loon messages in place of close friends and relatives.

Finally, mortuaries science instructors must continue to stress the importance of personal safety procedures. Though safety has always been taught as a high priority, these procedures are more important now than ever before, not only to protect funeral professionals but also their families, friends and community.

Situations in the world have changed, the needs of families have changed and mortuary science programs will change, as they have in the past, to meet these new challenges.

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CCMS NAMES VICTORIA KROUSE BEST YOUNG FUNERAL DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

Near the beginning of her senior year in high school, one of Victoria Krouse's closest friends experienced two unexpected deaths in her family. “It was devastating, and her grief was indescribable,” said Krouse. “Seeing her go through that pain got me started looking at the deathcare profession.” After some online research and meetings with local funeral directors, she knew her career path was set.

Last fall, Krouse was given the Best Young Funeral Director of the Year award by Jack Lechner, president and CEO of Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science. She was nominated by Ernie Heffner of Heffner Cremation & Funeral Care (York, Pennsylvania), where she interned and was subsequently hired as a full-time funeral director and celebrant. In addition, Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley issued a proclamation marking October 15, 2019, as Victoria Krouse Day in the city.

Krouse graduated summa cum laude from CCMS in 2017. But it isn’t simply her GPA that has propelled her to the top of her field as a young professional. In nominating Krouse, Heffner supplied example after example of family members who had been touched by her warmth and sympathy, and working with families is what Krouse finds most rewarding in her job.

Of course, like any job, being a funeral director has its challenges. For Krouse, as with most in the profession, the long hours can be taxing. She hopes to stay with the Heffner firm for “as long as they will have me.” Her future hopes include obtaining a master's degree and perhaps teaching at a school like CCMS. ccms.edu

CCMS HOLDS FALL GRADUATION

On December 14, 2019, 27 CCMS graduates officially began their journey into the deathcare profession. Twenty-four received a bachelor’s degree in mortuary science and three earned an associate degree in applied science. Randy Schoedinger, 1994 CCMS alumnus and CEO of Schoedinger Funeral & Cremation Service in Columbus, Ohio, gave the commencement address, sharing with the graduates his 15 principles of leadership. Class President Adam Grisier also addressed attendees.

In addition to their academic degrees, special honors were also conferred:

**Summa Cum Laude**
- Robert Baker
- Jennifer Burke
- Amanda Cafego
- Angelique Collins
- Malia Fondreist
- Adam Grisier
- C. Henderson-Johns
- Cassidy Holland
- Courtney Johnson
- Brooks Laid

**Magna Cum Laude**
- Travis Riddle
- Gina Terry
- Emily Yon Fange

**Cum Laude**
- Logan Alloway
- Katrina Miller
- Christopher Boldy
- Jordyn Schaich