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The Tribute WTC Visitor Center opened on September 6, 2006, across the street from the World Trade Center site and next to FDNY Engine10/Ladder10 Firehouse. The Tribute Center is a small museum that provides educational programming for visitors and a central place for the 9/11 community to gather and share their personal history. Through walking tours, exhibitions, and programs, the Tribute Center offers "Person to Person History," connecting visitors with people who directly experienced the events of February 26, 1993 and September 11, 2001 -- as family members who lost loved ones, survivors, Lower Manhattan residents and workers, rescue workers, civilian volunteers, police and firefighters. The Tribute Center is frequented by local, national, and international visitors who make a pilgrimage to the World Trade Center site, eager to learn and connect with history. Over 2,500,000 visitors have been personally welcomed and introduced to an extremely unique collection of stories that reveal diverse, personal perspectives.

The Tribute Center was created by the September 11th Families' Association, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization incorporated in November 2001 by victims' families. The Tribute Center conveys an understanding of the humanity and community that was both lost and found in the aftermath of 9/11. Throughout the Tribute Center, visitors are engaged in appreciating the scope and impact of the disaster as well as the enormous outpouring of compassion in response. By sharing with visitors the authentic experiences of those most affected by the events, the exhibits convey the courage, loss, heroism, and grief of those who responded to the tragedy. These personal experiences put a human face on the overwhelming events that shocked the nation and the world.

The Tribute Center is composed of five galleries. Individual experiences are revealed through first person accounts.

- **Gallery One – World Trade Center: Community Remembered** - Images, audio, video and a 3-D model introduce the visitor to the vibrant spirit of the WTC community and provide an appreciation for what was lost.
- **Gallery Two – Passage through Time: September 11th** - A series of timeline units invite visitors to "walk through" the events of February 26, 1993 and September 11, 2001. Objects, photographs, audio clips, and video reveal multiple perspectives.
- **Gallery Three - Aftermath: Rescue and Recovery** – Graphics depict the enormity of the WTC recovery operations, artifacts and a video pay tribute to the individuals and organizations that worked tirelessly for months to begin the recovery and rebuilding.
- **Gallery Four – Tribute** - A contemplative, spiritual setting provides a reflective environment. The names of the victims, photographs of over 2,000 victims donated by their families, and mementos create a living memorial.
- **Gallery Five – Voices of Promise** - Changing exhibits provide an in depth look at post 9/11 recovery. Visitors are invited to share their thoughts and feelings on how 9/11 affected their lives or how they have taken action in remembrance.

PROGRAMS

Museum – Person to Person History

Throughout the Center, interactive exhibits, personal greeters from the 9/11 community, and an environment for reflection allow visitors to appreciate the scope and impact of the disaster as well as the enormous outpouring of compassion in response. Annually, the Center serves an average of 500,000 visitors with an intimate personal glimpse of the events and recovery.

9/11 Community Volunteers – Sharing Personal History

The Tribute Center's volunteer program draws from the entire 9/11 community: family members who lost loved ones, survivors, Lower Manhattan residents and workers, rescue workers, civilian volunteers, police and firefighters. Volunteers are trained to share their personal 9/11 experiences as walking tour guides and greeters. On daily public tours of the 9/11 Memorial, volunteers connect physical locations to specific events. Annually, Tribute Center volunteers serve over 30,000 visitors on personal tours.

Education Programs – September 11th Personal Stories of Transformation

The Tribute Center offers deeper educational experiences in the form of guided gallery experiences for students, grade 5 – 12. Annually, Tribute serves over 15,000 students. The Tribute Center also has created a free, online multimedia toolkit for teachers who would like primary source material to bring a deeper understanding of 9/11 into the classroom. The toolkit, *September 11th: Personal Stories of Transformation*, engages students in using personal stories, interacting with participants in the September 11th events and conducting their own research to create their own projects that explore civic engagement. Each unit is a story of individuals who were directly impacted by 9/11 and who responded by creating projects to better their communities. The materials are available at www.tributewtc.org/programs/toolkit.html.

Community Programs & Changing Exhibitions

Changing exhibits explore specific aspects that bring the events of 9/11 into the present, highlighting ways in which people have healed and are making meaning out of their experiences. Programs invite experts to address unique issues arising from the events, recovery, and rebuilding. Each exhibit is accompanied by a series of public programs; symposiums, lectures or workshops that explore each topic with greater depth and insight. Twice a year a new exhibit explores topics such as children's responses to 9/11, the recovery effort, rebuilding, the business community and how people have been affected by this history.

9/11 Community Support

The September 11th Families' Association supports victims of terrorism through communication, representation, and peer support. Our mission is to unite the 9/11 community, present evolving issues, and share resources for long-term recovery. The quarterly *Tribute* newsletter and websites provide consistent information and resources. The Association maintains one of the largest active databases including 5,000 immediate family members of victims who died at the World Trade Center, Pentagon, and in Shanksville, PA.

10th Anniversary Book - 9/11: The World Speaks

The Tribute Center's 10th anniversary publication, *9/11: The World Speaks*, published by Lyons Press is a compilation of cards written by visitors from across the country and around the world after their visit through the Tribute Center museum exhibitions. Written by children and adults in many of the world's languages, the cards express our common humanity. In drawings and verse, in philosophical statements and personal recollections, people have shared their thoughts about the deeply felt impact of 9/11 on their lives. Over 250,000 cards have been collected at the Tribute Center written by people from 120 countries in 47 different languages.