

9/11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

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A PERMANENT DEDICATION TO GROUND ZERO RESCUE AND RECOVERY WORKERS IS BEING PLANNED AT THE 9/11 MEMORIAL

9/11 Memorial Board Chair Michael R. Bloomberg, Gov. Andrew Cuomo, former 'Daily Show' host Jon Stewart and the 9/11 Memorial & Museum Are Working to Realize Tribute That Also Brings Awareness to 9/11-Health Crisis

New York State, Through its Affiliates, and Bloomberg Philanthropies are Jointly Committed to Funding the Project

(New York) May 30, 2017 – National September 11 Memorial & Museum Board Chairman Michael R. Bloomberg and Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo with Board Member Jon Stewart today announced plans for the development of a permanent dedication at the 9/11 Memorial to recognize the rescue and recovery at Ground Zero.

New York State, through its affiliates, and Bloomberg Philanthropies will provide support and funding for the permanent dedication that will be located on the Memorial Glade. For several months, Memorial and Museum officials have been exploring creating a commemorative space and walkway to recognize rescue and recovery workers. The glade is the grassy clearing on the southwest corner of the 8-acre plaza near the Survivor Tree.

The Memorial and Museum will lead in the planning, design and development of the dedication with the Memorial's architects, including Michael Arad. The dedication would expand on existing exhibitions and programming that examine the impact the 9/11 disaster had on the health of those who were exposed, including first responders, workers, survivors, residents and others.

"Thousands of people converged at the World Trade Center site immediately after the attacks to show the world that our city and our country were not defeated," said Bloomberg, the city's 108th mayor, who led the revitalization of lower Manhattan after 9/11. "We owe these men and women of the recovery a great debt of gratitude and they deserve a fitting tribute for their courage, sacrifice and bravery."

"Fifteen years after 9/11, we still feel the pain and loss as if it were yesterday," Gov. Cuomo said. "This tribute will be a poignant reminder of the selflessness and courage of our first responders, who embody the best values of New Yorkers, and ensure that their sacrifice will never be forgotten."

Cuomo, 9/11 victims' family members, 9/11-health advocates and others are lending their support. Cuomo has long been committed in helping to ensure those suffering from 9/11-related illnesses have access to the resources they need. This includes legislation he signed providing \$9 million in state aid for 9/11 workers suffering from health problems and extending time for workers and volunteers to secure additional workers' compensation, disability and accidental death benefits.

"Many rescue and recovery workers will tell you that they responded to Ground Zero because they felt a duty to act," said Stewart, a longtime 9/11-health advocate and member of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum Board. "Without regard for their own health and wellbeing and with no demand for recognition, these men and women played a critical role in helping us all in New York and across the country get back on our feet. Today thousands are living with serious illnesses and dying at an alarming rate. I'm thrilled this is finally happening, that this dedication will give them the recognition they're due."

9/11 Memorial & Museum Board Member Lee Ielpi, whose firefighter son, Jonathan Ielpi, died on 9/11, arrived at the World Trade Center shortly after the second tower collapse and returned daily to help with rescue and recovery operations. As a tradition with the FDNY, where Ielpi served for more than 25 years, he worked over nine months in an attempt to recover all who were lost, including his son of FDNY's Squad 288.

"I have hope that this dedicated place to reflect will help to offer a sense of peace and help ensure these men and women will always be remembered for their many sacrifices," said Ielpi, who is also president of the 9/11 Tribute Museum. "The memory of their time here and its lasting effects have not faded. Our commitment to them has not faded either."

"I am humbled and awed to play a small part in assisting the 9/11 Memorial & Museum in ensuring history is never distorted and the plight of all 9/11 responders is told accurately," FealGood Foundation President John Feal said. "Building a permanent dedication that best represents not only our city but our nation's heroes on such sacred grounds validates the heroic actions of those in uniform and non-uniform who gave so much of themselves that horrific Tuesday morning, and continue to give of themselves to this day."

"After the towers fell, and before the dust cloud settled, these remarkably brave men and women risked their lives, and health, as they joined the response and helped start the process of recovery," 9/11 Memorial & Museum President and CEO Alice M. Greenwald said. "We should always remember what they endured in the aftermath of the attacks as they paved the way for this city and our country to rebuild."

"Every day, injured and ill 9/11 responders and survivors from every state across the country continue to have to deal with the health effects from their exposure to toxins at Ground Zero over 15 years ago. There are currently over 77,000 9/11 responders and survivors participating in the World Trade Center Health Program. More than 39,000 have at least one condition related to 9/11, with more than 6,000 having a 9/11 related cancer. There are many that are fully disabled by their injuries, and too many have died from them, like FDNY firefighter Ray Pfeifer who, after a long fight, died just the other day from his 9/11 cancer," 911 Health Watch Executive Director Benjamin Chevat said. "Establishing a permanent dedication on

the plaza of the national 9/11 Memorial that reminds the country of the extent of the health crisis facing so many is a fitting tribute to responders like Ray and the thousands of others like him. We thank Governor Cuomo, 9/11 Memorial Board Chairman Michael R. Bloomberg and Board Member Jon Stewart for their leadership with this effort.”

Today, the Memorial and Museum honors the men and women of the nine-month rescue and recovery effort as part of a week-long tribute commemorating the 15th anniversary of May 30, 2002, which marked the formal end of recovery operations at the World Trade Center.

The commemoration includes a special ceremony in the Museum near the Last Column, the final steel beam ceremonially removed from Ground Zero when recovery operations ended. Culminating in a moment of silence to remember those who have succumbed to 9/11-related illnesses, the event will conclude with participants tying ribbons at the base of the Last Column.

For more information about the week of dedicated programs and commemorative activities please visit 911memorial.org.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

The National September 11 Memorial & Museum is the nonprofit organization that oversees operations for the 9/11 Memorial and 9/11 Memorial Museum. Located on eight of the 16 acres of the World Trade Center site, the Memorial and Museum remember and honor the 2,983 people who were killed in the horrific attacks of September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993. The Memorial plaza design consists of two reflecting pools formed in the footprints of the original Twin Towers surrounded by swamp white oak trees. The Museum displays more than 900 personal and monumental objects while its collection includes more than 60,000 items that present intimate stories of loss, compassion, reckoning and recovery linked to the events of 9/11 and the aftermath. The Museum also explores the global impact of 9/11 and its continuing significance through education programs, public programs, live talks and film features that cover contemporary topics designed for diverse audiences. For more information or to reserve a ticket to the 9/11 Memorial Museum, please visit 911memorial.org.

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