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NFDA Invites Nominations for the 2026 Inspiration Award Honoring Women Who Lead, Serve and Elevate the Profession

Brookfield, Wis. – The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) is now accepting nominations for the 2026 [NFDA Inspiration Award](#) and encourages funeral professionals, colleagues and community partners to help identify women whose leadership, service and influence are shaping the future of funeral service. The award will be presented during the [2026 NFDA Professional Women's Conference](#). NFDA thanks National Guardian Life Insurance Company (NGL) for its continued support of the Inspiration Award.

Nominations will be accepted through February 17 at 12 p.m. CT. The Inspiration Award honors women whose contributions may take many forms – from mentoring and education to community engagement, innovation, advocacy and day-to-day leadership in serving families. NFDA encourages nominators to consider women from a wide range of backgrounds, career paths and roles whose work has strengthened the profession and inspired others.

“It’s meaningful for NGL to continue supporting an award that celebrates the many ways women contribute to funeral service,” said Jennifer Kaset, Vice President of Sales and Business Development, NGL. “The Inspiration Award recognizes leadership expressed through compassion, collaboration, innovation, and service to families and communities. We’re proud to support and amplify the voices that inspire change and shape the future. We look forward to honoring the 2026 recipient.”

“The Inspiration Award is about recognizing women whose impact is felt well beyond their own workplace,” said Lorri Wagner, NFDA Director of Business Development. “These leaders are often the ones building others up, creating positive change and quietly setting a higher standard for our profession. We want to hear about the women who inspire you, especially those whose stories may not always be in the spotlight.”

Nominees must be currently employed in funeral service or a deathcare-related field and have at least five years of experience working directly with families. Ideal candidates demonstrate a sustained commitment to:

- Giving back through community and professional involvement
- Helping the public better understand the value of meaningful memorialization and the role of funeral professionals
- Continuing to learn and grow through professional development activities

Nominations must be submitted online by 12 p.m. CT on February 17, 2026, at NFDA.org/InspirationAward.

A panel of industry leaders will select the recipient, who will receive complimentary registration to the [2026 NFDA Professional Women's Conference](#) and up to \$1,000 to help offset travel and lodging expenses. The conference will take place May 6–9 in St. Pete Beach, Florida, where the award will be presented.

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 NFDA.org.

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