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NFDA Introduces New Remembering A Life Award to Honor the Profession's Most Meaningful Funeral and Memorial Services

Brookfield, Wis. – The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) has announced a new honor within its renowned [Pursuit of Excellence Award](#) program: the Remembering A Life Award. This new recognition, debuting in 2026, will celebrate funeral homes that create the profession's most personal and meaningful funerals and memorial services – those that go beyond expectations to bring comfort, healing and significance to the families they serve.

The new award was formally announced during the association's All-Star Recognition Ceremony on Monday, October 27, at the 2025 NFDA International Convention & Expo in Chicago.

"The Remembering A Life Award will shine a spotlight on the heart of what funeral service professionals do for grieving families," said NFDA Director of Public Relations Jessica Koth, who manages the Pursuit of Excellence Program. "It will honor those moments when creativity, compassion and attention to detail come together to help families remember, grieve and begin to heal. We look forward to presenting the first Remembering A Life Awards during next year's All-Star Recognition Ceremony."

Elevating the Heart of Funeral Service

The Remembering A Life Award aligns closely with NFDA's consumer initiative, [Remembering A Life](#), which educates families about the value of funerals and memorial services and offers resources for planning meaningful tributes and beginning the grief journey.

Each year, up to five funeral homes will be selected by the Pursuit of Excellence Work Group for this distinction. Recipients will be chosen based on essays submitted as part of their Pursuit of Excellence entry that describe a personal and meaningful funeral or memorial service. Submissions will be evaluated on how creatively the service honored the life of the deceased, incorporated family wishes and cultural traditions and exceeded expectations to provide a truly meaningful experience.

Building on a Legacy of Excellence

Established more than 45 years ago by the late NFDA Past President Richard Myers, the Pursuit of Excellence Award program honors funeral homes that consistently demonstrate integrity, innovation and service excellence. In addition to the new Remembering A Life Award, the program includes:

- Pursuit of Excellence Award: The program's foundational honor, recognizing achievement in six categories of excellence.
- Hall of Excellence: Funeral homes are inducted into the Hall of Excellence upon earning their 10th Pursuit of Excellence Award.
- Richard Myers Pinnacle Award: Recognizes an extraordinary program or service that redefines funeral service excellence.
- Best of the Best Award: Honors up to five funeral homes annually for novel and innovative programs or services.

- Honorable Mention: Acknowledges programs that positively impact the families and communities served.

Reinforcing NFDA's Strategic Vision

The introduction of the Remembering A Life Award supports several priorities outlined in NFDA's 2024-26 Strategic Plan, including raising the profile of funeral professionals among consumers, increasing understanding of the value of meaningful memorialization and inspiring innovation across the profession.

"The Pursuit of Excellence program has always set the standard for service excellence," said Koth. "This new award reflects our ongoing commitment to helping funeral professionals elevate their work and demonstrate the deep value of meaningful memorialization to families and communities."

The first Remembering A Life Awards will be presented during the All-Star Recognition Ceremony at the 2026 NFDA International Convention & Expo in Charlotte, North Carolina.

For more information about the Pursuit of Excellence program or to apply by the July 15, 2026, deadline, visit [NFDA.org/PursuitOfExcellence](https://www.nfda.org/PursuitOfExcellence).

NFDA is the world's leading and largest funeral service association representing 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](https://www.nfda.org).

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