

FUNERAL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

Honouring lives lived.

Apprenticeship & Mentoring Program

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Honouring lives lived.

Personal. Connecting. Meaningful. Mentoring.
Rewarding. Compassion. These are words Funeral Service
Professionals use to describe the personal satisfaction
they receive in their daily activities.



To give solace to grieving families. Helping celebrate
the life of someone you never met. Or bringing closure to
a tragic situation and assisting siblings in reconnecting.



THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE MANY REWARDS OF
BEING A FUNERAL SERVICE PROFESSIONAL. AND THROUGH
THE WORDS OF THE PEOPLE YOU WILL MEET HERE,
WE HOPE TO INSPIRE YOU TO CONSIDER EMBARKING ON
THIS AS A CAREER CHOICE, OR TO GIVE BACK TO YOUR
PROFESSION AS A MENTOR.

Satisfaction.

I was introduced to funeral service through a personal loss and was intrigued by the behind the scenes efforts of all the funeral staff preparing for and conducting the service. The funeral services profession has exceeded all my expectations and having a mentor to guide me has given me the courage, insight, and strength to achieve skills far beyond what I ever imagined.



GISELLE BELLEC (APPRENTICE) & ROBERT LINKLATER (MENTOR)
VICTORY MEMORIAL PARK FUNERAL CENTRE, SURREY



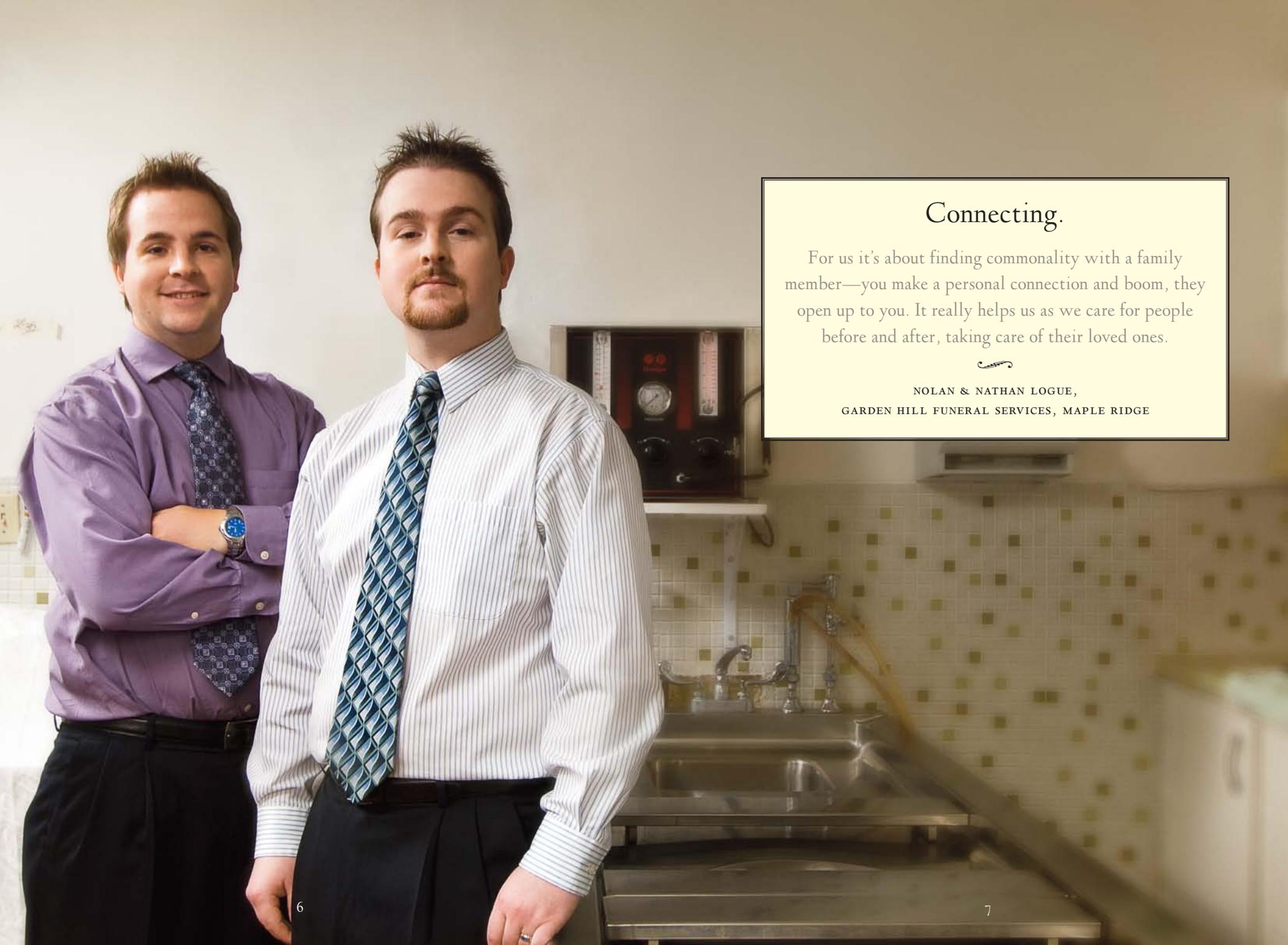


Personal.

As a fourth generation funeral director I know the importance of celebrating and honouring the life of each and every person. Funeral service has allowed me to provide a meaningful closure for many families from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and involvement in professional funeral associations and community groups has enhanced my own personal growth. After 25 years I can honestly say that funeral service was the right career choice.



TONY SLAVIN, BELL & BURNABY FUNERAL CHAPEL, BURNABY



Connecting.

For us it's about finding commonality with a family member—you make a personal connection and boom, they open up to you. It really helps us as we care for people before and after, taking care of their loved ones.



NOLAN & NATHAN LOGUE,
GARDEN HILL FUNERAL SERVICES, MAPLE RIDGE

A woman with dark hair, wearing a black suit jacket over a white collared shirt, stands in a hallway. The hallway has a warm, golden light, possibly from a stained glass window in the distance. The walls appear to be lined with wooden panels or lockers.

Meaningful.

As a former event coordinator at a five star hotel, I always noticed how much money people were spending on big events or vacations that come and go. Today, I'm able to apply my expertise to much more meaningful events—final celebrations of life.



ATHENA THODORAKIS, OCEAN VIEW FUNERAL HOME, BURNABY



Mentoring.

I believe that experienced directors and managers have a responsibility to coach apprentices and new directors and draw out their talent and skills, the ones they don't know exist within them, to help them to see what they *can* be instead of what they currently are.



MARION DICKSON, FRASER HEIGHTS CHAPEL, SURREY

Rewarding.

It was after the death of my grandmother that I first experienced how a good funeral director can really help a family during a very difficult time. At the time I was searching for a more meaningful way of working with people and I realized that I could get real satisfaction from this profession. The apprenticeship was rigorous and gave me a thorough grounding to help me be an effective funeral director. It's been very rewarding and I recommend our profession to anyone who feels called to help others.



ANDREW KNAPMAN, FOREST LAWN FUNERAL HOME, BURNABY



Who are Funeral Service Professionals?



Funeral service professionals work in funeral homes in many different capacities and roles. Funeral professionals are caring and empathetic people that walk with the bereaved through one of life's most difficult journeys. Funeral professionals also aid the bereaved in one of the most daunting but rewarding tasks: final care of their loved ones.

THE FUNERAL DIRECTOR

The funeral director is a professional caregiver who enables families and communities to celebrate a life and provide support for the living by:

- Helping the bereaved during the initial stages of their grief.
- Assisting with planning meaningful services and ceremonies in which people of different faiths and cultures express their feelings and practice their beliefs.
- Carrying out administrative and logistical tasks required by law, custom and acceptable practice.

THE EMBALMER

Throughout history, care and respect for the dead has been reflected in a deep respect for those who have chosen a career of caring for the physical needs of the dead and for the psychological needs of those who mourn their passing.

Today, the duties of the embalmer are regarded as sacred tasks and must be performed in a dignified and professional manner. It is the duty of the embalmer to disinfect, preserve and restore the deceased so that the health of the public will be protected while creating a pleasant memory picture for the bereaved. Viewing the deceased can provide reality and offer the first step of a healthy grief experience.

How do I become a Funeral Service Professional?



There are two main ways to enter the funeral service profession: apprenticeship and foundation programs.

APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeship has been the standard form of training and development in funeral service for many years in British Columbia. A candidate for apprenticeship must first gain employment at a funeral home before embarking on the formal training program. Once the candidate and the employer feel ready to advance to formal training the student is enrolled as an apprentice.

Apprenticeship in the Funeral Director and Embalmer professions is a two-year program designed and funded under the authority of the Industry Training Authority (ITA) and delivered by the Funeral Service Association of British Columbia (FSABC). The apprentice is guided through academic study and workplace training by a mentor and instructors using standardized training and assessment materials to ensure consistent experience and competency achievement. The Program is designed so that the potential candidate may remain employed and working full time while training to gain qualification. Academic study is delivered through classroom instruction, internet delivery and work experience. The workplace training is guided by a co-worker (mentor) using ITA designed guidelines and assessments.

MENTOR & APPRENTICE

Success in an apprenticeship program relies on a strong relationship between the apprentice and mentor. A mentor has the rewarding and fulfilling task of guiding the apprentice through practical experience, aiding the apprentice day-by-day in the application of the academic learning and sharing his or her own experience.

The apprentice takes on the responsibility of learning the material presented in on-line lessons and textbooks, relaying it to his or her mentor and then applying it to the job. For the duration of the program, the apprentice is exposed to a vast and varied amount of information and experience from mentors and instructors. It is the apprentice's responsibility to glean as much of this as they can over the course of the program.

This two year relationship between apprentice and mentor often leads to a life long professional affiliation of sharing and professional growth.

THE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

The formal training program consists of two equally important parts: academic study and practical (work place) experience. In the apprenticeship program these occur simultaneously over a given period of time.

ACADEMIC STUDY

The academic calendar is divided into two terms and runs from September through to the end of June. Enrollment is continuous for a two-year (24 month) period. Students take Level 1 courses in the first year and Level 2 courses in the second year. Each academic year for both levels begins in September with a three-day orientation seminar; a three-day winter term seminar is held in January; and a final two weeks of classroom seminars occurs in June. At the completion of this session, students write final examinations for each level in each subject. During each term the student will have access to on-line lectures, quizzes, communication and guided reading.

TECHNICAL TRAINING CONTENT FOR THE FUNERAL DIRECTOR & EMBALMER CERTIFICATION:

Level 1	Level 2
Dying, Death & Disposition 1	Dying, Death & Disposition 2
Funeral Practices 1	Funeral Practices 2
Funeral Law 1	Funeral Law 2
Funeral Service Ethics	Business Management
Anatomy & Physiology 1	Anatomy & Physiology 2
Safety, Sanitation & Hygiene 1	Safety, Sanitation & Hygiene 2
Communications 1	Communications 2
Embalming Theory 1	Embalming Theory 2
Funeral Experience 1	Funeral Experience 2
Embalming Experience 1	Embalming Experience 2

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

A Funeral Director and/or Embalmer apprenticeship requires two years of on-the-job training in addition to the formal academic study. Each year consists of full time on the job training, usually working with or being supervised by a qualified licensed journey person. On-the-job training provides an opportunity for students to put into practice the theory that they learn in the classroom and lab environments. An apprentice usually spends 80% of his or her time learning on the job and 20% learning the technical skills in a classroom environment.

Practical experience is monitored through an apprentice log book, mentor and peer guidelines and assessor guidelines. Required abilities for funeral service apprentices include:

- *Cognitive* and critical thinking abilities.
- *Interpersonal* abilities which are sufficient to interact purposefully and effectively with others.
- *Communication* abilities which are sufficient to convey thoughts in verbal and written form so that they are understood by others.
- *Physical mobility* which is sufficient to fulfill classroom, clinical and program objectives safely and effectively.

Frequently Asked Questions



FOUNDATION PROGRAM

A new and exciting entry to the funeral service professions is offered by the Foundation Program. This option is intended to provide an introduction to the basic theory needed for study/employment in the Funeral Service Profession prior to securing employment as an Embalmer, Funeral Director or both. The program is delivered in a variety of formats combining in-school and on-line training, all designed to meet the competency standards of a Level 1 apprentice.

Upon completion of the Foundation Program, graduates will need to find employment, register as a Level 2 apprentice and complete the work experience requirement for Level 1 and Level 2 of their chosen program.

What are the benefits of hiring an apprentice?

- Training apprentices is the best insurance against future shortages of skilled workers in your firm and the funeral services profession.
- Apprentices are trained by your funeral home's "mentor" and they inherit the skills and unique values that represent your firm.
- Apprentices learn new skills that help to:
 - Increase productivity and quality,
 - Improve customer satisfaction,
 - Improve morale by investing in careers and adding value to the job.

How do I find an Apprentice?

- Contact the Funeral Service Association of BC (FSABC),
- Recruit someone you know or who has been recommended to you,
- Advertise the position in a local paper or on the FSABC website (www.bcfunerals.com).

Apprenticeship is a partnership of the worker, employer, the FSABC and the Industry Training Authority. The success of the apprenticeship system is based on the history of cooperation and the willingness of each group to work for the benefit of all.

What does it cost to employ an Apprentice?

Wages for Funeral Service apprenticeships vary according to certain characteristics, i.e. years of school completed, the type of Apprenticeship, etc. A Funeral Service Apprentice is usually paid a training wage or an apprentice wage. You will generally treat the Funeral Service Apprentice in the same way as all your employees in relation to employee benefits and workers' compensation. As a mentor who has invested in the training of Apprentice, you and your apprentice may sign an employee contract agreement. An on-line Employer Management Toolkit of resources, tools and templates can be downloaded from the FSABC website.

What options do I have in employing an apprentice?

The FSABC can arrange for you to share a BC Funeral Services Apprentice with another business if you don't have enough work for an ongoing or full-time position. You can also engage an apprentice part-time while he or she is completing the new Funeral Services Foundation Program. The selection of an apprentice remains up to you in either case.

What are the Program Options?

- Funeral Service Foundation Program (no employment required/ theory equivalent to Level One)
- Level One Embalmer & Funeral Director – workplace training and theory (1,800 hrs per level)
- Level Two Embalmer & Funeral Director – workplace training and theory (1,800 hrs per level)

Where are the classes held?

Classes are typically held in the Greater Vancouver area. The FSABC rents classroom space usually at a post-secondary training institution. Before you begin the theoretical component of the program (classroom and online studies) you must first be employed full time at a funeral home as an apprentice embalmer/funeral director. The Foundation Program is a pre-employment program and therefore employment is not required.

I have some more questions about apprenticeship or mentoring.

Who do I contact?

The FSABC is the Training Service Provider for the BC Funeral Services Apprenticeship Program and under agreement with the Industry Training Authority who funds a portion of the apprentice's tuition fees. The FSABC contracts with quality instructors to deliver the funeral services programs. Any questions should be directed to:

Funeral Service Association of British Columbia
Suite 211, 2187 Oak Bay Avenue, Victoria, BC V8R 1G1
Tel: 1 800 665 3899 or 250 592 3213
E-mail: info@bcfunerals.com

Experience.

Many years ago when I chose to become a funeral director/embalmer there were dedicated funeral professionals who devoted their time, knowledge and experience to help me develop my own skills. It is now my privilege to mentor and pass 'the torch' to those individuals who want to become the best that they can be and to realize that funeral service is far more than a career but a 'way of life.'



ROBERT LINKLATER (MENTOR) & GISELLE BELLEC (APPRENTICE)
VICTORY MEMORIAL PARK FUNERAL CENTRE, SURREY
(on the cover)



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