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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gunderson Funeral and Cremation Care Pledges Five-Year Sponsorship of Selected Educational Trust's Second-Career Scholarship Program

LINCOLNSHIRE, IL — April 21, 2026 — The Selected Educational Trust is proud to announce that Gunderson Funeral and Cremation Care, Madison, WI, has pledged its support as the five-year sponsor of the Spring Cycle of the Trust's Second-Career Scholarship Program from 2026 through 2030.

This transformative commitment will fund two \$1,500 scholarships annually, awarded each June to aspiring funeral service professionals pursuing education and careers within independent funeral service.

Now in its 16th year, the Second-Career Scholarship Program has awarded more than 60 scholarships to individuals entering funeral service as a second career or later in life. The program was created to meet the educational needs of these professionals—many of whom bring diverse life and career experiences to their roles as funeral directors, embalmers, and future leaders within the profession. In addition to financial support, scholarship recipients benefit from meaningful networking opportunities with member firms of Selected Independent Funeral Homes.

The Trust is especially grateful to Gunderson Funeral and Cremation Care for its continued commitment to this program. The firm previously sponsored the Spring Cycle from 2022 through 2025 and has now renewed its support with this new five-year pledge.

Rachel Gunderson, licensed funeral director with Gunderson Funeral and Cremation Care and former member of the Trust's Board of Trustees (2019–2025), made the commitment as a parting gesture to honor her service and continued belief in the Trust's mission.

“Gunderson Funeral Home is dedicated to investing in the next generation of funeral professionals,” said Gunderson. “We believe the second-career scholarship is an invaluable resource for caring and compassionate individuals, seeking to make a difference in their communities.”

Stefanie Favia, Executive Director of the Selected Educational Trust, emphasized the significance of the pledge: “We are incredibly grateful to Rachel and the entire Gunderson team for their continued investment in this important program. Second-career professionals represent a growing and vital segment of the funeral service profession, and this commitment ensures that we can continue to support their educational journeys and connect them with opportunities to thrive within independent funeral service.”

Applications for the 2026 Gunderson Funeral and Cremation Care Second-Career Scholarships are now being accepted. The submission deadline is May 31. Additional information and application details can be found at: www.selectedtrust.org/second-career-scholarship.

For more information about the Selected Educational Trust, visit www.selectedtrust.org or contact Stefanie Favia at 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) 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 and networking and employment opportunities through its *Workforce Development Centers*, powered by Global Atlantic Financial Group.