

AMERICAN BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION
52nd ANNUAL MEETING

MINUTES

Friday, April 11, 2014
11:00 am

Stars Conference Room
“Windows on Minnesota
Marquette Hotel
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Meeting was called to order by President Francisco Solis, San Antonio College, at 11:00 a.m.

Presentation of Colors by the American Legion Color Guard followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation and Prayer of Remembrance by James Shoemake, Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science

John Fritch, University of Central Oklahoma was appointed Parliamentarian

Roll was called by Vice President Eugene Ogrodnik, Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science

Summary of Official Attendance

49 Accredited College and University representatives
5 NFDA representatives
4 NFD&MA representatives

Accredited Institution Representatives in Attendance:

Institution	Representative
	Scott Rankin
American Academy	George Connick, Pamela MacBrayne
American River College	Damon de la Cruz
Arapahoe Community College	Martha Thayer
Bishop State Community College	William Thompson
Carl Sandburg College	Tim Krause; Matt Kendall
Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service	Jason Altieri
Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville	Brian Burke
Cypress College	Glenn Bower; Jolena Grande
Dallas Institute of Funeral Service	James Shoemake; Wayne Cavender
Des Moines Area Community College	Kevin Patterson, Travis Carrico
Fayetteville Technical Community College	David Hall
FINE Mortuary College	Kevin Koch
Florida State College – Jacksonville	Robert Dean

Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service	Patty Hutcheson
Holmes Community College	Thomas Garrett, David R. Jones
Hudson Valley Community College	Elaine Reinhard
Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana - Northwest	Nhemya Ward
Jefferson State Community College	Venus Smith; Jzyk Ennis
John A. Gupton College	Steven Spann, Donna Collard
John Tyler Community College	Rhonda K. Pleasants
Kansas City Kansas Community College	Wiley Wright
Lake Washington Institute of Technology	Lauren Budrow
Lincoln College of New England	Paul Warren
Malcolm X College	Karen Scott
Mercer County Community College	Michael Daley
Mesa Community College	Thomas Taggart; Donna Backhaus
Miami Dade Collage	Joseph Finocchiaro, Loretta Adoghe
Mid-America College of Funeral Service	Michael Hays
Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College	Bill Harvey
Northampton Community College	Tony Moore, Patricia Warner
Northwest Mississippi Community College	Angela Hopper, Keith Reed
Ogeechee Technical College	Michele Rupar
Piedmont Technical College	David Martin; Dedrick Gantt
Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science	Eugene Ogrodnik
Salt Lake Community College	David Hess
San Antonio College	Francisco Solis
Southeast Kentucky Technical & Community College	Denise Schumate
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	Anthony Fleege
St. Petersburg College	Kevin Davis, Gary Brown
State University of New York – Caton	David Penepent
Tidewater Community College	Kimberly Jones
University of Arkansas Community College at Hope	Karen Davis
University of Central Oklahoma	John Fritch
University of the District of Columbia Community College	Vincent Hill
University of Minnesota	Michael LuBrant, Angela Woosley, Dave Lee, Donna Kvorak, Tom Ellis, Gloria Roach Thomas, Dave Schoff., Michael Matthews
Vincennes University	Jonathan DeHart
Wayne State University	Mark Evely
Worsham College of Mortuary Science	Stephanie Kann; Karl Kann
National Funeral Directors Association	Robert Bates, Robert Moore, Michael St. Pierre, Colleen Murphy Klein
National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association	Jamye Cameron, Ernest Adams, Carol Williams, Billie Watson-Hughes, Elosi Saucer

51 of 61 members present. A quorum was declared.

President Solis introduced Michael LuBrant with the University of Minnesota who welcomed ABFSE to Minneapolis. Michael LuBrant introduced faculty members who also served as co-hosts of this year’s event: Angela Woosley, Dave Lee, Donna Kvorak, Tom Ellis, Gloria Roach Thomas, Davie Schoff, Michael Matthews.

Also attending were:

Dr. Michael Smith, former ABFSE Executive Director
Catherine Gannon, Team Chair
Melton Jones, Team Chair

Jill Karn, Pierce Colleges
Matt Buel, Arkansas State University – Mountain Home
Daniel Simone and Rafael Castilla, Eastwick College
Stephen Smith and David Coughran, St. Louis Community College
Sally Pike, ABFSE Executive Assistant

A MOTION to adopt the Agenda as presented.

VOTE: Adopted unanimously.

A MOTION to approve the Minutes of the 2013 annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas was presented.

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

President Solis recognized Dr. Michael Smith for his dedication and service to the American Board of Funeral Service Education as its former Executive Director.

Report from the Robert C. Smith III, Executive Director

Mr. Smith expressed his gratitude to Michael Smith for “setting the tone” for him as Executive Director, for spending a few days with him in St. Joseph upon his arrival on January 6th, and giving him basic guidance of the responsibilities of the executive director; and to Sally Pike for her assistance in acclimating him to the office and to St. Joseph.

By the end of January, the executive director had attended a CHEA meeting in Washington, DC. Since then he has attended the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Board annual meeting and had the opportunity to represent the American Board at the funeral of Jim Augustine. He also attended the ICFSEB Item Writing Workshop and encouraged educators to attend this learning opportunity.

The director’s office responsibilities include coordinating team visits which included 9 team visits and a focus visit. Participating in the focus visit was an excellent opportunity early in his tenure as executive director.

Participating in CHEA (Council for Higher Education Association) and ASPA (Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors) organizations has added to his education as executive director. One thing heard constantly at these meetings was “peer review.” Our self studies are an opportunity to review ourselves as a program and when a team visits a school, they’re validating that self study created by the program.

A key element of this organization is that the majority of its work is done by volunteers. The COA members are volunteers and team members visiting schools are volunteers. Team Chairs, COA members and visit team members (educators and professionals) were recognized for their contributions. Those interested in being involved as a team educator were urged to express their interest to the executive director.

Mr. Smith also expressed gratitude to Dr. Robert Grymes, who recently retired as a Public Member of the COA. He previously served as a team chair and self-study workshop coordinator. The American Board wishes him well in his retirement.

The Higher Education Act, currently under consideration by Congress, is a means to make educators more accountable to outcomes as a way to let the consumers know where their education dollars are spent. It is important that educators pay strict attention to these details.

In trying to keep in touch with program directors, the Executive Committee and the Committee on Accreditation members, there may have been times when people have called the ABFSE office and the phone hasn't been answered. It wasn't because no one was in the office. It was because the executive director felt talking with educators was too important to put that person "on hold" to take another call. The phone doesn't automatically rollover to voicemail when an incoming call comes during another call. If callers don't have the opportunity to leave a voice mail message, they are urged to call back later.

The executive director is currently reviewing the *ABFSE Accreditation & Policy Manual* to make it the best document the ABFSE can put forward. Changes to the Annual Report are also being considered to derive more useful information.

From the most recent annual reports, we know:

- There are 57 accredited programs, covering 34 states of the United States
- 13 states have more than 1 funeral service program; 16 states have no program or none under serious consideration
- 6,006 students are enrolled in funeral service education programs, representing a 1.69% increase in enrollment over last year.
- 30 programs reported a decline in enrollment compared to last year.
- 2,755 new enrollees and 2.2% of those students had previously attended a funeral service program.
- There were 1,548 graduates and 2.8% of students dropped out over the course of the year.
- 56% of our graduates were between the ages of 21 – 30; 1.5% were over the age of 55. 56% of the graduates were females; 76% were Caucasian; 17% were related to someone in the funeral business. 11% were children of funeral home owners.
- 63% of those in funeral service education had 2 or more years of college prior to starting in funeral service; 19% entered funeral service education directly out of high school.

While attending conferences, the executive director has tried to visit near-by programs and has the opportunity to visit five programs since January. If schools receive word that the executive director is planning to visit, he isn't coming because there's a problem. It's a friendly visit.

A proposal for outside sourcing for our scholarship application process was reviewed. It was a good process but comes with a high price tag. Whether or not the price is warranted requires consideration at another time. Similarly, two proposals which would allow on-line self study and annual reports were reviewed. Interesting concepts which

are certainly compatible to our strategic plan but again, not without a cost.

84% of the program directors responded to a recent Survey Monkey on how schools are dealing with cremation, cemetery operations and preparation of the body. Expectations are that we will be using Survey Monkey for more collection of information. The next project will be the textbook survey. The director was pleased to see that so many made the transition to the new section of the NBE, the material had already been incorporated into courses.

In the coming months, we have the Summer Curriculum Workshop in San Antonio. We'll be revising and updating the Annual Report in an effort to collect more data on enrollees and graduates. The ABFSE website will be updated, giving our scholarship program better attention and recognition of our scholarship sponsors. We are open to your comments and suggestions to make the ABFSE office work more effectively.

Distance Learning Update – Robert C. Smith III, Executive Director

A majority of telephone calls received in the ABFSE office are from students asking “where can I take funeral service courses” and “do you offer distance education.” They are directed to the information provided on our website. In our annual report we found that 16.8% of our graduates were on-line students. 21% of our programs offer an on-line degree and another 21% offer 1 to 6 of their courses on-line.

Again, from our annual report, those that offer distance education have to separate out their NBE results. 74% of students pass Arts; 78% pass Science. In looking at the data for distance education, it's just the reverse. 78% of distance ed student pass the Arts; 74% pass the Science. This is something we will continue to monitor.

One important test of distance ed providers is to insure the identity of the distance ed students. We have to be sure we have processes in place to accomplish this.

One discussion coming out of CHEA is that distance ed providers get approval from each state where their students are located, to provide distance ed in that state. This is a federal requirement. CHEA has made the recommendation that schools should have to do this on a state-by-state basis. In the course of this occurring, there are several regional consortiums that have developed between the distance ed provider states. This has allowed the schools in this group of states, if the states agree to accept the distance state in one state, the consortium of states around that state will all accept the distance ed. If one consortium has agreed to accept from a particular group of states, the others will accept it as well. This is streamlining approval of distance ed. New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland didn't connect with a consortium; in these states, state-by-state approval is required.

President's Comments – Francisco Solis, San Antonio College

Mr. Solis expressed appreciation to everyone for the length of service in Funeral Service Education, ranging from one year to 35 years.

As ABFSE President, Mr. Solis has tried to recognize new faces and taken the opportunity to visit with them. This was a courtesy extended to him and one he has tried

to carry forward. He also recognized former ABFSE Executive Director, George Connick for his service to the organization and the friendship and mentorship he received from Jim Augustine.

New appointments to ABFSE standing committees were announced:

- Curriculum Committee: Damon DeLa Cruz, John Fritch, Mark Evely and Glen Bower.
- Program Committee: Dedrick Gantt
- NBE Liaison Committee: Travis Carrico
- Scholarship Committee: Martha Thayer

Highlights of the past year included the Summer Curriculum Workshop. Shortly after the workshop, Steve Spann began the national search for the executive director. During this process, 28 applications were received, 14 telephone interviews were held. Ten applicants participated in video interviews and four applicants were invited to Austin, Texas in October for personal interviews.

With various inputs, work has been done on the Strategic Plan for two years. The original meeting included some 50 people, meeting in Charlotte. During discussions to be held at the University of Minnesota, all participating will be divided into five groups. Mr. Solis expressed the desire that people take this opportunity to get involved in the future of the ABFSE.

**Financial Report: ABFSE Secretary/Treasurer Karl Kann, Worsham College and
and Robert C. Smith III, ABFSE Executive Director**

In reviewing audited financials, Mr. Kann reported an increase in accreditation income of approximately \$75,000 and a decrease in expenses of approximately \$10,000, ending the year with approximately an \$85,000 profit compared to the previous year's loss of approximately \$3,900 and commended Dr. Smith for the profit.

Mr. Kann feels the reserves should be more than they currently are and the increase in accreditation and membership fees should get the reserves at a more desirable level.

Robert Smith, Executive Director presented the remainder of the financial report. The current budget expectations should be reached without problems. Under the strong guidance of the Finance Committee, the proposed budget for next year was reviewed and approved by both the COA and the Executive Committee, increasing our reserve funds, the goal of which is to have one year of operating expenses in reserve.

Once back in the office, we will be upgrading to QuickBooks On-Line, allowing oversight by the officers by remote access to the finances. This will be an important improvement to the financial operations of the American Board. Karl Kann has a copy of the audited financials which are available for review

**Past President's Report and ABFSE Representative to the ICFSEB: Patty Hutcheson,
Gupton-Jones College**

This was Mrs. Hutcheson's last meeting as ABFSE Past-President and also her last

meeting as an ABFSE member as she will be leaving her position at Gupton-Jones College.

Mrs. Hutcheson encouraged people to become involved in the ABFSE. Without being actively involved, a person will not understand what this committee, this board, this group does. If you are not a proponent for funeral service and funeral service education, you need to get out now. We're at a crucial point and we need good funeral directors. If that's not your mission to produce people to go out and take care of families, then somewhere we're missing the boat. Mrs. Hutcheson encouraged everyone to be a cheerleader for funeral service, to be an educator who says "funeral service is important and this is what we do and we want the best people out there." Families deserve the best and we should provide the best.

Mrs. Hutcheson appreciated the opportunity to be involved and what she has learned from that involvement.

Committee Reports and Greetings

Scholarship Committee – Robert Dean, Florida State College

In the absence of the committee chair, Frank Walton, committee member Robert Dean presented the report.

Scholarship Committee met on Thursday, April 10.

47 undergraduate applications and one post graduate application were reviewed and ranked utilizing ABFSE approved criteria. The committee elected to award scholarship funds to the top seven applicants.

There was a total of \$22,672 available for awards at this meeting. \$10,200 was awarded to 8 applicants (7 undergraduate and 1 post graduate.) Students receiving scholarships are attending Wayne State University, American Academy McAllister Institute, Carl Sandburg College, Mt. Hood Community College, Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science, Florida State College.

The Scholarship Committee recommends that the criteria for scholarship essays be revised to require a minimum essay one page double spaced and a maximum essay two pages double spaced

The committee also recognized the efforts of Robert Smith in securing new sources of funds for scholarships

- Clark Vault
- Pure Country
- Batesville Casket Company

The committee requested the assistance of the ABFSE Office in making the Jim Augustine Scholarship publicly known.

Frank Walton was re-elected chair; Robert Dean was elected Vice Chair.

Curriculum Study – Stephanie Kann, Worsham College

Mrs. Kann introduced Jolena Grande, Cypress College to talk about the Hilgenfeld Curriculum Workshop.

Ms. Grande emphasized that a cornerstone of the American Board of Funeral Service Education and particularly the Curriculum Study Committee, is a commitment to the continual improvement and the advancement of funeral service education. The annual review of curriculum at the Hilgenfeld Summer Curriculum workshop has occurred for many years. With so many new members attending our annual conference, many may not know the history of the Hilgenfeld Foundation:

In 1927 Reverend and Mrs. Samuel Hilgenfeld opened the Hilgenfeld Family Mortuary in Anaheim, California. Shortly their son Melvin joined them as a funeral director and embalmer. In 1937, Melvin joined the teaching faculty of the Los Angeles College of Mortuary Science and continued to work at the family funeral home. In 1943 Melvin became president of the mortuary college. Melvin was committed to funeral service education. With continued success of the family mortuary and Melvin being so integrally involved in funeral service education, he embarked on a mission to bring funeral service education and private mortuary science school to more students. By making it part of the open access tuition-free California Community College system, he could train more licensees. In 1976 the California Community College of Mortuary Science became part of the North Orange County Community College district and what was once a private school education for only a few became the mortuary science program at Cypress College. Melvin's dream became a reality with the first graduating class in 1977 and although he died in 1984, his dream was solidified by his daughter Margie Hilgenfeld-Field and by her daughter, Becky Arias. Today the Hilgenfeld Foundation, along with the Hilgenfeld Mortuary, provides grants and scholarships for faculty, students and organizations committed to the advancement of funeral service education. They pay for us to be able to continually review and update our curriculum each summer. In 2017 the Hilgenfeld family will celebrate 90 years in funeral service and his gift of funeral service will celebrate 40 years at Cypress College.

Mrs. Kann expressed appreciation for the Hilgenfeld Foundation for their generosity and to Frank Solis and San Antonio College for hosting the curriculum workshop the past three years. They have made a commitment for another two years. San Antonio College does an awesome, making the work done at the workshop much more enjoyable.

The Curriculum Committee met and reviewed four outlines which will be presented later for approval: Cremation, Funeral Service Management, Restorative Art and Small Business Management.

The group discussed the ABFSE textbook list and The Conference textbook list. The Conference and the Curriculum Committee will share results of the ABFSE textbook survey, rather than each group conducting individual textbook surveys.

In looking at the surveys, The Conference identified 39 textbooks, 11 of these are not on

the ABFSE list.

The Hilgenfeld Summer Curriculum Workshop will be held May 30 – 31; travel dates are May 29 and June 1. The workshop will review Anatomy, History of funeral Service, Pathology and Sociology.

Several schools reported not receiving the email calling for resumes for the Hilgenfeld Workshop. Selection of participants is delayed until April 21st. The Committee will have a conference call to make the selections and release the names on April 22nd.

Donna Collard was elected co-chair and Stephanie Kann was re-elected Chair.

Committee on Accreditation – Steve Spann, John A. Gupton College

Prior to reporting the business of the Committee on Accreditation meetings, Mr. Spann reported on other business of the COA.

In July 2012, the decision to make a change in leadership of the American Board of Funeral Service Education was made. In doing so, the organization was going to be without an executive director for a period of time. Dr. Michael Smith was asked and agreed to come back as an interim director until a new executive director was hired. Mr. Spann expressed appreciation to Dr. Smith.

Over a two-day period, the COA met with 17 different programs for various reasons. Four programs were reaccredited for seven years; two programs for three years; initial accreditation was granted to one program for three years and candidacy status was granted to two programs (that had previously lost their accreditation).

The COA voted to increase Candidacy fee from \$7000 to \$10,000. This identifies the fee as twice the renewal fee. The programs are reminded that the dues statements, being issued in May due in September, will increase to \$5,000.

National Exam Liaison Committee – Michael LuBrant, University of Minnesota

The NBE Liaison Committee met April 10th with six members and more than 30 guests present. Initial business was election of a chair (Michael LuBrant, University of Minnesota) and vice-chair (Gary Brown, St. Petersburg College).

Dalene Paul, ICFSEB, was invited to attend the meeting of the Liaison Committee to address questions and comments solicited from the membership. One issue discussed was the change from the 30-day retake period to the 90-day retake period. She explained the change explanation was a Board decision, based on the advice and recommendations of members, in the best interest of the exam security and test taking procedures.

The discussions also centered on why the change in the retake policy came about so quickly. The Conference felt there was the need of urgency and apologized for any inconveniences caused to the schools.

After July 1st, students will not get their NBE pass/fail notification until “graduation” has been certified by the school. The Conference is also working on an on-line registration

procedure. Schools will be notified on a monthly basis when students take the exam.

The textbook survey was also discussed. The Committee requested that the ABFSE Executive Director create a textbook survey, in a manner similar to the Survey Monkey he created concerning cremation, with pre-populated fields that would make it easier to complete the survey. For those that did not respond the Committee requested that the Executive Director contact them to make sure they had received the survey and request that they complete the survey.

Program Committee – Dr. William Thompson, Bishop State Community College

The committee will develop a form which can be used to determine the logistical needs of any presenter. The form should be available for approval by the Executive Committee in October.

The committee discussed professional development in relation to outcome measures. There were two points on which the committee focused: The Program Committee works without a budget. It is requested that the Executive Committee earmark even minimal funds for the Program Committee, such as a gratuity for a perspective speaker. Secondly, the programs are being developed in such a way that there is a direct tie back to the Strategic Plan of the organization. The committee is unsure of what level of formality is required. There needs to be some form of communication from the Executive Committee to the Program Committee to ensure that the programs being planned are facilitating the overall movement of the entire organization and tapping into the organization's Strategic Plan.

The membership of this committee believes the committee could be a driving force behind the organization and play a much greater and larger role in terms of implementing the Strategic Plan.

Shortly after the conclusion of the annual conference, members will be sent an email with a link to a Survey Monkey. Mr. Thompson asked that all recipients respond to the survey as well as passing it along to any faculty member(s) who may also be attending this annual conference.

The Program Committee re-elected William Thompson as chair for another year; Glenn Bower was elected vice-chair. The committee welcomes any suggestion for professional development programs.

College and University Council – Jzky Ennis, Jefferson State Community College

The College and University Council met immediately prior to the Annual Meeting. In the By-Laws, this committee is charged with two main purposes. The first is to submit a slate of officers when there's an election year. The CUC unanimously approved the slate of officers that will be presented later in this meeting. The second task in the By-Laws is that the CUC is to vet and approve any Notices of Motion. The committee also approved the Curriculum Notices of Motion to be presented later.

ICFSEB representatives were invited to attend the CUC meeting, for a question and answer session which was very helpful to the group.

Mr. Ennis drew attention to the fifth motion in the 2013 Minutes of the ABFSE Annual Meeting: MOTION: That the Executive Director request and secure copies of documents and reports from the Conference and the National Funeral Directors Association on research and reports they have conducted on the subject of the importance of embalming and/or funeral directing as it relates to practitioner attitudes and the ABFSE curriculum. These copies shall be distributed to all members of the ABFSE.” The executive director has contacted both of these organizations and the data requested is not currently available. However, the NFDA will be doing future research on topics such as this and hopefully it will become available.

Constitution and By-Laws Committee – Francisco Solis, San Antonio College

In the absence of the committee chair, Octavia Dickerson, committee member Francisco Solis presented the report.

The committee has two purposes. One is to determine that proper procedures were followed in presentation of any Notices of Motion for approval at this meeting. The committee reviewed all motions to be presented and insures they were properly presented.

Second is to carry through any business through motions that any standing committee of the American Board of Funeral Service might have. There being none, no further business was necessary.

National Funeral Directors Association – Robert Bates, President-Elect

The NFDA continues to be proud to be affiliated with the American Board of Funeral Service Education and the involvement of NFDA representatives in ABFSE committees – Michael St. Pierre, Colleen Murphy Klein, Ashley Cozine, and Robert Moore,

For the first time ever, almost all of the major funeral associations, including NFDA, have united through the Funeral and Memorial Information Council, or FAMIC to create a national public information outreach, “Have the Talk of a Lifetime.” This public awareness campaign is aimed at motivating families to have conversations about life, what matters to them and what they value most. These discussions can help families make important decisions about how they wish to remember and honor the lives of their loved ones through the most meaningful memorialization. Available tools include customizable brochures, DVDs, the NFDA website and a possible advertising campaign.

The NFDA significantly expanded cremation services for members. The Certified Crematory Operator Program had a soft launch in September with approximately 50 attendees. More seminars have been held and many scheduled in the future. This is a result of the natural progression and expansion of cremation. This program is for funeral directors and their staff, whether they have an established crematory or not. The NFDA has shared this information through professional education events, teleconferences, live webinars, convention workshops and a free, member-only cremation hotline.

The NFDA Professional Women’s Conference will be held in April, the Leadership Conference will be in July. Mr. Bates also encouraged members to attend the 2014

NFDA International Convention & Expo is scheduled October 12 – 15, 2014 at Music City Center, Nashville, Tennessee. Student attendance at the International Convention and Expo is encouraged.

**National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association – Jamye Jeeter Cameron,
President**

NFD&MA is honored to be a part of the American Board of Funeral Service Education membership as the organization realizes the importance of funeral service education to the continuation of funeral service.

The upcoming House of Representatives meeting is April 26 – 30th in Jacksonville, Florida. The NFD&MA Annual Convention will be held in Dallas, Texas, August 2nd through August 7th.

The Board of Directors has approved the “school membership” category. With this the organization can incorporate the schools in NFD&MA activities. Three schools have either joined or are in the process of joining NFD&MA. All schools are encouraged to join NFD&MA. It is, however, an uphill battle with the schools in terms of having NFD&MA being recognized as not just an African-American organization but a funeral service organization, open to all. School membership allows the school’s faculty to also become members; there is no cost for student membership.

The NFD&MA Education Foundation has been established and is a 501(c)(3) organization. This allows the organization to offer more educational-based programs through our national office.

International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association – Robert C. Smith III

As ICCFA members were unable to attend the ABFSE Annual Conference, due to a scheduling conflict with their own annual conference, the ABFSE Executive Director, Robert C. Smith III presented a report, prepared by Mark Krause, on their behalf.

The ICCFA concluded a record setting ICCFA Annual Convention and Exposition at the Tampa Convention Center on April 10 – 13, 2013. The ICCFA is proud that they have been setting attendance records at their conferences over the past 5 years.

Their current annual convention is being held in Las Vegas, thus the reason they were unable to attend the ABFSE Annual Conference.. The 2015 ICCFA Annual Convention and Exposition will be held April 8-11, 2015 at the San Antonio Convention Center, San Antonio, TX hopefully avoiding all conflicts with the ABFSE Annual Conference.

The JFDA joined the ICCFA over a year ago in a cooperative venture that has been beneficial to both sides. JFDA members are members of and have access to all ICCFA educational programs and to participate in their convention. In addition, the ICCFA and JFDA have created programs specifically for its members.

The ICCFA University is to be held July 18-23, 2014 at the University of Memphis, Memphis, TN. ICCFA University offers five days of intensive educational programming in now seven colleges and two graduate programs.

- 21st Century Funeral Services
- Cremation Services
- Embalming, Restorative Art & Other Care
- Funeral Home Management
- Land Management & Grounds Operations
- Leadership, Administration & Management
- Sales & Marketing

The newest college is The College of Embalming, Restorative Art and Other Care. Such industry notable such as Jack Adams, Vernie Fountain, and Ken Whitaker are just some of the professors. PIMS Dr. Joe Marsaglia is the Dean of this newest college.

The Fall Management Conference was held October 9-11, 2013 at the Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort, Dana Point, California. This conference is geared for senior management and owners. The 2014 Fall Management Conference will be held September 17-19, 2014 at the Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, Amelia Island, FL.

The Wide World Of Sales Conference was held January 15-17, 2014, at the Rio Resort and Casino, Las Vegas, NV. The ICCFA's Wide World of Sales presents the premier training event for cemetery, funeral home and insurance preneed sales managers across the United States and abroad. This two-day conference is highlighted by keynote addresses from top national sales and marketing experts, complemented by dozens of brief, highly practical presentations by individuals working in the profession.

The ICCFA is proud to announce growing educational opportunities and partnerships with industry groups and mortuary schools.

- A Cremation Arranger Certification Program will be held April 29, 2014 at the Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service, Decatur, GA. A Crematory Operator Certification Program will be held the next day.
- Joint Two-Day Event with CANA: Crematory Operations Certification by CANA, June 9, Cremation Arranger Certification by ICCFA, June 10, Holiday Inn Charlotte Center City, in Charlotte, NC.
- A Cremation Arranger Certification Program will be held September 10, 2014 at Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, Dallas, TX. A Crematory Operator Certification Program will be held the next day.

The ICCFA has a professional alliance with the PLPA; the Pet Loss Professional Association aimed at raising the level of professionalism in pet loss services.

The PLPA is dedicated to promoting high standards in pet loss services and to developing educational programs for members and for veterinarians. Among its recent initiatives:

- The PLPA Standards and Ethics Committee has developed the "Definitions and Standards for the Cremation of Companion Animals" to promote uniformity in defining often confusing terms such as "private cremation," "partitioned cremation" and "communal cremation" as well as "active" vs. "residual" commingling. The Definitions and Standards are available for use by pet loss providers, veterinarians and consumers.

- The PLPA Standards and Ethics Committee has developed a Pet Release/Authorization for Final Disposition to be used by pet loss providers and veterinary offices in securing a release/authorization for the burial or cremation of a pet. The form includes definitions of terms and information on options for memorializing the pet, such as with fur clippings, jewelry and other keepsakes.
- The PLPA Educational Committee has developed a Certified Pet Loss Professional Program, which is an intensive two-day seminar teaching best practices and allowing pet loss providers to earn CPLP designation recognizing their commitment to maintaining high professional standards.

This report was provided by Mark J. Krause, ICCFA Past President and representative to the ABFSE Executive Committee.

Unfinished Business

Robert Dean offered an addition to his comments on behalf of the ABFSE Scholarship Committee – a post-graduate scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 was offered to David Penepent, State University of New York.

New Business – Francisco Solis, President

The ABFSE Budget for FY 2015 was presented to and approved by the ABFSE Executive officers. Any questions concerning the budget or the 2013 audit are to be referred to ABFSE Secretary/Treasurer, Karl Kann.

No Amendments to the By-Laws were presented for consideration by the Constitution and By-Laws Committee; no consideration was required.

Approval of Curriculum Outlines (presented by the Curriculum Committee, Stephanie Kann, Chair):

1. MOTION: The Funeral Service Management Outline and Glossary, with the revisions as shown and any subsequent technical corrections, be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

VOTE: Adopted unanimously.

2. MOTION: The Cremation Section should be added to the Funeral Directing Outline and Glossary, with the revisions as shown and any subsequent technical corrections, be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE

VOTE: Adopted unanimously.

3. MOTION: The Small Business Management Outline and Glossary, with the revisions as shown and any subsequent technical corrections, be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

VOTE: Adopted unanimously.

4. MOTION: The Restorative Art Outline and Glossary, with the revisions as shown and any subsequent technical corrections, be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE

VOTE: Adopted unanimously.

Election of Officers:

Nomination for President: Eugene Ogrodnik

VOTE: Adopted unanimously.

Nomination for Vice-President: Karl Kann

VOTE: Adopted unanimously.

Nomination for Secretary-Treasurer: Jzyk Ennis

The floor was opened for nominations; there being none, nominations were closed.

VOTE: Adopted unanimously.

Closing Comments:

President Ogrodnik congratulated Francisco Solis for a “job well done” as it was under his leadership that the organization has embarked on a very aggressive schedule in terms of a Strategic Plan. The ultimate goal of the Strategic Plan is that it becomes a living document. President Ogrodnik presented Franc with a plaque of appreciation for his service.

Frank expressed sincere appreciation for everything done to help him succeed as a member of the ABFSE. President Ogrodnik also presented Franc with an appreciation gift – a desk clock.

In his closing comments, President Ogrodnik sees the American Board of Funeral Service Education at a crossroads. We have never had a more educated group. The Strategic Plan is very robust, and very impressive. It is also very important as well. We are at a crossroads of opportunity as well – to the credit of the members who have worked so hard over the years to bring us where we are today. To achieve more educational functions at our meetings, we need to work “at a distance,” completing our “business” before arriving at our annual conference (with the exception of the Committee on Accreditation). This would give us two full days of professional development. We could take professional development home and share with our faculty. Survey Monkey, teleconferencing and other means will be used to do the “business” of the American Board.

The ABFSE is not outside of the realm of significant challenges. According to our critics, we are not doing our job; we are woefully out of date; we are slow to move;

graduates are leaving ill-prepared; curriculum is decades out of date. By changing the nature of this American Board and how it operates, we can go forward. If we don't have the resources, we go to where the resources are.

This brings us to another challenge – the finances to support our advancement. An exhibit hall could be a means of revenue that would help fund our speakers for continuing education or professional development.

According to the funeral service media, we are invisible. We're doing our job but no one knows about it. An easy way to correct this is through press releases – our executive director will be generating press releases throughout the year so they know we're working and what we're doing. People will start knowing who the American Board of Funeral Service Education is. We will stop maintaining our invisibility.

“Will you participate at a distance? Will you make the time to deal with this issue? Will you participate in our surveys?”

The Strategic Planning Session will held later at the University of Minnesota and on Saturday, Dr. Robert Holt will make a presentation – amazing ways to use teaching systems and looking for alternative testing measures, followed by a visit to Bradshaw Celebration of Life Center.

Adjourned 1:22 pm.

Next Meeting
Jacksonville, Florida
April 17, 2015