

Michael S. Burns

After graduating from PIMS in 1987, Mike enjoyed an active at-need and pre-need career in Funeral Service for 28 years. He and his wife of 31 years and their three children still in Pittsburgh where Mike recently joined the faculty and administration of the Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science. In addition to his duties at the school, he is attending Point Park University to earn a Master's degree in Education, specialization in Adult Learning.

"It is now my turn to take all the wisdom and knowledge I have amassed in funeral service and share it with the next generation of young professionals," Mike said.

Sean M. Krasner has been a resident of Toms River, NJ for all 32+ years of his life. Sean and his wife of 7 years, Jessica, are proud parents of two adorable children, Jacob and Noah (3 1/2 and 1 1/2 years old). "Raising a small family and continuing my education would not have been possible without the aid of everyone - my parents, in-laws, and especially my wife. I look forward to a rewarding new career in funeral service, where I intend to pay back all of the good fortune and social support I have received. Michael Daley and the staff at MCCC have certainly made an impact on me, and I intend to make them, and everyone else involved in my journey, proud."

Lily Buerkle spent the first twenty-something years of her life in Atlanta, Georgia and was shaped tremendously by Atlanta's very diverse denizens. She attended Georgia Southern University where she studied International Business and Spanish. Post college, she worked in business development, operations, sales, management, and non-profit fundraising. About two years ago, she finally decided to pursue her dream job. Getting her foot in the door was not easy and she chose to study online at Commonwealth Institute because it was the most reasonable way to pursue this new career, while balancing her work in an independent D.C. area funeral home, and her life as a wife, and mother to two girls, ages 4 and 6. Lily is honored to be serving families in Washington D.C. and is truly grateful for the support of the NFDA and ABFSE scholarship program.

Gregory Burton

Born and educated in Indiana, Greg earned a bachelor's degree in History at the University of Montana. He worked in a sporting goods store, became a licensed fly fishing guide and spent a total of nine years in Emergency medicine as an EMT and Paramedic. Because family is very important to him, when Greg decided that it was time for a career change he wanted something where he could make a difference in families' lives, so he chose funeral service. The scholarship from the ABSFE has helped to make his goal more attainable and he is humbled and grateful for this honor.

Bailey McCleery graduated with an Associate of Applied Science in Mortuary Science from Carl Sandburg College in Galesburg, Illinois. Prior to enrolling into the Mortuary Science Program, she completed general education classes from Lincoln Land Community College. Growing up in a rural community, Bailey loves the tight-knit feeling and plans on pursuing her career, close to her hometown. In doing so, she will be able to better serve her community professionally and personally.