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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Ford and Overturf Announced as 2024 Selected Leadership Academy Scholarship Recipients**

LINCOLNSHIRE, IL — March 6, 2024 — The Selected Educational Trust has announced two scholarship recipients for the 2024-2026 class of the Selected Leadership Academy:

- Laten Ford, Townes Funeral Home and Crematory, Danville, VA, recipient of the *2024 Chester T. French Memorial Scholarship*
- Wade Overturf, Smith Family Funeral Homes, North Little Rock, AR, recipient of the *2024 Leadership Academy Scholarship* sponsored by Homesteaders Life Company

These scholarships, valued at more than \$5,000 each, provide the recipient with full two-year tuition plus an annual stipend to participate in the Selected Leadership Academy, a unique and rewarding educational opportunity offered exclusively to members of Selected Independent Funeral Homes. The Academy is a personalized journey for those, no matter title or position, who believe their leadership matters and choose to become better.

"I started working in a funeral home when I was only 16 and decided soon after that funeral directing was my calling in life," said Laten Ford. "It's been an exciting opportunity to become manager of a funeral home at such an early stage in my life and career. It will be just as exciting to become a student in the Academy where I can learn leadership skills that I can apply for the rest of my career."

"I am looking forward to the whole experience of the Leadership Academy and being able to meet and learn from other fantastic funeral professionals," said Wade Overturf. "I am truly thankful for being chosen and look forward to the next step in this journey!"

"Selected's Leadership Academy is a launchpad to great things," stated Stefanie Favia, the Trust's Executive Director. "We are honored to be able to propel these dynamic professionals forward with this opportunity to grow and lead."

For more information about the Selected Educational Trust, visit [www.selectedtrust.org](http://www.selectedtrust.org) or contact Stefanie Favia, Executive Director, at [stefanie@selectedtrust.org](mailto:stefanie@selectedtrust.org).

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### **About the Selected Educational Trust**

The mission of the [Selected Educational Trust](http://www.selectedtrust.org) ([www.selectedtrust.org](http://www.selectedtrust.org)) is to provide the best educational opportunities for the advancement and support of all who work within the independent funeral service profession. To fulfill this mission, the Trust provides programs which offer scholarships to mortuary science students and funeral service professionals, education programs serving to bridge the gap between school and on-the-job training through its [Institute for Exceptional Funeral Service](http://www.funeral-institute.org) ([www.funeral-institute.org](http://www.funeral-institute.org)) and networking and employment opportunities through its *Workforce Development Centers*.

Images included: Headshots of scholarship recipients Laten Ford and Wade Overturf

# CONGRATULATIONS

*2024 Leadership Academy Scholarship Recipients*



Laten Ford



Wade Overturf