

# 2021 Valedictorian Is Crowned During ICCFAU in Atlanta

*Hillside Cemetery's Pamela Brown Receives Coveted Title for Her Five-Year Commitment*

**Pamela Brown has been a cemeterian since 2013. She manages a church-owned, nonprofit cemetery in the bucolic setting of Fairfield County, CT. Hillside Cemetery is composed of 26 acres of rolling hills, old stone walls, and graves dating back to the 1700s.**

**A picture perfect setting, but how does one bring this lovely historic cemetery up to modern standards? By attending ICCFAU! The Colleges of Land Management, 21st Century Services, Leadership, and Hospitality have given Pamela the confidence and skills to expand her business model, establish new community partnerships, and create unique programming events.**

**Pamela is an executive board member of the Connecticut Cemetery Association and a member of the Wilton Historic District Commission. She also serves on the board of directors of the local Chamber of Commerce and is past-president of the Rotary Club. Pamela and her husband, Keith, have four children and reside in Wilton, CT.**

**During this year's ICCFAU, Pamela provided some words of wisdom and appreciation to the association and to the deathcare community at large.**

“THANK YOU SO MUCH for this incredible honor. I am humbled to be standing here among so many pillars of this profession. Five years ago, I was still fairly new to this vocation and I was looking for answers and guidance; a friend recommended that I attend ICCFAU. From the minute I set foot on campus, this journey has been life changing. The first meal I shared was eye-opening.

Just like any freshman, I was shy and uncertain; but at the dinner table, conversation flowed freely about our jobs, challenges—and there was laughter, too! This was the first time I was with a group of people that truly understood what I did.

I was surrounded by smart, funny, loving people. And we all got it; how our work is really a calling, how we are here to serve our fellow humans during their most vulnerable time with respect and dignity.

The experience at ICCFAU has been an absolute gift. The deans and faculty have taught us so much more than business basics. They have taught us the special language of how to communicate with grieving families, how to walk in our customers' shoes, how to manage a diverse team, how to create that WOW factor, how to think outside the box.

These skills are not just applicable at work, but in our personal lives, too.

Freshman, I encourage you to ask questions, introduce yourself to someone new, seek answers to questions you never knew you had. This experience will be the best investment in your professional career and personal life. You will make friends from coast to coast, north to south, and internationally. I treasure the relationships and



friends I have forged during my time here.

Our profession is changing and ICCFAU provides the tools, guidance, and confidence to pave new pathways. So, now I ask my fellow graduates to take this knowledge back to your home states and businesses and become advocates, ambassadors, and leaders in this profession.

Encourage other new cemeterians, funeral directors, owners, and vendors to participate in ICCFAU. This is an incredible opportunity! There is no greater power than knowledge and then sharing it.

This graduating class of 2021 is stellar. I know we will make a difference in the lives of the families we serve. It is truly an honor to be part of this fine profession and part of the ICCFA family.”