

April 2010

From the Chair: Takin' Care of Business

The Survey Says...

The Paperless Way to Participate in Pursuit

Join the Nationwide Fight Against Cancer, Show Your Commitment to Those Your Serve

Plan Ahead: Fulfill *Pursuit of Excellence* Criteria Now with NFDA Resources









#### From the Chair: Takin' Care of Business

More than 70 funeral homes have already <u>registered</u> for the 2009-10 <u>Pursuit of Excellence</u> program, and the <u>Pursuit of Excellence</u> Committee has been busy planning for another successful year. In the last edition of the <u>Eagle's Eye</u>, we introduced the 2009-10 <u>Pursuit of Excellence</u> Committee and their important role in upholding the integrity of the program and representing the voice of program participants. It was during our first committee conference call back in January that I realized how passionate these committee members were about the <u>Pursuit of Excellence</u> program; these individuals believe in the program and have a strong desire to see it grow.

As the *Eagle's Eye* keeps readers informed of the latest *Pursuit of Excellence* happenings, I wanted to share some of the key topics

discussed during our productive January committee conference call and the ways in which we're working for you. After brief introductions, we delved right into our first agenda item: "Committee Responsibilities."

The role of a committee member extends far beyond the review of participant entries. Duties also include reaching out to program participants, volunteering during NFDA's International Convention & Expo and ensuring all program participants adhere to the rules and regulations of the *Pursuit of Excellence* program. Another committee responsibility is program participation. Although some may find it strange to recognize committee members with the very award they administer, we feel the only way committee members can identify with and represent participants is to go through the same motions as everyone else – organizing and submitting a *Pursuit of Excellence* entry and adhering to the same high standards required of all participants. Committee

members are not, however, eligible to apply for Best of the Best recognition, due to the collaborative nature of the judging process and limited number of award recipients.



One of the greatest opportunities we have to promote the benefits of *Pursuit of Excellence*, and showcase the hard work and innovative programs and services of participants, is during NFDA's International Convention & Expo. The committee discussed ways we could better highlight our Pursuit of Excellence Award recipients, those who earned Best of the Best recognition and our Hall of Excellence inductees; emphasize the progressive ideas of program participants; and clearly define the benefits of participation to your fellow NFDA members.

Many exciting things are coming up for the 2009-10 *Pursuit of Excellence* program and this is just the beginning! In this edition of the *Eagle's Eye*, see highlights from the results of the 2009 *Pursuit of Excellence* Participant Survey, and learn how NFDA and the committee are taking action now to bring you greater benefit and effectively meet your needs.

So if you haven't already, think about joining *Pursuit of Excellence* as a reflection of what you and your staff stand for – *service beyond expectations*.

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Lynn E. Ochiltree, CFSP, 2009-10 Pursuit of Excellence Committee Chair

#### The Survey Says...

There is nothing more valuable in evaluating and making improvements to the *Pursuit of Excellence* program than feedback from participants. Survey results allow NFDA and the *Pursuit of Excellence* Committee to see what's working, what's not and to make informed decisions on how to evolve the program in years to come.



Shortly after the 2009 NFDA International Convention & Expo, NFDA invited *Pursuit of Excellence* participants to take part in an online survey. They rated their satisfaction on a number of program components, including

online survey. They rated their satisfaction on a number of program components, including benefits of participating, usefulness of promotional materials and value of *Pursuit of Excellence* featured at NFDA's Convention. Here's what people are sayin'...and how NFDA is listening!

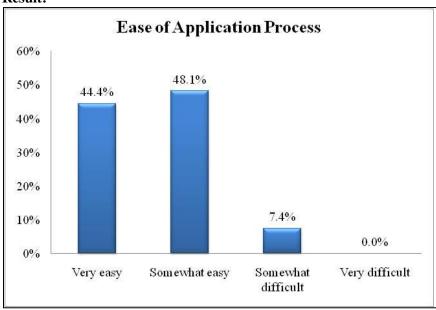
### **Survey Highlights**

**Q:** How likely would you be to recommend the Pursuit of Excellence program to your peers and participate again next year?

**Result:** 100% of respondents stated they were either "very" or "somewhat likely" to recommend the program to peers and participate again next year. Very encouraging!

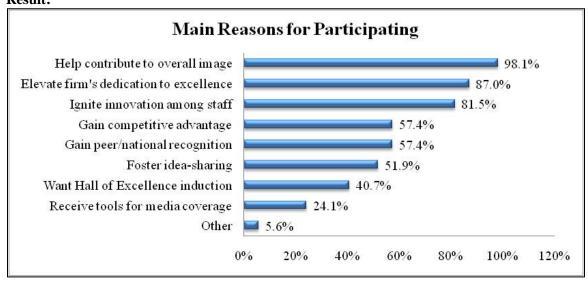
**Q:** Rate the application process: very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult or very difficult.

### **Result:**



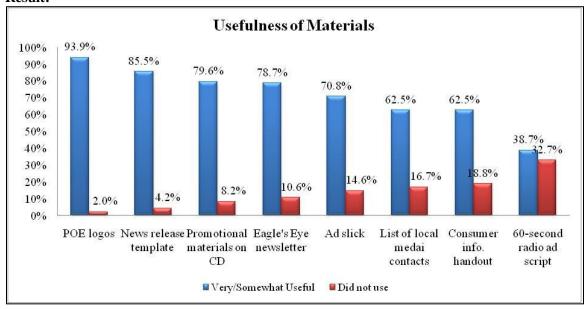
**Q:** What were the main reasons your firm participated in the 2008-09 Pursuit of Excellence program?

# **Result:**



**Q:** Rate the usefulness of the following program materials: Pursuit of Excellence logos, news release template, promotional materials on CD, Eagle's Eye newsletter, ad slick, list of local media contacts, consumer information handout and 60-second radio ad script.

### **Result:**



Overall usefulness of *Pursuit of Excellence* materials is very positive; NFDA will continue to improve and expand the promotional materials provided to award recipients, and assist participants with ideas on how to utilize the materials most effectively.

### **NFDA** is listening!

- Pursuit of Excellence Award recipients will receive a detailed description of each promotional piece and ways they can utilize these materials to get the most buzz in their communities.
- NFDA is now adding a media pitch letter, coming from the association, that award
  recipients can submit with their news release to local media further emphasizing the
  prestige of receiving the *Pursuit of Excellence* Award.
- Incorporating ads from previous years, NFDA will provide award recipients with a series of ads to choose from and alternate throughout the year.

Survey respondents also provided helpful feedback about the many ways *Pursuit of Excellence* is showcased at the NFDA Convention.

# NFDA is listening!

NFDA will explore additional ways to recognize Pursuit of Excellence Award
recipients during the NFDA Convention, seek new opportunities to market the
program to convention attendees and reevaluate the format of the All-Star
Recognition Ceremony & Reception.

Overall, the results from the 2009 *Pursuit of Excellence* Participant Survey were very positive. The feedback was constructive and provided valuable insights to NFDA and the committee on what participants find beneficial and what needs improvement. Be assured the committee and NFDA staff are taking in your feedback and making improvements to the program.

You don't need to wait for the next survey to share your feedback; email your thoughts and suggestions to <a href="mailto:pursuit@nfda.org">pursuit@nfda.org</a> or call NFDA at 800-228-6332.

### The Paperless Way to Participate in Pursuit



Pursuit of Excellence recognition has always been based upon a funeral home's demonstration of its commitment to service excellence and exceeding the expectations of those they serve. In other words, program entries are reviewed for their content, not the means in which they are organized and submitted. For this very reason, NFDA has modified the <a href="mailto:online Pursuit of Excellence">online Pursuit of Excellence</a> application for the 2009-10 program, creating a more user-friendly process, and adding greater flexibility for participants.

While <u>mail-in entries</u>, like scrapbooks and three-ring binders, which allow participants to include pictures and other supporting material, are a great way for funeral homes to showcase their programs and services to those who visit the funeral home, this application option may not be feasible for smaller funeral homes with limited staff resources. The new online *Pursuit of Excellence* application option allows participants to fill out criteria, upload documents and pictures, and submit their entire entry electronically – no postage required!

So if you would rather log-on than mail-in, check out NFDA's all-new online *Pursuit of Excellence* application option. Here are some helpful tips to help your *Pursuit* cyber experience go smoothly:

- The online *Pursuit of Excellence* application is only accessible to NFDA members and requires a username and password. If you do not know your username and password, call your personal NFDA member services representative at 800-228-6332.
- The online application allows users to begin work on their entry, save content and return to it at a later date. You must use the same username and password throughout the entire entry process in order to access the saved document.
  - > To access your saved document, log-in and click on the appropriate link under "Previously Submitted or Completed Forms."
- As with mail-in entries, participants must fulfill a certain number of criteria in each of the criteria sections in order to be considered for the *Pursuit of Excellence* Award. All criteria descriptions must be specific. Provide names, dates, places, etc., indicating the "who, what, when, where," etc., as applicable.
- Read criteria descriptions and instructions carefully. **NFDA has added mandatory fields** and new criteria options that require the user to upload documentation file types will be noted within the criterion description.

- You must click the "Save" button at the bottom of each page in order to ensure the information you have provided is entered into the system. Clicking the "Next" or "Previous" page links will exit the page without saving the information you have provided.
- After submitting your answers, you will be able to amend them until you are happy with them. Once you are satisfied with ALL of the information you have provided, you will have the option of indicating that your application is complete on the last page of the application form. You should only select the "These are my final answers" checkbox when you are completely satisfied with ALL your answers. You will not be able to adjust your information after it is submitted.

If you have questions regarding the new online *Pursuit of Excellence* application process (or mail-in application process), call NFDA at 800-228-6332 or email <a href="mailto:pursuit@nfda.org">pursuit@nfda.org</a>.

### Join the Nationwide Fight Against Cancer, Show Your Commitment to Those You Serve



According to the American Cancer Society, men have nearly a one in two risk of developing cancer in their lifetime; for women, the risk is a little more than one in three. As a funeral service professional who serves grieving families and is actively involved in the community, chances are you've seen firsthand the devastating impact of cancer.

As part of its ongoing partnership with the American Cancer Society (ACS) and commitment to fighting back against cancer, NFDA is participating in the Relay For

Life National Team Program for the third consecutive year. Bringing communities together across the United States, <u>Relay For Life</u> is the largest nonprofit fundraising event in the world, and celebrates those who have claimed victory over cancer, remembers those who have lost the

battle and fights back to put an end

to the disease.

NFDA has pledged to recruit at least 50 teams participating in local Relay events to join its National Team. As a participant in NFDA's National Relay For Life Team, funeral homes will have access to a customizable ad slick and news release conveying their commitment to the families and community they serve, as well as tools and information to help teams recruit members and raise



funds. Teams will also receive a special banner to promote their affiliation with the NFDA National Team. The 72" x 18" vinyl banner with the NFDA and ACS logos can be displayed outside the funeral home, at Relay fundraising events or at the team's Relay For Life campsite.

Funeral homes interested in joining the NFDA National Relay For Life Team can sign up online by following these steps: Visit the exclusive NFDA National Relay For Life Team page; click on the "Find a Relay Near You" link; enter your ZIP code to find the Relay events closest to you; choose the Relay event you would like to participate in; click on the "Sign Up Here" button and then click on "Start a Team"; and fill out the registration information. To ensure your team is affiliated as a member of the NFDA National Relay For Life Team, be sure to choose "National Funeral Directors Association" in the "Team Company/Organization" drop-down menu.

Many *Pursuit of Excellence* participants have described their Relay For Life experiences in their program entries as part of their community outreach efforts or even as their essay. For more information about joining NFDA's National Relay For Life Team, contact Jessica Koth (jkoth@nfda.org) or Emilee High (ehigh@nfda.org) at 800-228-6332.

#### Plan Ahead: Fulfill Pursuit of Excellence Criteria Now with NFDA Resources

The deadline to submit a *Pursuit of Excellence* entry for the 2009-10 program is still three months away, and you may have already fulfilled many of the program's criteria (via workshops at NFDA's 2009 Convention in Boston, your state's convention, NFDA teleconferences and Web seminars, etc.). However, if you still have unmet criteria, don't wait till the last minute to fulfill them! Check out these NFDA resources that can help round-out your *Pursuit* application.



[Note: For the Basic Requirements category, <u>ALL</u> criteria need fulfillment. For the remaining five categories, <u>at least four</u> criteria need to be fulfilled. First-time program participants can fulfill criteria using programs and activities completed in the past three years – July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2010; returning participants can fulfill criteria using programs and activities completed in the past year – July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010.]



### **Category I: Basic Requirements**

# FTC Funeral Rule Staff Training Fulfillment Ideas:

➤ NFDA Teleconference: "FTC Funeral Rule Coordinator Speaks Out on How to Avoid Findings and Finds"

Presenter: Scott Gilligan with Craig Tregillus May 6, 1-3 p.m. CT, 2 CE hours

- NFDA Online Course: "Understanding the Practice of the FTC Funeral Rule" Authors: Scott Gilligan and Colleen Murphy Klein, M.A.
- NFDA Home Study (DVD): "FTC Compliance Handling the General Price List" By: NFDA

NEW! NFDA Home Study (CD): "FTC Funeral Rule Staff Training"
By: Scott Gilligan with Craig Tregillus

# NEW!

➤ NFDA Home Study (CD): "GPL Funeral Packages – Doing Them Right"

By: Scott Gilligan

# Price List Compliance with the FTC Funeral Rule Fulfillment Idea:

NFDA General Price List Review Service
Conducted by NFDA General Counsel Scott Gilligan, receive legal analysis of your funeral home's current general price lists (GPL, CPL, OBCPL) and your Statement of Funeral Goods and Services Selected.

# **Compliance with OSHA**

\*\*NFDA *does not* provide staff training to meet OSHA compliance requirements, as these standards are worksite specific. NFDA *does* provide information to help funeral homes understand their obligations to comply with OSHA regulations.\*\*

# Compliance Resources:

**OSHA Website:** For information on OSHA standards, summaries and explanations. For state OSHA plans, <u>click here</u>.

# **Category II: Continuing Education and Staff Development**

# Training on a Technical Skill

### Fulfillment Ideas:

➤ NFDA Online Course: "Embalming the Obese Case" Author: Vernie Fountain

- ➤ NFDA Home Study (DVD & Book): "The Art of Facial Reconstruction" By: Gary Sokoll
- NFDA Home Study (DVD): "Embalming Difficult Cases: Donor Cases"
  By: Jack Adams, David Brown, David Green, Joe Main, Ed Robb, Mark
  Sommerville, Jonathan Stuchell and David Tackett
- ➤ NFDA Home Study (DVD): "Restorative Arts: An Artist's Perspective"
  By: Jacquelyn Taylor and Maria Vitigliano

# Training on a Communication Skill

Fulfillment Ideas:

➤ NFDA Web Seminar: "Facebook Best Practices for Funeral Directors"
Presenter: Rob Heppell
May 20, 1-3 p.m. CT, 2 CE hours

➤ NFDA Online Course: "Conflict Management for Funeral Directors - Successful Interpersonal Communication Practices"

Author: Stephen R. Rocco

➤ NFDA Online Course: "Serving Hispanic Families"

Author: NFDA

**NEW!** NFDA Home Study (Book): "Building Customer Loyalty From the Inside Out"

By: Debra J. Schmidt

NEW! NFDA Home Study (Book): "Capitalizing on Kindness: Why 21st Century Professionals Need to Be Nice"

By: Kristin Tillquist

➤ NFDA Home Study (Book): "Customer Service in an Instant: 60 Ways to Win Customers and Keep Them Coming Back"

By: Keith Bailey and Karen Leland

➤ NFDA Home Study (CD): "Legendary Service at the Ritz-Carlton: A Great Fit for Funeral Service"

By: Jeff Hargett

# **Training on Funeral Home Operations**

Fulfillment Ideas:

➤ NFDA Teleconference: "Eliminating Potential Wage and Hour Violations at Your Firm"

Presenter: William Ford, SESCO June 10, 1-3 p.m. CT, 2 CE hours

➤ NFDA Web Seminar: "Advanced Cremation Arranging"

Presenter: William McQueen April 27, 1-3 p.m. CT, 2 CE hours

- ➤ NFDA Endorsed Vendor: <u>SESCO Business Management Online</u> Courses
- ➤ NFDA Online Course: "ADA Employer Compliance: Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act"

Author: NFDA

➤ NFDA Online Course: "Wage and Hour Laws for Funeral Home Employers"

Author: Scott Gilligan

➤ NFDA Podcast Course: "Guaranteed Funerals: Is Preneed Right for You"

Author: Curtis Rostad

➤ NFDA Podcast Course: "Risk Management: Controlling Liability Risk for Small Businesses"

Author: Michael Daney

➤ NFDA Home Study (CD): "Preneed Ethics in Demanding Times" By: Christopher Kuhnen

➤ NFDA Home Study (Book): "Traversing the Minefield – Best Practice: Reducing Risk in Funeral-Cremation Service"

By: Michael Kubasak

**NEW!** NFDA Home Study (CD): "With the Push to Cremate: 5 Reasons to Encourage a Viewing and Ritual"

By: Susan J. Zonnebelt-Smeenge and Robert C. De Vries

**NEW!** NFDA Home Study (CD): "Prepare for the New Employment Regulations"

By: Stephanie Peters

➤ NFDA Home Study (CD with PowerPoint): "Tips for Marketing a Pet Funeral Business"

By: Coleen Ellis

NEW! NFDA Home Study (Book): "The Eight Building Blocks for Creating a Sustainable Closely Held Company"

By: D. Wayne Rivers

# Training on Bereavement and Family Support Fulfillment Ideas:

> NFDA Online Course: "Understanding a Child's Grief"

Author: Alan D. Wolfelt

➤ NFDA Online Course: "Understanding Adult Grief: Developing Effective Ways to Help Adults on Their Grief Journey"

Authors: Susan J. Zonnebelt-Smeenge and Robert C. DeVries

➤ NFDA Home Study (Book): "Healing a Child's Heart: 100 Practical Ideas"

By: Alan D. Wolfelt

➤ NFDA Home Study (Book): "Healing a Teen's Grieving Heart: 100 Practical Ideas for Families, Friends and Caregivers"

By: Alan D. Wolfelt

➤ NFDA Home Study (CD): "Creating the Ultimate Funeral Experience Through Questioning Strategies"

By: Valerie Wages

➤ NFDA Home Study (Book): "Healing the Adult Child's Grieving Heart: 100 Practical Ideas"

By: Alan D. Wolfelt

NFDA Home Study (CD): "Body Preparation and Practices for Different Religions and Cultures: Jewish, Hispanic, Mormon"
By: Susan Alvarez, Tadd Lindermann and Marvin Reznik

➤ NFDA Home Study (Book): "Ethnic Variations in Dying, Death and Grief"

Edited by: Donald Irish, Kathleen Lundquist and Vivian Jenkins Nelsen

- ➤ NFDA Home Study (CD): "Hispanic Funerals: Need-to-Know Insights" By: Felix Gonzales
- NFDA Home Study (Book): "Creating Meaningful Funeral Experiences: A Guide for Caregivers"
  By: Alan D. Wolfelt
- **NEW!** NFDA Home Study (Book): "Understanding Your Suicide Grief" By: Alan D. Wolfelt
- NEW! NFDA Home Study (Book): "Cry Until You Laugh: Comforting Guidance for Coping With Grief"
  By: Richard J. Obershaw
  - NFDA Home Study (Book): "When All the Friends Have Gone: A Guide for Aftercare Providers"
     Edited by: O. Duane Weeks and Catherine Johnson

If you are interested in obtaining continuing education (CE) credits, NFDA courses are approved for CE by APFSP and most state licensing boards.