

American Cemetery & Cremation

INNOVATORS

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The Faces of Death Care



The Face of Technology

Ronen Rybowski
President & CEO

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Ronen Rybowski, founder of Behar Mapping, is a recognized innovator in the funeral care industry. With a background that bridges enterprise software, geospatial science, and AI, he brings a rare blend of technical expertise and industry insight. His career also includes roles as a speaker, educator, and adjunct professor at NJIT.

At the helm of Behar Mapping, Ronen has led the company to the forefront of cemetery technology, transforming traditional operations through interactive digital mapping, integrated management systems, and comprehensive financial tools. His focus on intuitive design and automation has enabled cemeteries to simplify complex workflows and offer families a more meaningful connection to their loved ones.

Driven by a mission to empower cemeteries, Ronen continues to advance the role of technology in the funeral care space. His work is reshaping the industry — building solutions that enhance operational efficiency while deepening the experience of remembrance.



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The Face of Grounds Maintenance

Marilyn Brandt
*Strategic Partnerships —
Cemeteries*

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<http://davey.com/cemetery>

Marilyn Brandt is a long-time veteran with over 35 years in the cemetery industry. Based in Ohio, she started at Lake View Cemetery in Cleveland as a horticulturalist. Her dedication to cemetery care and management allowed her to move up the ranks to grounds manager and Chief Operations Officer, where she oversaw daily operations.

In 2024, Marilyn joined Davey as a business developer specializing in cemetery landscape maintenance and management. In her role, she gives back to the industry she has been dedicated to for decades by working with cemetery clients to help meet their tree and landscaping goals.

Marilyn is a member of the ICCFA, Ohio Cemetery Association, the Greater Cleveland Cemetery Association, and most recently the International Association of Pet Cemeteries and Crematories.

She enjoys watching sports, even supporting the Cleveland teams, and spending time with her two rescue dogs, Gertie, a chihuahua puggle mix, and Maggie, a miniature goldendoodle.

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The Face of Customer Experience

George Owens
President

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A 20+ year veteran of the profession, George Owens and his Fortitude Research and Marketing team (formerly SoCal Approach) launched Fortitude CXP 5 years ago to create a simple-to-use program that gives death-care professionals a comprehensive understanding about the families they serve and how to better meet their needs.

“Our team has a passion for funeral service and understands the positive impact of customer-centric decision-making,” says Owens. “We know that Fortitude CXP improves operations, helps proactively address reputation management, and drives incremental revenue.”

With more than a decade in the profession preceded by more than a decade at J.D. Power, the world's leading authority on customer satisfaction, George Owens believes he and his team bring a data-driven approach to solving problems. He and his team apply these insights every day to help organizations make better operational and marketing decisions.

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The Face of Metal Recycling

Taylor Johnson
Director of Sales

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As someone passionate about serving the death-care profession, I'm proud to help Garfield Refining deliver ethical, efficient metal recycling to crematories. I come from a background in customer experience, and that foundation shapes everything we do – whether it's helping crematory staff improve recovery, offering fast, dependable results, or just explaining what exactly metal recycling is all about – we're focused on building long-term partnerships grounded in service and support.

Garfield is a family-run business that's been operating since 1892, and that legacy matters deeply to me. For over 130 years, we've worked to preserve what's precious, both in the materials we refine and in the relationships we build. Our mission is simple: offer crematories a sustainable, ethical way to recycle metals while helping them reinvest in their people, communities, and the families they serve.

I'm honored to be a part of that mission and to support this profession every day.

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The Face of Future Grass Technology

Jackson Madnick
President & CEO

**Pearl's Premium Ultra Low
Maintenance Lawn Seed**
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Jackson Madnick is an environmental scientist, educator, and lawn care expert, inventor of Pearl's Premium Ultra Low Maintenance Lawn Seed, now in over 600,000 lawns and 66 cemeteries and 41 funeral homes in all soils and climates. An award-winning, non-GMO, U.S. patented, sustainable grass seed mixture that is People, Pet & Planet Friendly™ for homes, cemeteries, and universities, and most applications to save dramatic time, money, water, and health. It grows so slow, it needs mowing and weed whacking only once a month rather than weekly. Pearl's Premium reduces 75% of lawn watering and eliminates the need for toxic lawn chemicals, to protect children, animals, and drinking water. With more surface area above the soil and 8-foot roots, it sequesters carbon at 12x that of ordinary shallow-root grass to help protect the environment, lessen climate change, and lessen extreme weather.

Winner of 18 national and international awards, Jackson's past environmental work has been commended by two White Houses, The National League of Cities, Vice President Al Gore, astronaut and Senator John Glenn, and the United Nations. Call for a deep discount – 508-653-0800.

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The Face of Perpetual Care Funds

Hayden Burrus

FCAS, MAAA

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25 years ago, Hayden Burrus began studying perpetual care funds and funding issues. He first shared his knowledge through a three-part research series in International Cemetery and Funeral Management magazine in 2001.

Hayden is the most recognized expert in cemetery perpetual care funds. An independent analysis from PerpetualCareAdequacy.com will give management support for its long-term plans for the perpetual care fund. For most cemeteries, the time to perform a perpetual care adequacy analysis is now.

Hayden builds a customized perpetual care fund balance sheet simulation model for each client. He uses that model to simulate each client's perpetual care fund balance sheet 100 years in the future under thousands of different economic, business, and investment environments. This simulation model allows him to determine the probability that the perpetual care fund will still be solvent 100 years in the future. There are no other firms that can determine the probability that a perpetual care fund's business plan will be successful in the very long term.

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The Face of Technology

Mandy Benoualid
Co-Founder & President

Keeper Memorials
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Hamilton, Ontario Canada

www.mykeeper.com

Mandy has dedicated her work to transforming how we remember and celebrate those we've lost. Inspired by her own family history and the realization that every name in a cemetery holds a lifetime of stories, Mandy created Keeper to help families and communities fill in "the dash" – the rich, meaningful life between birth and death.

Since 2013, Keeper has been shaping the future of remembrance – with technology that connects communities and reimagines how we experience cemeteries and funeral homes.

Under Mandy's leadership, Keeper has become more than an online memorial platform – it is a trusted solution for cemetery professionals, supporting everything from preneed sales and marketing to cemetery kiosks and customer engagement.

Mandy notably partners with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to honor over 10 million American Veterans online and leads Keeper's innovative kiosk modernization project across all National Cemeteries.

She also serves as Editor of TalkDeath.com, advocating for death education and awareness.

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