

**LOUISVILLE, KY. WDRD NEWS-- Students study the business of death with funeral service degree.**

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Students at Mid-America College of Funeral Service preparing for a career in funeral industry. Find out about the unique lessons taught at Mid-America College. **Watch Now --WDRD News:**

<http://www.wdrb.com/story/31214549/students-study-the-business-of-death-with-funeral-service-degree> (PDF)

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (WDRB)-- In an uncertain job market, there's nothing more certain than the business of death. Students in Jeffersonville, Indiana are preparing for a career in the funeral industry at the Mid-America College of Funeral Service.

Student Nicole Miller spends her day adding a light layer of foundation to a mannequin, paying attention to every detail.

"Really you just have to keep adding some pinks and browns together to get a color that's not too bright but not too light," said Miller.

While her clients might not notice if the look is flawless, their families surely will.

"It's just more comforting when your loved one looks like when you last saw them," said Miller.

The mannequin she's working on is reminiscent of the deceased. That's because the 19 year-old is in her last month at Mid-America College of Funeral Service, where lectures held in the same room as caskets is the norm. The restorative arts lab is like any other classroom, but here students work to recreate the living by molding entire body parts for a passing grade.

"I am creating an ear from modeling wax using sculpting tools," said senior Zach McDonald.

These students are part of the changing face of the mortuary industry. Most students are in their late teens or early 20s. The students often deal with misconceptions about the business.

"No, the deceased do not stand up straight on the embalming table. That's one that we always get," said senior Samuel Lange.

Despite the subject matter, the school is far from depressing. Students are eager to learn the ins and outs of this longstanding tradition.

"You're part counselor because you're dealing with grieving families. You're part business owner because for the most part the idea is to have your own funeral home. But the third part would be very heavy on science. The embalming, the cremation," said Mike Moeller, admissions representative with the college.

To graduate, students must embalm ten bodies. That's done off site, but the theory is learned in the classroom. While cremation is gaining in popularity, students like Samuel Lange still learn the more conventional method of embalming. He decided at just 10 years old the funeral industry was for him.

"My grandfather passed away in 2006 and I was having a really tough time with it and the funeral director had some words of wisdom with me at the visitation," said Lange.

He hopes to go on to operate his own funeral home.

"You're not guaranteed a job, but if you have a focus and you go into school with that focus in mind I think it ups your chances of getting that job that you want," said Moeller.

For most of the students, it's more than a job, but a special calling to serve.

"We give closure to the family because a lot of people think 'oh you're having a funeral' and it's for the deceased, but it's not. It's for the family. It's to bring closure to the family," said McDonald.

Mid-America College of Funeral Service will be hosting an open house on Saturday, March 5 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.