

## **BONNIE McCULLOUGH BECOMES CHAIR OF STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION GROUP**

Albany, NY -- February 9 -- The Empire State Society of Association Executives (ESSAE) has unanimously elected Bonnie L. McCullough, CAE to the post of Chair of the board of directors for 2007-2008 at its annual meeting last evening at the Desmond Hotel in Albany.

Ms. McCullough holds the post of executive director of the Albany-based New York State Funeral Directors Association (NYSFDA). Ms. McCullough holds a B.S. degree in Sociology from the University of Utah and, subsequently, began her association career in Montana. In addition to serving as executive director of the Montana Funeral Directors Association, she held this same post for numerous other Montana state associations, including those representing pharmacists, chiropractors, hotel/motel operators and builders of manufactured homes.

In 1998, she was awarded the designation of Certified Association Executive (CAE) from the American Society of Association Executives. She has maintained this certification -- the highest professional credential for those serving the the association management field -- since that time. In addition, Ms. McCullough is a member of the Board of Directors of the St. Mary's Hospital Foundation in Amsterdam, New York.

ESSAE is comprised of over 550 association and supplier members, and represents executives employed by trade, business and professional associations. ESSAE provides its members a means to exchange ideas and encourages high professional standards through educational programming, publications, industry resources and networking opportunities. It is affiliated with the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) in Washington D.C.

Under Ms. McCullough's stewardship, NYSFDA has grown to become one of the nation's recognized leaders in advocating and providing services for funeral service professionals and the consumers they serve. In her capacity as Executive Director for the past 13 years, she has overseen the creation of both an association credit union and its affiliated charitable/educational 501(c)(3) foundation. In addition, Ms. McCullough initiated and subsequently led the successful development and growth of the association's funeral consumer master trust, operated for the joint benefit of member funeral directors and their consumers, to become the most successful program of its kind in the nation.

Founded in 1889, NYSFDA's mission is to promote the highest standards of funeral service to the public and to enhance the environment in which its members operate. More than 800 funeral firms and their 3000 licensed funeral directors across the state are members of the New York State Funeral Directors Association. In addition to maintaining a Website ([www.nysfda.org](http://www.nysfda.org)), NYSFDA also publishes a newspaper column ("Transitions") and various publications aimed at educating and informing consumers about the many issues surrounding funeral service.

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Editor's Note; For more information or to schedule an interview, please call Vera Nuspliger at 518-882-9816 (or cell 518-424-8719), Bonnie McCullough directly at 518-452-8230 or Penny Murphy, ESSAE Executive Director, at 463-1755.