs implemented and resources provided to bereaved families that go above and beyond the standard level of service.

Complete at least *four (4)* of the following criteria:

- A. Provide aftercare/grief support services for adults (e.g., newsletter, support groups, seminars, online aftercare resources, resource library). **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of the support services offered by your firm.*
- B. Provide aftercare/grief support services for children and/or teenagers (e.g., support groups, grief camps, grief resources to local schools, resource library). **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of the support services offered by your firm.*
- C. Hold a memorial program for a major holiday, such as Memorial Day, Mother's/Father's Day or a religious observance, such as Christmas. **Documentation Required:** *In addition to a detailed description of the program offered by your firm, you must include documentation of the event (e.g., an event invitation, program, photos, etc.).*
- D. Support or participate in programming with your local hospice or palliative care organization. **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of how your firm supports local hospice and/or palliative care organizations.*
- E. Establish or maintain grief and bereavement resources in your firm or on your funeral home website. If you already have resources in your firm or on your website, add at least five new titles or links, which can include any combination of books, brochures/pamphlets, films, slide presentations, tapes, CDs, DVDs, videos, and links related to grief and bereavement or funeral service. **Required:** *Include the titles and a description of the new resources and/or website content.*
- F. Provide families with online memorialization options (e.g., funeral webcasting, online video tributes, photo galleries, assistance with memorial websites). **Documentation Required:** *Provide a detailed description of the options offered and documentation of these services (e.g., website copy, description in GPL, marketing materials, etc.).*

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

- G. Offer green funeral/natural burial options to families. **Documentation Required:** *Provide a detailed description of the green options offered and documentation of these services (e.g., GPL showing a green funeral package, website copy, marketing materials, etc.).*
- H. Implement green business practices in your business (e.g., alternative energy sources for energy efficiency and conservation, green construction and remodeling, water conservation, energy-saving transportation/fleet practices, and waste prevention, reduction and recycling). **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of these practices.*
- I. Execute an innovative funeral service. This example should go beyond any products purchased for the funeral and demonstrate a unique and highly meaningful service directed by the funeral home and its staff. (Please include a detailed description of the service, but remember to respect the family's privacy.)
- J. Execute an innovative program (that does not fit criteria A-I) that exemplifies excellence in serving the bereaved. (Refer to Category 3's definition when deciding what to include.) **Required:** *Be detailed in your description.*

Category 4: Community Service and Education

Service excellence should extend beyond the walls of the funeral home through the direct sponsorship of community events and educational programs, and through volunteerism with local clubs, nonprofit organizations and service organizations. Criteria in this section will provide clear evidence that your funeral home maintains an active level of involvement in the community.

Complete at least *four (4)* of the following criteria:

- A. Present a program to an organized community group, such as a local school, civic or community club/organization, nursing home, hospice, or medical or healthcare group. **Required:** *Provide a detailed description that includes the name of the group, date of presentation, name of the presenter and topic on which they spoke.*
- B. Sponsor a visit to your funeral home for groups such as youth, church, civic organization or school. **Required:** *Provide a detailed description that includes the name of the group, date of visit and what transpired during the visit.*
- C. Volunteer at least 12 hours with community service organizations (e.g., Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity, soup kitchen). **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of your service that includes the name of the organization, dates of service and your duties as a volunteer.*
- D. Participate in local government, service clubs or fraternal organizations through an elected position or volunteer activities. **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of your participation that includes the name of the organization, dates of service and your role.*
- E. Support and/or participate in programming on a specific health issue (e.g., American Cancer Society, March of Dimes, American Heart Association, etc.). **Required:** *Provide a detailed description that includes the name of the organization and program you supported, date of the program, and the specific support you lent.*
- F. Arrange for at least five resources (e.g., books, DVDs) related to funeral service to be donated to a school, college, or public or religious library in your area. **Required:** *Include the resource titles in your description.*
- G. Describe an innovative program (that does not fit criteria A-F) that highlights your funeral home's involvement in the community. (Refer to Category 4's definition when deciding what to include.)

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

Category 5: Professional Service and Participation

Professional excellence includes active development of professional relationships and the support of funeral service associations and/or related organizations. Criteria in this section will demonstrate active participation in the profession.

Complete at least *four (4)* of the following criteria:

- A. Serve on a local, state, provincial or national funeral service association board, committee, task force, etc. **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of your involvement.*
- B. Become actively involved with a local mortuary science education program (e.g., serve on a board, present a workshop to students, host a tour of your funeral home for students, serve as a faculty member). **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of your involvement, including, as applicable, the name of the school, dates of involvement and the specific support you lent.*
- C. Mentor or train an apprentice or student embalmer. **Required:** *Provide the name of the apprentice/student embalmer and dates of mentorship.*
- D. Present a one-hour workshop/presentation to a local, state, provincial or national funeral service organization. **Required:** *Provide the title of the workshop/presentation, the group to which it was presented, the date of the presentation, name of the presenter and a description of the presentation.*
- E. Write an article that is published in *The Director*, a state association publication or other funeral service magazine (print or electronic). **Required:** *Provide the name of the publication, date on which the article was published, title of the article and a brief summary of the article's key point(s).*
- F. Attend an NFDA educational event (e.g., NFDA International Convention & Expo, NFDA Leadership Conference, NFDA Professional Women's Conference, NFDA Meet the Mentors, NFDA Business Conference, NFDA Cremation Retreat). **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name, date and location of the event. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*
- G. Attend the NFDA Advocacy Summit, a provincial or state government regulatory meeting, or send letters to your government representatives to ensure that funeral service or small-business issues are heard by elected officials. **Required:** *Provide the date(s) and location of the event or detailed information about the letter(s) sent to government officials.*
- H. Participate in a local, state or provincial funeral directors association meeting or attend a state association convention. **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name, date and location of the event. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*
- I. Attend the convention or regional conference of a nationally or internationally recognized funeral service organization (e.g., American Society of Embalmers; Asociacion Latinoamericana de Parques Cementerios y Servicios Exequiales; Association for Death Education and Counseling; Cremation Association of North America; Federated Funeral Directors of America; Fédération Internationale des Associations de Thanatologues – International Federation of Thanatologists Association; Funeral Service Association of Canada; International Cemetery, Cremation & Funeral Association; International Order of the Golden Rule; Jewish Funeral Directors of America; KAVOD Independent Jewish Funeral Chapels; National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association; Preferred Funeral Directors International; Selected Independent Funeral Homes). **Documentation Required:** *In your description, provide the name, date and location of the event. You must also provide documentation of your attendance/participation (e.g., CE certificate, participation certificate, registration confirmation, badge, program, etc.).*
- J. Make a monetary contribution to a funeral service-specific charitable organization, such as the Funeral Service Foundation (includes participation in the annual Funeral Service Foundation Golf Classic), The Heritage Club, a state or national association foundation, or a mortuary science school scholarship. **Required:** *Provide the name of the organization and the date of your contribution (it is not necessary to specify the amount donated).*

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

- K. Participate in a state disaster team or DMORT unit. **Required:** *Provide a detailed description of your involvement and duties. If you responded to a disaster, please provide a brief overview of your duties during the response.*
- L. Offer to serve as a mentor to a prospective/new Pursuit of Excellence program participant. (Example: On funeral home letterhead, share information about the program and offer to mentor your colleague.) **Required:** *Provide documentation of your communication with the funeral home(s).*
- M. Provide an example (that does not fit criteria A-L) that demonstrates support of, or participation in, professional funeral service associations. (Refer to Category 5's definition when deciding what to include.)

Category 6: Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations

A funeral home that provides outstanding programs and services will not have much impact if people do not know it exists or what it stands for. Criteria in this category will identify and describe marketing, advertising and public relations programs used to promote your funeral home and funeral service in the community.

Complete at least four (4) of the following criteria:

- A. Describe the ways in which your funeral home promotes its recognition by NFDA with the Pursuit of Excellence Award in the community (e.g., send out news releases, use the Pursuit logo on communication materials, display award at community events, etc.). **Documentation Required:** *In addition to a detailed description, provide documentation showing how you have promoted your achievement in your community (e.g., news release, newspaper articles, ads, etc.).*
- B. Develop or update a section on your funeral home's website featuring information about death, dying, funeral planning or bereavement for consumers. **Documentation Required:** *In addition to a detailed description of the information added or updated, provide documentation showing the change(s) made.*
- C. Use social media and/or web-based tools (e.g., blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) to market your firm and educate the community about funeral service and grief/bereavement issues. Note: Having a funeral home website does not fulfill this requirement; your firm must be engaged in activities beyond its website. **Documentation Required:** *In addition to a detailed description of how these tools are being used, please provide documentation of your firm's online presence.*
- D. Implement a new, or improve an existing, public relations program aimed at media or community relations (e.g., holiday programs, memorials for public figures, write a column for a local newspaper about grief and bereavement issues, publish news releases, make TV/radio appearances).
- E. Implement a new, or improve an existing, advertising and/or marketing program (e.g., create or update a brochure; develop new advertisements for print, radio or TV; develop a direct-mail campaign; sponsor a community event).
- F. Implement a new, or improve an existing, clergy relations program (e.g., host a presentation, distribute a newsletter to local religious organizations, organize a clergy appreciation event, host a breakfast for local clergy members).
- G. Create and/or provide a free newsletter (print or electronic) addressing grief and bereavement issues to allied groups in your community, such as hospice workers, clergy, social workers, nursing homes or other social organizations. **Documentation Required:** *Provide a copy of the newsletter.*
- H. Use the Funeral and Memorial Information Council's Have the Talk of a Lifetime materials as part of your firm's overall marketing/advertising plan (e.g., print ads, community presentations, digital ads, Have the Talk of a Lifetime brochure). **Documentation Required:** *Identify which materials your firm is using and provide documentation showing how they are being used.*
- I. Describe a marketing, advertising or public relations program (that does not fit criteria A-H) that your firm has successfully implemented in your community. (Refer to Category 6's definition when deciding what to include.)

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

2018 Pursuit of Excellence Registration Form – page 1 of 2

All Pursuit of Excellence program participants must complete and submit this registration form, along with payment, by July 15, 2018.

Firm name _____

NFDA member number _____

Firm name as it should appear on press release, certificate, merchandise, etc. _____

Contact name _____

Address _____

City, State/Province, Postal Code _____

Country _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Referred to program by _____

Pledge of Ethical Practices (Please Read Carefully)

As a condition of application to the Pursuit of Excellence program, the undersigned persons pledge the following:

- All information provided in our Pursuit of Excellence entry is true and correct, and we will abide by the rules, procedures and decisions of NFDA, which will be considered final in the case of awards.
- NFDA has permission to use any materials submitted as part of our entry for the Pursuit of Excellence Award in promotion of the program.
- As current members of NFDA, we will continue to maintain strict adherence to the NFDA Code of Professional Conduct.
- Our funeral home and its employees have not, within five (5) years of the date of application, been found to be in violation by a government licensing or regulatory authority of any statute or regulation whose purpose is to protect consumers and regulate ethical or business practices of funeral directors. (Participants can appeal to the Pursuit of Excellence Committee.)
- If our funeral home is found to be in violation of the Pledge of Ethical Practices, we forfeit all rights and benefits awarded by the Pursuit of Excellence program.
- The Pursuit of Excellence program is built upon its participants' strict adherence to the highest ethical practices and professionalism. It is impossible to craft a written policy that can precisely define or list all of the acts of misconduct or impropriety that should disqualify a funeral home from participating in the program. However, in order to protect the integrity of the program, the Pursuit of Excellence Committee needs the ability to reject an application, rescind an award and revoke a recipient's right to hold itself out as a Pursuit of Excellence Award recipient due to some act of misconduct or impropriety associated with that firm. Therefore, it is the policy of the Pursuit of Excellence program that the Pursuit of Excellence Committee shall have the final authority to reject an application, rescind an award and revoke a recipient's right to hold itself out as a Pursuit of Excellence participant in the event the committee finds that the funeral home, its ownership, employees, operations or anything associated with it detracts from the integrity of the Pursuit of Excellence program and its commitment to the highest ethical and professional standards.

Signature(s) of all licensed funeral directors and all full-time staff (attach additional page(s) if necessary):

2018 Pursuit of Excellence

2018 Pursuit of Excellence Registration Form – page 2 of 2

Participation Fee – Required

Select the appropriate participation fee. The participation fee is nonrefundable.

- ☐ Hall of Excellence Inductee (inducted in 2017 or earlier)..... \$260
- ☐ Early-bird Participation Fee (on or before February 16, 2018)..... \$280
- ☐ Standard Participation Fee (after February 16, 2018) \$305

Total Due to NFDA..... \$ _____

Method of Payment

☐ Check payable to NFDA (U.S. dollars drawn on U.S. bank only).

☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Card number _____

Expiration date _____

Name on card (please print) _____

Signature _____

Participants will be contacted after they have been notified of their award status to order commemorative merchandise.

Submit this registration form to NFDA

- By fax: 262.789.6977
- By mail: NFDA
Attention: Pursuit of Excellence
13625 Bishops Drive
Brookfield, WI 53005
USA
- You may also call your member services representative at 800.228.6332 (262.789.1880) to pay the registration fee by phone.

