



# Tri-State Leadership Academy

Empowering Impactful Leaders

Tomorrow's funeral service leaders must be adaptable and open to change—responding to workforce pressures, evolving consumer expectations, and regulatory challenges—while fostering collaboration and investing in the future of compassionate care.

*"Attending this leadership academy has created the opportunity to sharpen my vision, connect with inspiring minds, and ignite actionable growth."* —

Kyle Eveland, 2024 Tri-State Leadership Academy Participant

## OVERVIEW

### Fees ✦

- Registration fee is \$1,500
- Fee includes group meals during each of the in-person sessions.

### Format ✦

The six-month Leadership Academy will meet in person at each of the Tri-State association offices, with an every other month Zoom meeting. (schedule below)

### Perks ✦

- Each academy graduate receives a complimentary registration to each of the association's conventions.
- **Optional:** Each academy participant will receive a complimentary registration to the NFDA Leadership Conference in Louisville, KY, August 2-5. This opportunity is made possible by the Ohio Funeral Education Foundation.

## CONTENT

- Burnout
- Supplier Relations
- Work/Life Balance
- Recruitment & Retention
- Servant Leadership
- Celebrant Utilization
- Leadership
- Marketing
- Embalming
- Celebrant Utilization
- Self-Image
- Consumer Behavior
- Media
- Communication
- Emotional Intelligence
- Teamwork
- Cremation
- Succession
- Hospitality
- Business Operations
- Personality Assessment
- Crucial Conversations

**Approximately 15 hours of CE included for the 2026 calendar year.**

## FORMAT



Virtual



In-Person

## ACADEMY LEADER



### Tom Sproles, CFSP

Funeral Director & Co-Owner,  
Sproles Family Funeral Home

Tom is a graduate of the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science and holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Indiana Wesleyan University.

A speaker, trainer, and coach with the Maxwell Leadership Team, he presents nationwide on hospitality and leadership.

## SCHEDULE

✦ = In-Person

July 15 & 16, 2026 ✦

### In-Person Session

Ohio Funeral Directors Association (OFDA) Office

August 11, 2026

### Virtual Session

September 16 & 17, 2026 ✦

### In-Person Session

Funeral Directors Association of Kentucky (FDAK) Office

October 14 & 15, 2026 ✦

### In-Person Session

Indiana Funeral Directors Association (IFDA) Office

November 19, 2026

### Virtual Session

December 14 & 15, 2026 ✦

### In-Person Session

CCMS

Apr 27 - 29, 2027 ✦

### OFDA Convention

May 24 - 27, 2027 ✦

### IFDA Convention

June 22-23, 2027 ✦

### FDAK Convention



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*"The Tri-State Leadership program has helped me understand the blind spots I have in my own leadership style, and through reflection and practice I hope to put into place what I have learned to become a better leader for our team, and association."* —

**Geoffrey Gompf, 2024 Tri-State Leadership Academy Participant**

## MEET SOME OF OUR SPEAKERS



### John T. Hill

John is a licensed undertaker in seven states, serves as Clinical Coordinator for Pierce Mortuary Colleges—including Gupton-Jones, Dallas Institute, and Mid-America—and works with James Funeral Home and Northlake Memorial Gardens in North Carolina. As owner of Hill Mortuary Service & Seminars, he provides trade embalming and continuing education nationwide. In 2024, he founded the RESTORE Program to promote excellence in embalming, restorative art, and open casket viewing, and he contributes monthly to the Nomis Publications Funeral Home & Cemetery Newspaper, where he authors a featured column titled "Embalming in Today's World." Passionate about advancing funeral service, John mentors and inspires current and aspiring professionals to serve with skill, compassion, and purpose while keeping the art and practice of embalming relevant and meaningful.



### Poul Lemasters, Esq

Poul has worked in the funeral profession for over 30 years and holds funeral director and embalmers licenses in several states. As an attorney, Poul is admitted to practice law in several states as well. His work focuses in deathcare advising on funeral home, cemetery, and crematory issues across the country. He is a renowned keynote speaker who has addressed audiences across North America. As an author, Poul has published hundreds of articles covering all aspects of deathcare and is also the author of the risk management book, "Cover Your Ass - The Ultimate Guide to Protecting Your Business." Poul works directly with practitioners, and also serves as counsel for several associations including the National Concrete Burial Association, the Catholic Cemeteries Conference, and General Counsel for the International Cemetery Cremation and Funeral Association.



### Leili McMurrough

Leili McMurrough serves as president of Worsham College of Mortuary Science, one of the nation's largest mortuary science programs. A licensed funeral director/embalmer and attorney, she co-owns McMurrough Funeral Chapel, chairs the ABFSE Committee on Accreditation, and is a trustee of the Funeral Service Foundation. A national speaker on workforce development, licensure, and education, Leili is recognized for providing practical, field-tested tools that help funeral homes build strong, effective teams. In recognition of her leadership and innovation, she received the 2024 NFDA Inspiration Award.



### Lacy Robinson

Lacy brings nearly 20 years of experience developing customer service training for funeral home professionals. She is an instructor at Worsham College of Mortuary Science, teaching Fundamentals of Customer Service, and provides training for Johnson Consulting Group clients. She also co-authored "Engaging the Heart of Hospice: Making Funeral and Memorial Services an Extension of Hospice Care" with Greg Grabowski. A licensed funeral director/embalmer and certified funeral celebrant, Lacy has served on the Selected Independent Funeral Homes Educational Trust and the APFSP Board of Trustees. She holds degrees from Georgetown College and Mid-America College of Funeral Service, as well as an MBA in Bourbon Tourism and Event Planning from Midway University. She volunteers with Hosparus Health in Louisville, Kentucky, and founded the Bourbon Legends Tour.



### Ryan Thogmartin

Ryan is a driven entrepreneur who is passionate about creating positive change and making a difference. He is a forward-thinking leader who is constantly exploring new ways to innovate and break the status quo. As the founder of UnKommon Empire and CEO of DISRUPT Media, a two-time Inc. 5000 company, he's developed expertise in relationship marketing and lead generation, as well as cultivating change in stagnant fields. This work has helped businesses scale and create millions of dollars in revenue.

*Full speaker lineup announced at a later date.*