

Creating an extraordinary and meaningful experience for the families I will be serving has been the source for a great amount of thought and excitement for me throughout mortuary school. My creativity has been brought out through my having been raised in a very small town with only one funeral home that offers few options for personalization. I feel that families deserve more today. They deserve more options, more thoughtfulness, and they deserve to be taken care of in ways that even they would never expect during their time of grief. I have a plan to take care of my community through my unique service to each and every family. The first idea I have for creating a lasting impression is to leave a white rose in the place of death following each removal to facilitate easing the families experience of finding an empty bed in which their loved one last rested. I want to convey that their loved one is in safe hands by calling the family as soon as I have arrived at the funeral home after the removal. I want to reassure them that I understand their concern and that I have the utmost respect for their relationship with the decedent. This idea comes from a common human bond much like many parents that wait up for their child to return home after a night out to make certain of their whereabouts. They will know and have confidence that I will safeguard and care for their loved one which is the basis for a meaningful experience.

When the family arrives for the arrangement conference, they will be given many options, and helped through their selection process. The selection room will be very inviting with warm décor, pictures on the walls, a diverse selection of merchandise with many items being personalized, and accessories in the caskets like a hat, pair of glasses, or shawl. The services for their family member will be tailored to their needs. One example of this is to include anything that may be brought right into the funeral home

such as a motorcycle or painting that may have been owned by the decedent. The night before the service I will be furnishing dinner to the family at their residence to ease the burden before the next day of services and give them an opportunity to ask any questions they may have developed since the arrangement conference. The day of the service I have arranged for the family to come in and bring in their children one hour before the services are to start. The children will have a class, which will teach them and prepare them for the visitation and funeral. This will serve the purpose of not only teaching the children and forming a foundation for the future of finding value in the funeral tradition, but the parents of the children will be appreciative of some time with the decedent prior to their entrance with their children.

The funeral service at the cemetery will have added items that I think convey my genuine concern for the comfort of the family. One example of this is that I have personally designed a chair cover that is multifunctional. The design will allow the chair to be covered beautifully and allow for the family chairs to be identified. The cover is designed to unfold in cold weather so that there are two "flaps" that fold onto one another and open up to be able to wrap up the person sitting in the chair. There also will be weather appropriate drinks at the cemetery for those in attendance at the funeral. The children at the funeral service will be allowed to release helium filled balloons if it is desired. There are so many wonderful and unique ways in which I want to support the families that I will serve. I am always in a pursuit driven by a genuine desire to be a source of comfort in time of need.