2017 ANNUAL REPORT
INTRODUCTION

On behalf of The Conference, its board of directors, staff, and tireless volunteers, it is a privilege to present the 2017 Annual Report to the many shareholders of this organization. Contained within, you will find a mere representation of the countless hours of work given to the cause of improving funeral service and its Regulation throughout the United States and Canada. When many of us began our time at The Conference, its purpose was only vaguely understood. Most knew of the National Board Exam, but few of us understood the work behind it. As you examine this report, I hope you will reflect on the efforts of those volunteers that took part in that work, through the development of a Job Task Analysis, standard setting and item writing. Upon returning to your member boards, associate member institutions and associations, we challenge you to share your knowledge of the breadth of The Conference’s work, beyond just the exam. We are certain that you will continue to encourage your colleagues to find in us a repository of information, best practices, and model documents. It is only through the cooperation of our stakeholders that we can continue our century long tradition of serving the regulation of the funeral profession and the public that call on them in their time of need.

From all of us at The Conference, thank you for the important work that you do.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Ransford
President

Dalene Paull
Executive Director
ABOUT ICFSEB

Strategic Plan
The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards is a not-for-profit voluntary association providing examination services, information, and regulatory support to funeral service licensing boards and educators, governmental bodies and other regulatory agencies.

Vision Statement
To be the collective voice of the funeral service regulatory community and promote excellence in regulation through the sharing of best practices and the facilitation of open dialogues across all jurisdictions.

Mission Statement
To be the premier source for examination services, information and regulatory support for the death care profession by continually monitoring the regulatory environment and providing services to meet the needs of our membership.

Goals
- Define and enhance the identity and the role of The Conference to increase stakeholder understanding.
- Increase the effectiveness of The Conference through the development of the Board and staff.
- Enhance and expand communication to member boards, associate members, and exam candidates for understanding the purpose of The Conference.
- Expand and enhance The Conference member services to support the regulatory community.

The Conference membership includes all 50 US states, D.C., and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Saskatchewan.
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
Regulated JURISDICTIONS

NATIONAL BOARD EXAM (NBE) ACCEPTANCE

Regulated State - Accepts NBE
Non-Regulated State*

*NBE scores are transmitted to the Colorado Funeral Directors Association for use in their voluntary certification program.
JOB TASK ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (Conference) develops and administers the National Board Examination (NBE), which provides official licensing agencies with a national evaluation of an applicant for licensure in the diverse areas of competency required for the field of funeral service. The Conference develops, administers and provides score reporting services to the state licensure boards. A fundamental requirement for best practices in testing is to conduct a formal Job Task Analysis (JTA) every five to seven years to ensure the examination reflects current practice.

The test development process is designed to employ best practices and psychometric analysis at every step. In order to develop and maintain an examination that is legally defensible for use in any U.S. jurisdiction and ensures national standards for entry-level safe practice, the test development process must include a JTA. Through the creation of a survey, the JTA identifies the knowledge and skills required for one to be competent to practice in the field of funeral service.

The 2017 survey was deployed online from June 5, 2017 until July 7, 2017. The Conference sent email invitations to participate in the JTA survey to individuals who had taken the NBE, and members of all regulatory boards for distribution among their licensees. Professional associations were invited to disseminate the survey to their members. Social media posts, support from industry publications, and prominent placement on the Conference website were also used to encourage survey participation.

Only licensed and practicing funeral directors and/or embalmers were eligible to participate in the survey. These licensees noted the frequency with which they personally perform various tasks. Each task was also given a rating of importance specific to entry level practice. The information gained through this survey was used to create the future blueprint for the examination. Thus, the exam reflects the reality of practice and the knowledge required to perform in a safe and competent manner.
As a result, the blueprint for the NBE was updated with a release date of January 1, 2018.

The test specifications are as follows:

**NBE Arts Domains (As of January 1, 2018)**
- Funeral Arranging and Directing (51 items)
- Funeral Service Marketing/Merchandising (21 items)
- Funeral Service Counseling (22 items)
- Legal and Regulatory Compliance (36 items)
- Cemetery and Crematory Operations (20 items)
- Pretest (20 items)

**NBE Science Domains (As of January 1, 2018)**
- Embalming (58 items)
- Restorative Art (34 items)
- Preparation for Disposition (31 items)
- Funeral Service Sciences (27 items)
- Pretest (20 items)

**NBE Arts Domains (September 1, 2012 - December 31, 2017)**
- Funeral Directing (52 items)
- Funeral Service Marketing/Merchandising (22 items)
- Funeral Service Counseling (23 items)
- Regulatory Compliance (38 items)
- Cemetery and Crematory Operations (15 items)
- Pretest (20 items)

**NBE Science Domains (September 1, 2012 - December 31, 2017)**
- Embalming (60 items)
- Restorative Art (38 items)
- Preparation for Disposition (22 items)
- Funeral Service Sciences (30 items)
- Pretest (20 items)
The Conference is committed to the principle of testing individuals in a manner that will yield valid and reliable examination results. In some instances, the examination administration procedures may need to be modified to provide reasonable accommodations for candidates who qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act. To learn more about the accommodation process, please visit: theconferenceonline.org/requestada
2017 NBE Statistics
January 1 - December 31, 2017

Arts Exams Administered

1,722
Total

1,307
First Time Attempts

989 Passed (76%)
318 Failed (24%)

415
Retake Attempts

197 Passed (47%)
218 Failed (53%)
2017 ANNUAL REPORT

2017 NBE Statistics
January 1 - December 31, 2017

Sciences Exams Administered

1,671 Total

1,289 First Time Attempts

1,019 Passed (79%)
270 Failed (21%)

382 Retake Attempts

134 Passed (35%)
248 Failed (65%)
State Board Exams administered in 18 states in 2017

537

Laws, Rules, Regulations Exams administered in 14 states in 2017

923
The study guides published by The Conference assist in preparation for the National Board Examination (NBE) and the State Board Examination (SBE). In 2017, 956 National Board Exam study guides were purchased along with 328 State Board Exam study guides. Each guide includes professional expectations, content outlines, sample questions, and glossary terms.

Laws, Rules, and Regulation Examination study guides are an added feature The Conference is able to produce on behalf of a state. Please check the website for study material regarding Laws, Rules, and Regulations exams.
STUDY MATERIAL

The Practice National Board Exam (PNBE) and Practice State Board Exam (PSBE) provide a realistic experience of the licensing examination(s). Featuring 75 multiple choice questions, the single use exam provides an overall percentage score as well general feedback for content areas in which items were answered incorrectly.

- **770** PNBE ARTS purchased in 2017
- **767** PNBE SCIENCE purchased in 2017
- **166** PSBE ARTS purchased in 2017
A revised edition of the Candidate Handbook was published in May 2017. An online version is available for immediate download at theconferenceonline.org. Copies are available upon request as well.

As the repository of over 100,000 National Board Exam records, The Conference processes and distributes certified results for individual licensure to various funeral boards daily.

674 CERTIFIED EXAM RESULT ORDERS
Processed in 2017
REGULATIONS IN LICENSING

The Conference received a 100% participation rate from its 56 members in completion of the updated Regulations in Licensing book. New categories were added including:

- requirement of background checks
- crematory operator training
- alkaline hydrolysis regulation

This publication was mailed to the membership and shared on our website in June 2017.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMMUNICATION

We are pleased to offer membership polling as an added benefit for our members. The Conference periodically conducts polls on behalf of a jurisdiction on topics where information is needed quickly.

From January - December 2017, The Conference polled its 56 members on 14 topics. The questions generated a total of 301 responses that were collected, organized, and sent back to the requesting boards for analysis and review.
MODEL PRACTICE ACT

The Conference Model Practice Act Review Committee conducted a full review of the Model Practice Act for Funeral Service (MPA) in 2016 and 2017. The amended version was adopted on March 1, 2017 at the 113th Annual Meeting. The purpose of the Model Act is to facilitate the protection of the public by providing legal mechanisms that establish and provide for the enforcement of uniform standards.

MODEL INTERNSHIP - UNDER CONSTRUCTION

In continuing the model documents series, a multi-faceted committee of seven individuals was formed in the fall of 2017 to create a best practice model internship program. The committee is composed of professionals who represent:

Licensees
State Boards
Associations
Mortuary Science Programs

More information will be forthcoming in the fall of 2018.
CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Conference awarded 45 certificates to licensees from 25 jurisdictions during the 113th Annual Meeting in Hilton Head, South Carolina. A total of 19.75 credit hours were possible during the event including Board Member Training. The Conference was pleased to be approved by 23 jurisdictions and the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice (APFSP).

BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

The Board Member Training session was held in conjunction with the 113th Annual Meeting of The Conference on February 28 & March 1, 2017 in Hilton Head, South Carolina. The Conference was proud to add the following names to the Board Member Training graduate list:

- Donna Amaro | MT
- Reynolds Baldwin, Jr. | PA
- D’Michelle DuPre | SC
- Charles Graves | NC
- Charvis Gray | SC
- Richard Little | WA
- Calvin Meadows | AL
- Mia Mimms | VA
- Craig Olive | NC
- Jill Pugh | OH
- Jon Rettig | OH
- Lucy Richards | MT
- John C. Rudder | AL
- Cameron Smock | WA
- Corie Tillman Wolf | VA
- William Wappner | OH
- Asanti Williams | DC

482 CEU CREDIT HOURS AWARDED in 2017
FINANCIAL REPORT
INCOME

Examination Services
$1,345,720

Membership Services & Annual Meeting
$28,127

Miscellaneous
$5,594
2017 ANNUAL REPORT

EXPENSES

- Administration & Testing: $1,036,078
- Travel & Meetings: $188,860
- Legal: $330,543
- Program Support: $60,710
WEBSITE

The ICFSEB website, theconferenceonline.org, remains the foremost resource for individuals seeking information about ICFSEB and the exam programs. In 2017, the website hosted approximately **251,499** page views.

SOCIAL MEDIA

ICFSEB shares organizational news and regulatory information with the profession via its social media presence. In 2017, ICFSEB saw growth in its social media following.

Follow ICFSEB on all social media channels.
ICFSEB distributes newsletters bi-annually and e-newsletters every other month focusing on providing the regulatory community, educators, and other funeral service professionals with Conference updates. To be added to our mailing list, please email info@theconferenceonline.org.
Volunteers
VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

The Conference Board of Directors would like to express its sincere appreciation to the committee volunteers for their time and effort in furtherance of the 2017 Conference goals. As a member-driven organization, the work of The Conference would not be possible without the dedication of these invaluable partners. From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU!
2017-2018 Board of Directors

President & District 7 Director
Edward Muhleisen
Member, Louisiana State Board of Embalmers & Funeral Directors
E-mail: edward@theconferenceonline.org

Vice President & District 5 Director
Sandy Sebastian
Executive Director, Missouri State Board of Embalmers & Funeral Directors
E-mail: ssebastian@theconferenceonline.org

Secretary/Treasurer & District 4 Director
Mark Ransford, CFSP
Member, Michigan Board of Examiners in Mortuary Science
E-mail: mark@theconferenceonline.org

Past President & District 8 Director
A.R. “Sandy” Mahon
Registrar, Funeral & Cremation Services Council of Saskatchewan
E-mail: sandy@theconferenceonline.org

District 1 Director
Robert N. Barnes, CFSP
Member, Maine State Board of Funeral Service
E-mail: bob@theconferenceonline.org

District 2 Director
Blair H. Nelsen
Member, Virginia Board of Funeral Directors & Embalmers
E-mail: blair@theconferenceonline.org

District 3 Director
Charles Perine, CFSP
Executive Secretary, Alabama Board of Funeral Service
E-mail: charles@theconferenceonline.org

District 6 Director
Douglas “Mack” Smith
Executive Secretary, Kansas State Board of Mortuary Arts
E-mail: mack@theconferenceonline.org

District 9 Director
Bart R. Burton
Member, Nevada State Funeral & Cemetery Services Board
E-mail: bart@theconferenceonline.org

Executive Director
Dalene Paull
director@theconferenceonline.org
2017-2018 COMMITTEES

EXAMINATION
ARTS
Keri Haines, Chair | Oklahoma
Barbara Kazmierczak | Massachusetts
Harvey Leavitt | North Carolina
Victoria Monforte | California
John Rice | Nebraska
Craig Stires | Ohio

SCIENCE
Don O’Guinn, Chair | Michigan
Virginia Bryant | Tennessee
Brevin Clifford | Washington
Mark Fisher | Virginia
Patricia Traffas | Kansas
Laura Zabel | Colorado

MODEL INTERNSHIP
Jennifer Kandt, Chair | Nevada
Randall Anderson | Alabama
Suzanne Gebel | Iowa
James Marrocco | New Jersey
Leili McMurrough | Illinois
Blair Nelsen | Virginia
Bill Vallie | Texas

JOB TASK ANALYSIS
Randall Anderson | Alabama
Zach Carnley | Texas
Brevin Clifford | Washington
Mark Evely | Michigan
Steve Gordon | Idaho
Jolena Grande | California
Keri Haines | Oklahoma
Leili McMurrough | Illinois
Mia Mimms | Virginia
Robert Moore | New Jersey
Paul Warren | Connecticut

STANDARD SETTING
Sheila Barcus | Missouri
Arlillian Bushelon | Alabama
Delbrita Greene | Tennessee
Lindsey Jeffries | Oklahoma
James “Vince” Larkin | Washington
Edward Muhleisen | Louisiana
Michelle Olson | Connecticut
Keith Parsell | Delaware
Mark Ransford | Michigan
Jerri Reed-Taylor | Illinois
Mike Shorter, Jr. | Florida

STUDY MATERIAL
Mark Evely, Chair | Michigan
Stephen Crawford | California
Karen Davis | Arkansas
Mark Fisher | Virginia
David Hess | Utah
Barbara Kazmierczak | Massachusetts
Melissa Christiansen-Kloss | Kentucky