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## **2025 NFDA Meet the Mentors Program: Exclusive Opportunity for Funeral Professionals to Connect, Learn and Advocate in Washington, D.C.**

Brookfield, Wis. – The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) is proud to announce that its highly-praised [Meet the Mentors](#) program will take place from April 8-10, 2025, in Washington, D.C. This transformative event, held in conjunction with NFDA’s annual Advocacy Summit, offers a unique opportunity for emerging funeral service professionals to engage with leaders and experience the power of advocacy firsthand.

Since its launch in 2011, and thanks to the generous support of the Funeral Service Foundation, Meet the Mentors has provided invaluable insights and connections for hundreds of funeral professionals. This year’s program promises to be particularly impactful, combining intimate mentorship sessions with real-world advocacy training on Capitol Hill.

“We are thrilled to host Meet the Mentors in Washington, D.C., again this year,” said Sara Moss, MS, CT, LFD, NFDA Associate Director of Education. “This setting not only offers participants the chance to learn from top funeral service leaders but also equips them with the skills and experience to advocate for our profession at the highest levels of government.”

### **An Exceptional Mentorship Experience**

The 2025 program will bring together 25 participants – funeral professionals aged 40 and under, or those licensed within the past five years – to learn from three distinguished mentors who have made significant contributions to the funeral service profession:

- **Dr. Camelia Clarke:** Co-owner of Paradise Memorial Funeral and Cremation Services and Leon L. Williamson Funeral Chapel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Clarke brings over two decades of experience. A past president of the Wisconsin Funeral Directors Association, she is also an active member of the NFDA Spokesperson Team and deeply involved in her local community.
- **Lori Sheeler:** As General Manager of St. Pierre Funeral Services in Indianapolis, Indiana, Sheeler has served in key leadership roles, including Vice Chairman of the Indiana Funeral Education Foundation and District 7 Director for the Indiana Funeral Directors Association. Her dedication to mentorship and service extends beyond the funeral profession, reflecting her passion for community support and education.
- **Tim Schramm:** Owner and CEO of Howe-Peterson Funeral Homes in Michigan, Schramm’s expertise spans funeral service management and mass fatality response. He currently leads the Michigan Mortuary Response Team (MI-MORT) and serves on the Funeral Service Foundation’s Board of Trustees. His commitment to excellence and innovation in funeral service makes him a valuable resource for emerging professionals.

Throughout the program, participants will engage in dynamic roundtable discussions, gaining career insights and personal advice from these leaders in the funeral service profession. Beyond mentorship, attendees will build lasting connections with their peers, creating a support network that will benefit their careers for years to come.

## **A Seat at the Table: Advocacy in Action**

One of the most distinctive aspects of the 2025 program is its focus on advocacy. Participants will join seasoned professionals at the NFDA Advocacy Summit, spending a day on Capitol Hill meeting with Members of Congress. This hands-on experience offers a rare opportunity to discuss how federal policies impact funeral service professionals' ability to serve families and operate their businesses.

"Advocacy is a crucial skill for any funeral service professional," said Moss. "By participating in these meetings with members of Congress, mentees will not only learn about the legislative process but also see the real-world impact of their voices in shaping policies that affect our profession."

Previous Meet the Mentors participants offer consistently high praise for the program. A 2024 mentee said, "My favorite part of this program was being able to sit down with the mentors and talk with them ... I feel that the information they gave to us will be very valuable and I will be able to incorporate it into my everyday work life to make myself a better funeral director."

Another noted, "NFDA's Meet the Mentors Program was an incredible experience! I gained valuable knowledge and insight that I will be able to use throughout my career. I would highly recommend the program to all newly licensed professionals."

## **How to Apply**

Applications for the 2025 Meet the Mentors program are now open. Interested NFDA members must be licensed NFDA-member funeral directors or embalmers, aged 40 or under, or within their first five years in the profession. The application deadline is 11:59 p.m. CST on January 17, 2025.

Selected participants will be announced in February. Thanks to the Funeral Service Foundation's support, the program covers registration fees, lodging, and select meals; attendees are only responsible for their transportation to Washington, D.C.

For complete details and to apply, visit [NFDA.org/Mentors](https://www.nfda.org/Mentors). For questions, contact NFDA at (800) 228-6332.

NFDA is the world's leading and largest funeral service association, serving 20,000 individual members who represent nearly 11,000 funeral homes in the United States and 49 countries around the world. NFDA is the trusted leader, beacon for ethics and the strongest advocate for the profession. NFDA is the association of choice because it offers funeral professionals comprehensive educational resources, tools to manage successful businesses, guidance to become pillars in their communities and the expertise to foster future generations of funeral professionals. NFDA is headquartered in Brookfield, Wis., and has an office in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit [www.nfda.org](https://www.nfda.org).

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