

## **Funeral Business Advisor Magazine, 9/11/2018**

By Meghan Kelly

Clint Probst

Funeral Business Advisor sat down with Clint Probst, funeral director and owner of Probst Family Funerals in Midway, Utah and Heber Valley Funeral Home in Heber, UT to learn more about his career and experience in the funeral industry.

Did you always want to be a funeral director? When did you get into the industry?

I grew up in a small town in Utah that only had one funeral home. I was always curious about it and wondered what it would be like to work there, but it was never something I thought I would actually pursue. Then when I was 18 years, I had the opportunity to live in Mexico for a few years. While living out of the country, I experienced someone I was close to lose their son in a car accident. After seeing the process they went through, I knew I wanted to take a closer look at the funeral industry when I returned home.

Upon returning home and spending some time researching the industry, my wife Calli and I checked out Mesa Community College and I ultimately enrolled. Once I gave it a shot, I fell in love with this industry. I started working at a local funeral home, and quickly realized that this was the right path for me. I love getting to work with families and build relationships with those in my community – relationships that last.

I am a first generation funeral director and my wife- who is a social worker – and we now own two funeral homes together – Probst Family Funeral Home located in Midway, Utah and Heber Valley Funeral Home located in Heber, Utah.

What makes your funeral homes unique?

We live in a very traditional place here in Utah and most funeral homes here reflect that. When we designed our funeral homes we really aimed to make them feel like home instead of a funeral home. I have worked in some very nice funeral homes over the years, but it didn't matter how nice they were – they still looked and felt like traditional funeral homes. Our goal was to break that mold with our locations.

We want our families to feel at ease when they walk through our doors, just like they would feel when they are at their own homes. We want them to be comfortable and never feel any kind of pressure.

What is your favorite part about working in this industry?

My favorite part about working in this industry is how each day is different and every family is unique. No two days are the same and that's what I love. In my opinion, there is absolutely nothing that is more rewarding than being a funeral director. I love helping families honor their loved ones in ways that are as unique as they are.

What makes your funeral home stand out from others in the area?

When I was working in funeral homes in Arizona, we were fortunate to be able to adopt two beautiful girls and move our family back home to Utah. At that time, there was only one other funeral home in the area serving families. When we opened our own, our goal from the beginning was to provide an extremely unique and personalized celebration for each family we served. We achieve this by spending time really getting to know our families.

We get to serve the community where I grew up each day. My parents and grandparents are from here and although they didn't work in the funeral industry, it's easy for me to connect with each person that walks through our doors and truly connect with them because we have a lot in common and can provide a wholesome service for them.

It's the best feeling in the world when families thank us, hug us, or tell us how much we helped them and that they love us. We love our community and I think that really shows through in everything we do.

Are you a member of any community groups or organizations?

Yes, we are members of the Chamber of Commerce, Caregiver Coalition, and we work with Hospice. We do anything we can to give back and we take a grassroots approach to advertising. Calli is a therapist and runs local grief groups and we try to donate to any local events that we can. We love our community and we try to stay very connected.

What are you most proud of so far in your career?

I strive every day to be better at what I do. I'm so grateful for where I am at and the families we serve bless our lives in ways I cannot even describe. I can't pinpoint a specific time or achievement, but I am proud to have the opportunity to serve my community each day. I am proud of the services we have provided and the lasting relationships we have created. This industry is extremely rewarding, and I am so glad I work in this industry.

Looking forward to the future, what are you most excited about?

I am excited to see where the funeral industry is headed. The industry has seen big shifts in recent years with the rise cremation, improvements to technology, and an increase in creative services and I am interested to see what that future holds. There are so many unique products that have come out recently and funeral homes are really starting to think outside the box. I think this industry has some pretty cool changes on the horizon, changes we shouldn't try to stop. The possibilities are endless and I'm ready to see what the future brings.

Do you have any advice that you would share with other funeral directors, especially those that are younger and just entering the profession?

My advice is to never have any expectations. Whether it is in hours you will be working or what exactly you will be doing, the sky is the limit and you need to think outside the box and never limit yourself. Show emotion and be yourself, don't try to fit the mold of what you think a funeral director is. People will gravitate towards you if you are genuine. Do not be afraid to push the limits and love what you do.