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DID YOU KNOW?
The Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science Bachelor of Mortuary Science employs five military veterans full-time in various positions, including President and CEO Jack E. Lechner, Jr.

Journey to Serve
Trading Service of Country for Service of Families
Greetings,

I hope you are all off to terrific spring! We are busy here at CCMS so I want to share some updates and observations with you.

**Educational Cremation Center.** Construction on the Educational Cremation Center (ECC) has begun! Our state of the art, $3.5 million facility will provide hands-on cremation training, an expanded pet loss curriculum, alkaline hydrolysis for pets, and hospitality training. We’ve heard the needs of the client families you serve and are adapting our education programs to meet those needs. You’ll find plenty of ways you can contribute to support the new ECC which is scheduled to be completed early next summer (2023). You can follow the progress of the ECC on our website or our Facebook page. In fact, you can follow our Facebook page on our website at CCMS.EDU.

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**Time to stop the NBE.** Why are so many candidates across the nation failing the NBE? First time pass rates **nationally** for the NBE are 68% for the Arts section and 57% for the Science portion.

Could it be the students? The students are studying as hard as ever. I know how rigorous our program is and I know how hard students work to excel. The students I see coming into our program are highly motivated to become licensed. They work hard to earn exceptional grades, are compassionate, caring, and smart individuals looking forward to a career of serving their communities. We have a 93% graduation rate! So, no - I don’t think it is a problem with the students.

Could it be the instructors and the schools? I see the dedication that every instructor puts into the education of our students and can testify that it is second to none. Our instructors pour everything they have into the educational process and care more for student success than anyone. They are the most supportive instructors, and they cover every detail of the American Board curriculum to prepare students for the NBE. So, no - I don’t think the problem is with the instructors or colleges.

Could it be the American Board? The American Board maintains a curriculum update schedule that is slow and methodical. The curriculum changes are easily implemented and very often overdue. There is very little change in the curriculum from year to year. So, no – I don’t think the problem is with the American Board.

Well, that only leaves one more area to consider – maybe it is the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards and the NBE they produce!

The NBE has become the greatest single barrier to entering funeral service in the United States. It is intended to be an entry level assessment exam. There are two sections to the NBE – Arts & Sciences. The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards or “The Conference” published national statistics for the year January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021. Only 68% passed the Arts their first time and only 57% of candidates passed the Science portion of the NBE their first time. Repeat test takers only have a 37% chance of passing the Arts and a 32% chance of passing the Science.
Not passing the NBE the first time has far reaching negative effects. First, the candidate will have to take another examination and pay for the examination again. I address the monetary effects of those retakes later. The psychological effects and the anxiety of having to retest is an incredible weight for the candidate, families, faculty, staff, and employers. Second, the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE or American Board) requires all funeral/mortuary programs to maintain a first-time pass rate for the NBE of 60% for Arts & Sciences in order to maintain their accreditation. This places a heavy burden on every funeral service instructor and administrator considering the “Conference” shares very little information with the programs (schools) and ABFSE; in fact, the “Conference” prides itself on its lack of transparency.

The “Conference” uses psychometricians to construct the NBE. A psychometrician is a person (such as a clinical psychologist) who is skilled in the administration and interpretation of objective psychological tests or a psychologist who devises, constructs, and standardizes psychometric tests. Their purpose is to achieve consistent results. The consistently low scores indicate that the psychometrics employed are causing candidates to fail at unacceptable levels.

The “Conference” is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) with a small non-funeral staff. It is NOT a legal regulating body authorized by State or Federal law. The questions are written by individual licensees who volunteer with honorable intentions. The psychometricians take those questions and revise them to achieve the consistent results. Dalene Paull, Executive Director of the “Conference” told me that if she accepted a question written for the NBE by me, I would not recognize it on the NBE.

Last year the NBE cost $570 to take both the Arts and Science. If a student fails one or both, they must pay $285 to retest for each. According to the 2020 Annual Report from the Conference (last one available online) revenues were $1,745,483 with expenses of $1,282,730. A net asset increase (we don’t use the word profit in not-for-profit organization) of $462,753!

The estimated increase in revenue from retakes was $416,385.00 (603 Arts & 858 Science @ $285/test)! That is in addition to the $722,760 in revenue made from first time testers. This is an obnoxious amount of money for a non-profit to make. The point is that it is in the best interest of the “Conference” for students to fail and be required to pay to take the test again.

I was first licensed in 1976, back then the NBE was an optional test. Most State Boards produced their own licensing examinations or outsourced them locally. Board members were responsible for the material on the examination, board members administered and proctored the examinations, and board members were in the room to resolve issues with the examination.

Today most states abdicate all that responsibility to the “Conference” and just sit back and wait for scores to be sent to them. Most State Boards no longer write examinations, they depend on the test scores results provided to them by the “Conference”. In 2018 when I questioned our State Board about the first-time pass rate for our State Laws Rules and Regulations Examination (LRR) no one could answer my question. It took the personal intervention of the previous Executive Director of the State Board two months to get the answer from the “Conference”.

The answer was an abysmal 51.5% first time failure rate! In 2020 I sent an email request to the State Board asking for the current first-time pass rate for the State examination. My request was referred to the Board Member who chaired the Education and Testing Committee. He returned my email with a phone call and told me that “Dalene Paull [Executive Director of the “Conference”] told him that he did not have to give that information to me”.

In August 2021, I sent a formal written request to the Ohio State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors under the Ohio Open Meetings Act requesting the first-time pass/fail rates for the previous three years and the details of the fiduciary relationship between the State Board and the Conference. After an inordinate delay of 65 days and being publicly disrespected at an open State Board meeting by a member of the board – I was finally furnished two years of raw data on the State Board Exam and the Laws, Rules, and Regulations Ohio State Exams that are prepared and administered by the “Conference”. (Up to that point, for the past 6 years I regularly attended the monthly meeting of the Board. I no longer attend their meetings.)
I conducted a statistical analysis of the redacted raw data provided by the State Board and found that the first-time failure rate had actually risen. I was also able to show that if the Ohio State Board directed the “Conference” to make 70% the passing score instead of 75% (like Nevada and Delaware have done) on the Ohio LRR, 41% more would have passed. I was politely thanked, but didn’t receive any comment in response.

The “Conference” is an unregulated monopoly. There is no competition since most states have stopped writing their own examinations. The NBE from the “Conference” is mandated by most states, but there is no independent oversight. The “Conference” reports to its own board, which is composed of members of state boards from across the nation. For example, in our state we have a multi-term State Board member who was not only the “District 4 Director” having his travel expenses paid by the Conference, but he was also the SECRETARY/TREASURER of the Conference’s Board of Directors! He is now Vice-President of the “Conference” all while being an active member of the Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors.

The “Conference” has infiltrated the ranks of our State Regulatory Boards. The entire construct of the “Conference” is replete with conflicts of interest. The “Conference” pays travel expenses and provides free registration at its annual conference to its own Board members. Also, the “Conference” has offered free attendance for one member from each state board to attend the annual conference. The “Conference” takes these steps to maintain its stronghold position as a monopoly.

The “Conference” operates under a blanket of secrecy and shares almost nothing with the American Board accredited schools. For example, there is a call out right now from the “Conference” asking for volunteers to be on the Examination Committee that specifically excludes any educators from applying. “Committee members cannot work directly with or have any immediate family members enrolled in any ABFSE accredited program and must also be willing to sign a confidentiality agreement.”

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing” Edmund Burke.

Now is the time for the profession to say “NO MORE” to the Conference. We must become our own advocates; status quo is unacceptable. Here is a short list of what I believe we can do now to start to end this strangle hold on our future death care professionals.

◊ Tell your state association that its time to end the monopolist dominance of the “Conference”. Tell them you want them to lobby the state board for an alternative to the NBE.

◊ Go to the State Board meetings and be heard or write letters to the State Board asking for an alternative to the NBE. You have a voice!

◊ Lobby the State Board to lower the passing grade score of 75% to 70% for the LRR (like Delaware and Nevada have done)

◊ Lobby State Boards to have the passing score of the NBE lowered from 75% to 70%.

◊ Encourage the State Board to work with State Associations and funeral/mortuary schools to produce an alternative test to the NBE (majority of state board members are Association Members).
◊ Ask local legislators what they are doing to make your state more friendly to future funeral directors. Lower scores, legislate the need for State Board to accept more than one test for licensing.

◊ Lobby the Board to create a rule forbidding members from serving on the “Conference”. It is a conflict of interest. The State Board requires candidates for licensure to spend their money with the “Conference” to take the NBE – a State Board member should not also be sitting on the Board of Directors that accepts money from candidates.

We need to get the NBE out of Ohio!

**NBE National Results for 2021 from the “Conference” website**

**January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Board – Arts Examination</th>
<th>Total Tested</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Fail</th>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>Total Num-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Time</td>
<td>1269</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeater</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>1094</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Board – Science Examination</th>
<th>Total Tested</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Fail</th>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>Total Num-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Time</td>
<td>1267</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeater</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2125</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>1127</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent.*

Respectfully,

Jack L. Siegel

President and CEO, CCMS
The Educational Cremation Center

Thank you to all our generous donors who have provided direct support to the Educational Cremation Center.

**President’s Circle ($50,001 - $300,000)**

Facultative Technologies USA

**Dean’s Circle ($10,001 - $50,000)**

Walker Funeral Homes
Schoedinger Funeral Service
The Columbus Foundation
Scott Goodsell
Frank Rosenacker

**Professor’s Circle ($5,001 - $10,000)**

Haller Funeral Home

**Champion’s Circle ($2,501 - $5,000)**

DeJohn Funeral Homes & Crematory
The Dodge Company
Dan L. Flory
William Harrod
Peoples Mortuary Museum
Debbie & Pete Minges
Mark Whetstone
Nicole Wiedeman
Coleen Ellis
Lemasters Consulting
The Educational Cremation Center (cont.)

**Patron’s Circle ($1,001 - $2,500)**

- Cahall Funeral Homes
- The Czachor Family ASD Inc
- Nectar Ramirez
- Wappner Funeral Directors, Inc
- Rosenacker & Associates
- Tri-County FDA District 19
- Skorupski Family Funeral Homes
- Spring Grove Funeral Homes
- NOMIS Publications
- Margaret Rouzzo
- Mark Schneider
- Jack E. Lechner, Jr.
- Michael Ryan
- ClearPoint Federal Bank and Trust
- Stephen McCune
- Enrico Caruso
- Dooley Funeral Home
- South Jersey Funeral Assoc., Inc.
- KZF Design, Inc.
- Brown-Dawson-Flick Funeral Homes, Inc.
- Thomas Routsong
- American Coach Sales
- David R. Kolbe
- Funeral Directors Life Insurance Co.
- Flagel Huber Flagel
- Harrod Brothers Funeral Home
- Jeff Company
- Heffner Funeral Chapel & Crematory
The Educational Cremation Center (cont.)

**Supporter’s Circle ($1 - $1,000)**

- Richard G. Snider
- Karen Mihovk
- Kenn A. Peterson
- Jerome E. Webster
- Connie Strawser
- Karen Eckerle
- DISRUPT Media
- Sue Gilkey
- Cincinnati Equitable Life Ins.
- Lemasters Consulting
- JC Battle & Sons Funeral Home
- Jamieson & Yannucci Funeral Home
- Baltimore Pike Cemetery
- Cincinnati Catholic Cemetery Society
- Heffner Funeral Chapel & Crematory
- Michael S. Shaffer
- Brian R. James
- McCaskey
- Ryan Thogmartin
- Frank Rosenacker
- NorthStar Memorial Group
- Ducro Funeral Services & Crematory
- Josephine Ward-Zambo
- Mark Ivey
- Summer Leibrock
- Erin Schwanitz-Vogt
- Joe Marsaglia
- Tim King
- Messenger, LLC
- The Chapel of Peace Funeral Home
- Larissa Jones
- Edward Nurre
- Michael T. Smith
- William Smith
- Michigan Memorial Park
- Jack E. Lechner, Jr.
- Gene Gompf
- Laura Garrison
- Neeld Funeral Home Inc.
- Bruce C. Redmon
- Alexys Gribble
- Justin Weber
Supporter’s Circle ($1 - $1,000) (cont.)

Saleen Hail
Rachel Nelson
Ducro Funeral Services & Crematory
Toby Day
Ducro Funeral Services & Crematory
Tyler O’Brien
Cindy Montgomery
Jack E. Lechner, Jr.
Michael P. Dozeman
Michael Pierson
Stephen McCune
Teresa Dutko
Scott Goodsell
Sherry Dirr
Zins Plumbing, LLC
Batesville Casket Co.
Birchfield Funeral Home
Dwayne R. Spence Funeral Home
Ducro Funeral Services & Crematory
Paige Greenlee
Megan Johansen
Rebecca Anne Schnauber
Summer Leibrock
Emily E. Dunford
Bruce C. Redmon
Robert G. Mayer
Stuart Snow
Jacob L. Wittrock
Anonymous
Kelly Dwyer
Aley Ramirez
John Vinnedge
LaToya Henderson
Upcoming Continuing Education Opportunities at CCMS

May 3 10:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

**Ohio Master Training and Certification (6 CEUs)**

- Ohio Preneed & AARPS (2 CEUs)
- Ethics in Death Care (2 CEUs)
- Ohio Laws & Rules for Death Care Professionals (2 CEUs)

**Presenters:**

Jack E. Lechner, Jr., CFSP, CT, President & CEO CCMS
Poul Lemasters, Esq., Principal Lemasters Consulting
Beth Williams, LFD/LE, Director of Institutional Effectiveness CCMS
Wanda M. Lee, CFSP, MDI, LFD/LE, Registrar CCMS
Ed Nurre, President, Ohio Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors

To Register for the seated in-person session, [CLICK HERE](#)
To register for the live webinar, [CLICK HERE](#)

June 8, 10:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

**Crematory Operator Certification Program (6 CEUs)**

**Presenters:**

Poul Lemasters, Esq., Principal Lemasters Consulting
Larry Stuart, Jr., Founder, Cremation Strategies and Consulting

*Stay tuned for registration information!*

* Applied for
Trading Service of Country for Service of Families

Military Veterans Bring Commitment to the Funeral Profession

By Susan Cushing

(Excerpt reprinted from the November 2021 issue of Memento Mori)

IF THERE IS ONE THING the deathcare profession has always led the way on with dignity and deep respect, it is how it honors veterans. It seems particularly appropriate during a month in which we set aside a day to salute these heroes that ICCFA would highlight ways its members have chosen to remember and assist our Canadian and U.S. servicemen and women.

Jack E. Lechner, Jr., CFSP, president and CEO of the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science, is a huge supporter of the Journey to Serve initiative launched in 2021 by the ICCFA Educational Foundation and the Funeral Service Foundation to engage, recruit, and hire more military veterans into this amazing profession.

Jack’s enthusiasm for the program really isn’t too surprising since he has been instrumental in its creation and success.

“Journey to Serve is a relatively new program that is a unique marketing campaign leading the way in proactive efforts to boost and support our military personnel,” says Jack. “Veterans are exceptionally qualified and temperamentally disposed to make highly skilled and dedicated employees.”

Combining Military Service with Funeral Service

Jack is best known for his association service as a member of the board of trustees for the ICCFA Educational Foundation and a member of the Veteran’s Committee. But Jack has held a number of prestigious and, frankly, patriotic positions, including serving five years at Arlington National Cemetery culminating as the Superintendent.

Long before that, Jack distinguished himself serving in the U.S. Army, which included almost three decades of military service. In truth, it’s almost impossible to separate his funeral service from his military service since the two are so intertwined.

Now a retired colonel, Jack can trace his funeral service expertise back to his days following high school when he worked as a driver and pallbearer at a funeral home. He was then attending Mercer County Community College to study funeral service and is a member of the program’s inaugural graduating class.

In his current post, Jack has had the opportunity to put these words into action. “I hired an instructor who was an Army medic,” he says. “She was employed part-time as an adjunct embalming instructor, and she is now full-time. I also hired a recent graduate that I knew was an Air Force veteran.”

Jack is the classic example of how military service and funeral service can go hand in hand. Today, as a proud proponent of operation Journey to Serve, Jack says, “With this effort, we’re trying to recruit people who are leaving the military to come to the deathcare profession. Veterans are comfortable following orders, reporting to work on time; they have a good work ethic and are normally a pretty good bet as an employee.”

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.
Thanks to everyone who came out to the Mill Course on September 15, 2021 for a great day of golf, fellowship and fun! Because of your support we were able to raise more than $40,000 for CCMS! Funds such as these are vital in helping keep the cost of tuition affordable for our students while allowing us to provide them with the finest death care education possible.

Extra special thanks to our Golf Classic Committee:
- Mike Gedert
- Jackie Hahn
- Tim King

Thanks also to our terrific team of on-site volunteers! We couldn’t have made it happen without you:
- Jan Borgman
- Duane Hedrick
- Melanie Larson
- Samantha Schatzman
- Karen Sharpe
- Abby Urquhart

See photos from the event on the following pages and on our social media platforms.

Mark your calendars for the 2nd Annual CCMS Golf Classic on Sept. 14th, 2022!
1st Annual CCMS Golf Classic
Presented by

Dignity

Thanks to our Sponsors!

Rosenacker & Associates
Life Center Organ Donor Network
Matthews Aurora
Haller Funeral Homes
American Coach Sales
Funeral Directors Life Insurance
CCMS OMORT Adjunct Faculty
Gate of Heaven Cemetery
Heartland PreNeed
Inman Worldwide Shipping
Nomis Publications
Routsong Funeral Home
Spring Grove Cemetery
T.P. White & Sons
Batesville Casket Company
Cincinnati Equitable Life
Disrupt Media
Great Western Insurance Company
Greater Cincinnati Funeral Service Association
Heffner Funeral Home
Mihovk-Rosenacker Funeral Home
North Side Bank
Paragon Casket Company
Passare
Schiff Insurance
Taft Law
Vonderhaar Catering
Walker Funeral Homes
**Fall 2021 Commencement**

This past December CCMS was proud to confer degrees upon the Fall Class of 2021. The ceremony took place at The Summit Hotel in Cincinnati on December 11, 2021. In all, 34 graduates received either Associates or Bachelors degrees (those earning Latin honors are listed below).

CCMS President and CEO Jack Lechner reprised his role as Master of Ceremonies and Coleen Ellis, who serves on the CCMS Board of Trustees and is the Founder and CEO of Two Hearts Pet Loss Centers, delivered the keynote address. Her speech, entitled “Everything I Need to Know I Learned from My Dog” was inspiring, humorous and touching.

Congratulations to all of our graduates! We wish you the best of good fortune as you embark on your careers!

**Summa Cum Laude (GPA 4.0—3.85)**
- Katherine Barnes
- Toby Day
- Shaina Haakinson
- Charley Hill
- Elissa Hurley
- Rachel Sullivan
- Abigail Urquhart

**Magna Cum Laude (GPA 3.84-3.70)**
- Satin Akins
- Madison Donbrock
- Colbie Kaplan
- Hannah Lane
- Elise Lang

**Cum Laude (GPA 3.69-3.5)**
- Keely Mensior
- Kara Pennington
- Kaleb Rider
- Danielle Thomas

*Cont. >>*
Our next commencement will take place April 16, 2022 at 10:00am at the Summit Hotel in Cincinnati.
Day and Legendre Join CCMS Team

Over the past few months CCMS has been pleased to add two new members—Toby Day and Samantha Legendre. Toby was welcomed as an instructor and will eventually become Director of the Educational Cremation Center. Samantha has taken on the role of Director of Admissions and will also be assuming instructor duties in the near future.

Born and raised in southeastern Indiana, Toby had not considered a career in death care until he found his way into funeral service as a second career following a twenty-two-year career in collision repair. Due to an unforeseen change in circumstances, he began working in a hometown area funeral home and immediately felt the call to service the needs of those experiencing loss.

After earning his Associate degree at CCMS, Toby served his apprenticeship in his home state of Indiana, where he earned his Funeral Director license. He found a rewarding balance serving his hometown community while also giving back to his alma mater through service as an adjunct instructor in the CCMS Clinical and Restorative Arts curriculum.

“My time as a CCMS student was amazing,” says Toby. “Thanks to the faculty, staff, and administration. It was, therefore, an easy decision when the offer to join the nation’s premier death care educator and team of distinguished educators was presented to me.”

Toby lives in Southeast Indiana, where he is a husband, father, and dog father. Toby and his wife Loretta have given a loving home to several rescue dogs over the years. When time permits, Toby enjoys several hobbies including, but not limited to, woodwork, leatherwork, and metal fabrication. He and Loretta also enjoy spending time next to a campfire.

As Director of Admissions for CCMS, Samantha guides prospective students through the journey of completing their transfer requirements to ultimately become part of the CCMS family. She is passionate about the death care profession and enjoys finding like-minded individuals to bring to the team.

Samantha is a United States Air Force veteran who proudly served her country for 6 years while on Active Duty as a F-16 fighter aircraft Fuel Systems Specialist. She graduated from CCMS in 2020 with Summa Cum Laude honors. She then completed her apprenticeship and became a licensed funeral director/embalmer in Ohio in July 2021.

With intentions to become part of the Faculty team in the future, she has recently been given the opportunity to teach her first course at CCMS- and truly loves it!

“Whatever my job title may change to- either now or in the future,” says Samantha, “I will continue to provide support and guidance to anyone who asks.”

Samantha enjoys long walks on the beach and anything an elderly woman would be found doing such as: reading, painting, crocheting, and sitting in her rocking chair until dark. She lives in Cincinnati, Ohio with her husband Christopher and their handsome son, David. Shadow and Keke complete their family circle (their dog and cat).
Jim Szakovits Retires

After 36 years as a Funeral Director and Embalmer, Class of Fall 1983 Alumnus Jim Szakovits has announced his retirement. Jim has been a well-respected leader in the profession, having spent his last 15 years with Service Corporation International as the General Manager of Ottawa Hills Memorial Park in his native city of Toledo, Ohio. Jim says he still holds many fond memories of faculty (including former CCMS Board of Trustees President Frank Rosenacker) and fellow students at the Edge Cliff campus.

As for his future plans, Jim says, “I will continue with my licensure certification requirements as my wife and I spent more time traveling and enjoying life!”

Since his retirement, Jim has joined Walker Funeral Homes and Crematory, Toledo, Ohio working part time with their team.

Congratulations to Jim on a terrific career and thanks for your lifetime of service!
CCMS thanks these valued alumni for their support in 2021

**President's Circle**
- Marlan Gary
- Frank Rosenacker
- Rob Rue
- Mark Schneider
- Karen S. Sharpe
- Richard G. Snider

**Founder's Circle**
- Ada Jean Fraley
- Brian R. James
- Stephen Hegert
- Marie McCune
- Kenn A. Peterson
- Erin Schwanitz-Vogt

**Partner's Circle**
- Van Caradras
- Gwen Mooney
- William C. Peoples
- Michael Pierson
- Timothy Schmidt

**Supporter's and Apprentice's Circle**
- Johnathan Brandon
- Robert B. Cilles
- Louis Crow
- Jeffrey Keller
- Robert S. Lovein
- Jodi Ranannee Lucas
- Robert Mayhew
- Tyler O'Brien
- Kimberly Ogle
- Noah Schlabach
- Gina Lee Terry
- Samuel L. Walters
Lee and Vinnedge Promoted

On December 27, 2021, President Lechner announced the promotion of faculty members Wanda Lee and John Vinnedge to new roles.

Ms. Lee, who served for the last eight years as the Clinical Director and Instructor, has been promoted to College Registrar and Instructor. In her new role, Lee will serve as the senior “keeper of the academic records” and certify student requirements for the conferring of degrees, among other duties. Lee will retain her role on the faculty and continue to teach in her dual role.

Mr. Vinnedge, who served as a clinical and classroom instructor, also for the last eight years, has been promoted to Interim Clinical Director and Instructor. As part of his new duties, Vinnedge will oversee all activities and instruction in the Clinical Mortuary Lab, and spearhead future updates and enhancements. Vinnedge will also retain his role on the faculty and continue to teach in the classroom.

President Lechner commented, “We are excited to work with both Wanda and John in their new roles, and know they will continue to do an excellent job.”
Dutko Honored for 35 Years of Service

On September 15, 2021 CCMS honored Academic Chair Teresa Dutko for 35 years of service to the College. “We have been very fortunate to have had Teresa on our teams for more than three decades,” said CCMS President and CEO Jack E. Lechner, Jr. “Her leadership, academic rigor and thoughtfulness form the core of what we do here at CCMS.”

During her career Teresa has taught the College’s social science curriculum, including courses such as Social Aspects of Death and Dying, Professional Relationships in Funeral Service, Psychology of Grief and Counseling and Aftercare in Funeral Service. Teresa coordinates the CCMS Assessment Program (CAP) designed to ensure student learning and improve institutional effectiveness. She also serves as the College’s liaison to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) and The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (ICFSEB).

Teresa holds the Fellow in Thanatology (study of death, dying and bereavement) advance-practice credential through the Association for Death Education and Counseling and a Death and Grief Studies Certificate through the Center for Loss and Life Transition. A certified funeral celebrant for 16 years, Teresa is also one of the celebrant trainers for CCMS bachelor’s degree students.

In her leisure time, Teresa enjoys reading, cooking, and practicing yoga. She is married to writer and educator, Louis Martinelli. Together they enjoy hiking, canoeing, playing golf, and traveling.

Class Officers Elected

Earlier this year, our Semester 2 students elected their Class Officers. Congratulations to:

Class President: Lauryn Thomas
Vice President: Lauren Royall
Secretary/Treasurer: Iyanna Cooper
Class Representatives: Kylie Allen and Janelle Dunseth

Positions Available

Looking for a great place to work? Come join the CCMS Family! The following positions are open for qualified candidates:

- Dean of the College
- Director of Admissions
- Instructor

Click here to get more information and learn how to apply.
#ccmsfamily  continued...

In Memory of

Lynwood Battle

Lynwood L. Battle, loving father of Monica and Brooke, devoted grandfather of Isabella Frances, Morgan Shay and Maddison Paige, passed Sunday, August 29, 2021, age 78 years. Lynwood Battle was born to the union of Lynwood and Frances Battle on December 31, 1942. At the age of 78 he departed this life on August 29, 2021 following a lengthy illness with heart failure.

He was raised and educated in Cincinnati, Ohio. After graduating from Walnut Hills High School, Lynwood attended the Ohio State University. He graduated with a B.S. in Biology.

After his marriage to Barbara Frances Battle in 1965 he enlisted in the Army. As a captain in the Army he was stationed in the Panama Canal Zone and in Vietnam.

Lynwood’s professional career was spent in the role of manager of Diversity at Procter and Gamble. A devout Christian and member of Kennedy Heights Presbyterian Church, Lynwood served as a lay preacher and a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati.

He held many community service positions: Cincinnati Public School Board, Cincinnati Zoo Board, Springer School and Center Board, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Board of Trustees. After retiring from a 28 year career with P&G, Lynwood worked full time at the family business JC Battle and Son’s Funeral Home.

Lynwood is preceded in death by his wife of 38 years, Barbara.

Lynwood Battle modeled leadership, service, and faith. He was a man of wisdom, integrity, and warmth that connected with people everywhere he went. His sense of gratitude and thanksgiving resonated with everything that he did whether it pertained to family, service, work, or his many friendships.

He had many defining moments in his lifetime: attending The Ohio State University and making the OSUMB. Certainly, the highlight for any sousaphone player is to get the chance to dot the “I”. Lynwood dotted the “I” twice. He was also the ROTC Band Commander.

Another defining moment occurred while he was a Captain in the U.S. Army Field Artillery serving in The Canal Zone and Vietnam in 65-'69. Lynwood distinguished himself by outstanding, meritorious service in connection with military operations in the Republic of Vietnam. He was awarded a Bronze Star Medal. His loyalty, diligence and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

Lynwood worked part time at the JC Battle and Son’s Funeral Home while taking a full-time job at Procter and Gamble. He felt that if he wasn’t giving something back to the community, he’d shrivel up and die. Children, education, and equality were at the center of his heart.

When asked how he defined his life, Lynwood answered, by being of service.

Lynwood believed that the most precious thing in the world, for anyone, is the love of one’s family and the esteem of one’s friends. He felt like he hit the lottery when it came to friends and family. Marrying his wife Barbara, an educator with Cincinnati Public Schools was another defining moment that led to the birth of their two children, Monica and Brooke. Being a devoted husband, father, and grandfather was his greatest achievement.

Continued ==>
In Memory of (cont.)

Lynwood’s career at P&G as manager of diversity was another defining moment of his life. During his 28 year career at Procter and Gamble, Lynwood played a major leadership role in diversity. Most notably his work that inspired and improved P&G’s culture in the area of diversity and inclusion by recognizing those LGBT+ leaders and allies who through their actions and approach made a profound difference at an individual, organizational and/or corporate level. Lynwood paved the way for P&G to drive more inclusiveness and ensure their LGBT+ employees felt protected. He was awarded the Ally in Action Award in recognition of his work. His contribution to this work is captured in a documentary titled, "The Words Matter" which was awarded a Silver Film Lion Award at the International Festival of Creativity 2018 Cannes.

Later in life Lynwood returned to his roots to work at the family funeral home, a business that was started by his grandfather in 1933. One of his greatest joys came from working alongside his brother James Battle III, and having the privilege of comforting and supporting families through the difficult time of losing a loved one.

When trying to synthesize all that Lynwood Battle accomplished and gave in his lifetime, it all comes down to this; Lynwood Battle was a person who cared, nurtured, led, coached, and loved. Bridges said it best, “in gratitude for these and countless other acts of civic leadership and selfless giving to others- WE THANK YOU! And may your noble example and benevolent deeds rebound to the everlasting benefit of your family, your friends and your community.”

Lynwood is survived by his daughters Monica and Brooke, granddaughters Isabella, Morgan, and Maddison, siblings DeWitt, Theresa Anderson, James C III (Dr. Dorothy).

Jackie Brown

Jacqueline (Jackie) Brown died on Thursday, November 4, 2021 in Cincinnati, OH. She was born in Sterling, IL in 1937 and raised her family in Aurora, IL. Jackie served as the CCMS registrar/FA director in the mid to late 80’s.

Jackie was the beloved wife of Terry and the cherished mother and grandmother of Debbie (Mark) Sommerville, Andrew (Alex), Natalie (Derrick) Garcia, Aaron (Alex), and Anthony; Chris (Kim) Brown, Ethan, and Lauren; and Beckie (Robb) Young, Matthew, Nathan, Zachary, and Joshua.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Howard and Margaret Weaver; her sister, Mary Rude; her son Greg Brown; and her grandson Ian Sommerville.


The threads that ran through all of these roles were Jackie’s boundless energy, love, joy, laughter, and devotion. Jackie was devoted to God, her faith, and the church she was attending; she was devoted to her husband Terry of 64 years; devoted to her four kids and ten grandkids; and devoted to her family and friends (and everyone was a friend in Jackie’s world). She embraced every role at every stage of her life with energized elegance.
In Memory of (cont.)

Robert Bruce Burke

Robert Bruce Burke, beloved son of the late Robert A. Burke and the late Cecilia (nee Stuben) Burke, loving brother of Valerie (nee Burke) McQueen, dear friend of Rich and Jennie Johnson and devoted employee of Ogle & Paul R. Young Funeral Homes died November 21, 2021.

Robert was born at Camp Lejuene, North Carolina, and, like his father before him, served his country with honor in the United States Army (1983-1989) before returning home to Cincinnati. He worked for many years in technology and later pursued his calling to serve his community as a professional funeral director, eventually enrolling in and graduating from CCMS. He spent his last few years living and working in Oxford, Ohio.

Robert will be remembered for his gentle spirit, unique sense of humor, tenacity even when he was struggling, and fondness of all things Disney. He left us too soon and will be deeply missed.

He will be laid to rest with his parents at Arlington National Cemetery. Please consider making a donation in Robert's name to the Honor Flight Network.

Nicholas A. HogenKamp

Well known resident and local businessman, Nicholas A. Hogenkamp, died peacefully at Otterbein SeniorLife Community in St. Marys, Ohio, on Saturday, February 19, at the age of 89. He was born on April 23, 1932, in Minster, Ohio to Nicholas P. And Rosella J. (Vallo) Hogenkamp. He was raised in Minster where he lived most of his life.

After graduating from Minster High School in 1950, he attended the University of Dayton for two years until 1952 when he was drafted into the Army. He served in the Korean War as Corporal and was a Tank Commander. Upon returning from the war in 1953, he soon married his high school sweetheart, Thelma Bornhorst on June 8, 1954. He then completed his studies graduating from the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science in 1956.

Upon returning from college, Nicholas joined his father, Nicholas P., at N.J. Hogenkamp Sons Funeral Service in Minster becoming the fourth generation in the family business. He took over the business in 1963 upon the death of his father and served as president of the company for 37 years and stayed involved in the business part-time for many years following. During his tenure, the business grew to include three funeral homes and served Auglaize, Mercer and Shelby counties and beyond.

Nicholas was a member of St. Augustine Catholic Church and a member of the church choir for 62 years. He served on the Minster Volunteer Fire Department and was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Civic Association and Knights of Columbus.

His is survived by his wife of 67 Years, Thelma (Bornhorst), and five children, Jayne (Marc) Spiegelman of Los Angeles, CA, Nicholas C. (Susan) Hogenkamp of Minster, OH, Thomas (Jane) Hogenkamp of Naples, FL, Julia (Joseph) Schwegman of Birmingham, MI, and Helen (James) Saber of Rochester Hills, MI. He had 13 grandchildren, Joseph Hess, Nicholas Matthew (Elizabeth), Andrew and Benjamin (Deanna) Hogenkamp, Douglas and Diane Hogenkamp, Claire, Joseph, Eric and Jack Schwegman, Christopher, Abby and John Saber, and one great-grandchild, Mary Emma Hogenkamp. He is also survived by two brothers, Dale (Linda) Hogenkamp of Kettering, OH and B. Jay (Lois) Hogenkamp of Celina, OH and a sister, Ann (Dan) Jacobs of Delaware, OH. He was preceded in death by his brother, Jon Hogenkamp, and his sister Karen Herchen.

Nicholas enjoyed playing golf and spending time with his children and grandchildren. In their later years, he and his wife enjoyed long car trips to see family throughout the country and cruises to various parts of the world.
In Memory of (cont.)

Thomas E. Miller

Words are from the lips, actions are from the heart. Tom Miller’s love was expressed through his career; dedication to his community; and acts of love and sacrifice for his family and friends. Never one to utter “the three words”, he showed his love in his day-to-day actions. Thomas E. “Tom” Miller, 68, and longtime dedicated funeral director of the Sunbury community died unexpectedly early Friday morning, January 14th, 2022, in Bradenton, Florida.

He was born on September 24, 1953, in Kenton to Leo Miller and Erma L. (Oehler) Miller and graduated from Elgin High School in 1971. He earned degrees from The Ohio State University and Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science, where he served as an embalming laboratory assistant.

Tom began his career in funeral service with the Stofcheck Funeral Home in LaRue, where he also drove an ambulance and was a volunteer member of the Richwood Fire Department. In 1978, he became a funeral director with Snyder Funeral Homes in Marion. He went on to join as a partner with the Hughes-Kubach-Miller Funeral Home in 1985 for several years.

After serving as a team leader at Abbott & Company in Marion, he and his family moved to Sunbury in 1995 when he became the resident manager director with the DeVore-Snyder Funeral Homes, serving the Sunbury, Delaware, and Marengo communities. His career with Snyder Funeral Homes totaled 28 years until he retired in 2016 as manager of the DeVore-Snyder Funeral Home in Sunbury. Dedicated to his profession and community, he took pride in the role as an embalmer and funeral director; a passion that inspired his oldest daughter Susan to follow in his footsteps.

Tom was a dedicated husband, father, and grandfather, who treasured time spent with his family and attending the activities of his grandchildren. He possessed a soft heart for the countless families he was called to serve in their time of need. Always consistent, Tom was reliable to his core. He will be remembered for his loyalty, kind deeds, spirited nature, and love of family.

In addition to his mother, those left to cherish his memory include his beloved wife Pat, daughters Susan (Lance) Dill of Bellville, Heather (Fred) Kantzer of Marion, treasured grandchildren: Gunnar Dill and Emmary Sue Dill, Wyatt Thomas Frederick Kantzer, sister Shirley (Doug) Green of Waldo, nephew Bret (Lacey) Green, extended family, and numerous dear friends.

He was preceded in death by his father in 1990.
In Memory of (cont.)

Thomas A. Tilton

Thomas A. Tilton, age 83, of Bryan, Ohio, passed away on Saturday, February 26, 2022, at the Community Health and Wellness Center in Bryan, Ohio, after a brief illness. A resident of Bryan for forty-two years, Tom retired in 1994, after a long and respected career as a funeral director. He was the owner/proprietor of the Greenisen & Tilton Funeral Homes in Bryan and Sherwood, which he joined in 1971, after spending the first nine years of his career at the Robinson Funeral Home in Genoa, Ohio. A mentor to his fellow funeral directors, Tom served as a Past President of District 1 of the Ohio Funeral Directors Association.

Tom was a long-time member of the Bryan Rotary Club, serving as its President in 1992-93. He was also a Paul Harris Fellow and enjoyed reading to children as part the Rotary Reads program. Throughout his years as a Rotarian, Tom maintained perfect attendance, even enjoying a meeting in Paris, France while on vacation.

Following in his father’s footsteps, Tom was a Past Master of the Masonic Lodge #495 in Oak Harbor, Ohio. He also served as an Elder of the First Presbyterian Church in Bryan for many years. In addition to his family and his faith, Tom’s other great love was The Ohio State University football team and marching band. Tom and Jenella attended home games at the horseshoe whenever they could, and one of their grandchildren’s happiest memories is attending the Big Ten Championship game with their grandpa in 2014.

Thomas A. Tilton was born on August 2, 1938, in Fremont, Ohio, the only child of Albert W. Tilton and Esther E. (Schroeder) Tilton. Tom enjoyed hunting and fishing with his father and uncle, and acquired a life-long passion for golf from both his parents at an early age. He was a member of the Orchard Hills Country Club for many years, winning the Top of Ohio Pro-Am, and shooting a hole-in-one in 1999.

A graduate of Oak Harbor High School in 1956, Tom was a three sport varsity athlete, excelling in football, basketball, and track. He was the Ottawa County High Hurdles champion. He continued his athletic career at Ohio Northern University, where he ran track and was the starting quarterback for the Polar Bears. While at ONU, he was a member of Delta Sigma Phi. Tom graduated from ONU with a BA in 1960, and then completed graduate work at the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science.

Thomas Albert Tilton married Jenella Mary Sutter at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oak Harbor, Ohio, on June 30, 1963, beginning a true loving partnership that has lasted fifty-eight years.

In addition to his wife, Tom is survived by two daughters: Jennifer L. Andrews, M.D. of Mansfield, Ohio, and Lisa (Seth) Tilton-Levine, Ph.D. of Millburn, New Jersey; and five grandchildren: Ellen E. Andrews, Thomas G. Andrews, Joshua T. Levine, Daniel T. Levine, and Zachary S. Levine.
Roger Rullman

Roger Leland Rullman, 85, of Aurora, Indiana, passed away Tuesday, January 18th, 2022, in Lawrenceburg, Indiana. He was surrounded by his family. Roger was born July 20th, 1936, in Aurora, Indiana. He was the son of Harry and Alma (Benning) Rullman. Roger was a 1954 Aurora High School graduate. During his senior year, his basketball team beat the state champion Milan Indians in the regular season. Also, Roger scored all of the points for the football team that year, a total of one touchdown. These were two moments he was very fond of.

Roger was an extremely proud Valparaiso University Alumnus, graduating in 1958 with his degree in Business. Before being drafted, he spent some time working at Yellowstone National Park, which remained one of his favorite destinations to visit the entirety of his life. He served in the United States Army from 1959-1961. For the duration of his service, Roger was stationed in Germany. He spent his free time while overseas travelling to other countries in Europe. When asked about his experience, he said that being overseas for so long made him appreciate this country and all of the opportunities we have here.

After his service, Roger moved to Mundelein, Illinois, where he taught Junior High Science for six years. While there, he met the love of his life, Patty Hileman, who was studying for her Master’s Degree at Northwestern University. They married in her hometown, Wayland, Iowa on July 23rd, 1966. Patty and Roger moved home to Aurora in 1968, when Roger began school at the Cincinnati School of Mortuary Science. Roger and his brother, Millard, ran the Rullman Funeral Home together for the rest of their careers. Helping people navigate stressful times that follow death was Roger’s true calling. He continued to work after selling the business to his friend, Sharon Hunger, remaining on payroll until well after his 80th birthday. Roger loved nature, long walks at Lesko Park, growing tomatoes, and the Cincinnati Bengals.

Roger was so proud of his hometown. He and Patty raised their two daughters, Angela and Stephanie, in Aurora. He was an active member of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, served on the Hillforest Historic Foundation for over 30 years, was a member of the South Dearborn School Board, and served as treasurer on the Aurora Public Library Board for 16 years. He was also a district president for two years for the Indiana Funeral Directors Association.

Roger was preceded in death by his parents, Harry and Alma; siblings, Phyllis Croll and her husband Bill, Millard Rullman and his wife Sally, and Melvin Rullman.

Roger is survived by his loving spouse of over 55 years, Patty (Hileman) Rullman, daughters, Angela (Matt) Burkhardt and Stephanie (Tim) Rice of Aurora, IN; grandchildren Nick (Nina) Burkhardt of Dayton, OH, and Rachel Burkhardt of Aurora, IN; great-grandchild Finn Burkhardt; siblings, Joyce (Gordy) Rich of Lomita, CA, and Roy (Linda) Rullman of Lafayette, IN, and many nieces and nephews.

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By making a bequest or other planned gift to CCMS you will not only help ensure the future of the College and quality death care education, but also your place in its history.

For more information or to make a planned giving pledge contact Ken Coggeshall at 513-618-1927 or kcoggeshall@ccms.edu
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Very Respectfully,

Jack E. Lechner, Jr.
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