

9/11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

This backgrounder provides a detailed overview and historical context about the National September 11 Memorial & Museum. Members of the media are encouraged to direct specific media inquiries to press@911memorial.org. Content creators looking for access to the Memorial or Museum are encouraged to visit 911memorial.org/creators.

Photo credit: David E. Starke

9/11
MEMORIAL
& MUSEUM

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- The 9/11 Memorial & Museum is the country's principal institution concerned with exploring September 11, 2001, documenting its impact, and examining its continuing significance. This mission is advanced through **commemoration, education, and inspiration**. Located on **eight of the 16 acres** of the World Trade Center site, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum remembers and honors the **2,983** lives lost on September 11, 2001, and February 26, 1993.
- Through exhibitions, a wide variety of programs, and commemorative events, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum seeks to educate the public — particularly the **100 million** Americans born since the attacks or those too young to remember — about the consequences of terrorism and its impact on individuals and communities. Through preserving and sharing stories of resilience, compassion, and service, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum hopes to inspire individuals to build a more compassionate and secure world.

Leadership

- Michael R. Bloomberg, Chairman
- Elizabeth L. Hillman, President & CEO
- Ten family members of victims serve on the Board of Trustees alongside others from the 9/11 community





Graphic: C&G Partners, LLC

BARCLAY STREET

- The 9/11 Memorial was dedicated on the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks in a ceremony for victims' families. Its public opening date was September 12, 2011. The 9/11 Memorial consists of two reflecting pools set in the footprints of the Twin Towers.
- The Memorial Museum was dedicated on May 15, 2014, and has since welcomed **25 million visitors** from **all 50 states** and over **190 countries**.
- The 9/11 Memorial Glade was dedicated on May 30, 2019 — the **18th anniversary** of the formal end of rescue and recovery operations at Ground Zero. Located on the southwest corner of the Memorial plaza, this tribute also recognizes rescue, recovery, and relief workers who acted with courage, selflessness, and perseverance.
- At bedrock of the 9/11 Memorial Museum is a repository for the remains of unidentified 9/11 victims, independently operated by the New York City Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME). The repository is separate from the public space of the 9/11 Memorial Museum and is only accessible by OCME staff. The contemplative space ensures the remains' safekeeping and houses a peaceful reflection room for victims' family members. All DNA testing occurs at an off-site OCME facility in Manhattan.

2,983

names on the 9/11 Memorial, honoring the 2,977 people killed at the three attack sites on September 11, 2001, and the six people killed in the February 26, 1993 bombing at the WTC.

11.6

million visitors were welcomed to the Memorial plaza in 2025, and 2.4 million visitors were welcomed to the museum.

2,753

people were killed in New York, 184 people at the Pentagon, and 40 people aboard Flight 93 when it crashed in a field near Shanksville, PA.

441

first responders representing over 30 agencies died on 9/11. 343 FDNY firefighters, along with 37 Port Authority Police Department officers and 23 New York Police Department officers, were killed.

Memorial Facts

Nearly one acre

in size each, the Memorial pools stand in the footprints of the Twin Towers.

413

swamp white oak trees on the Memorial plaza, and one Callery pear tree, original to the site, known as the “Survivor Tree.”

200

approximate feet in length of each side of the Memorial pools.

30

feet in height of the Memorial waterfalls cascading each memorial pool.

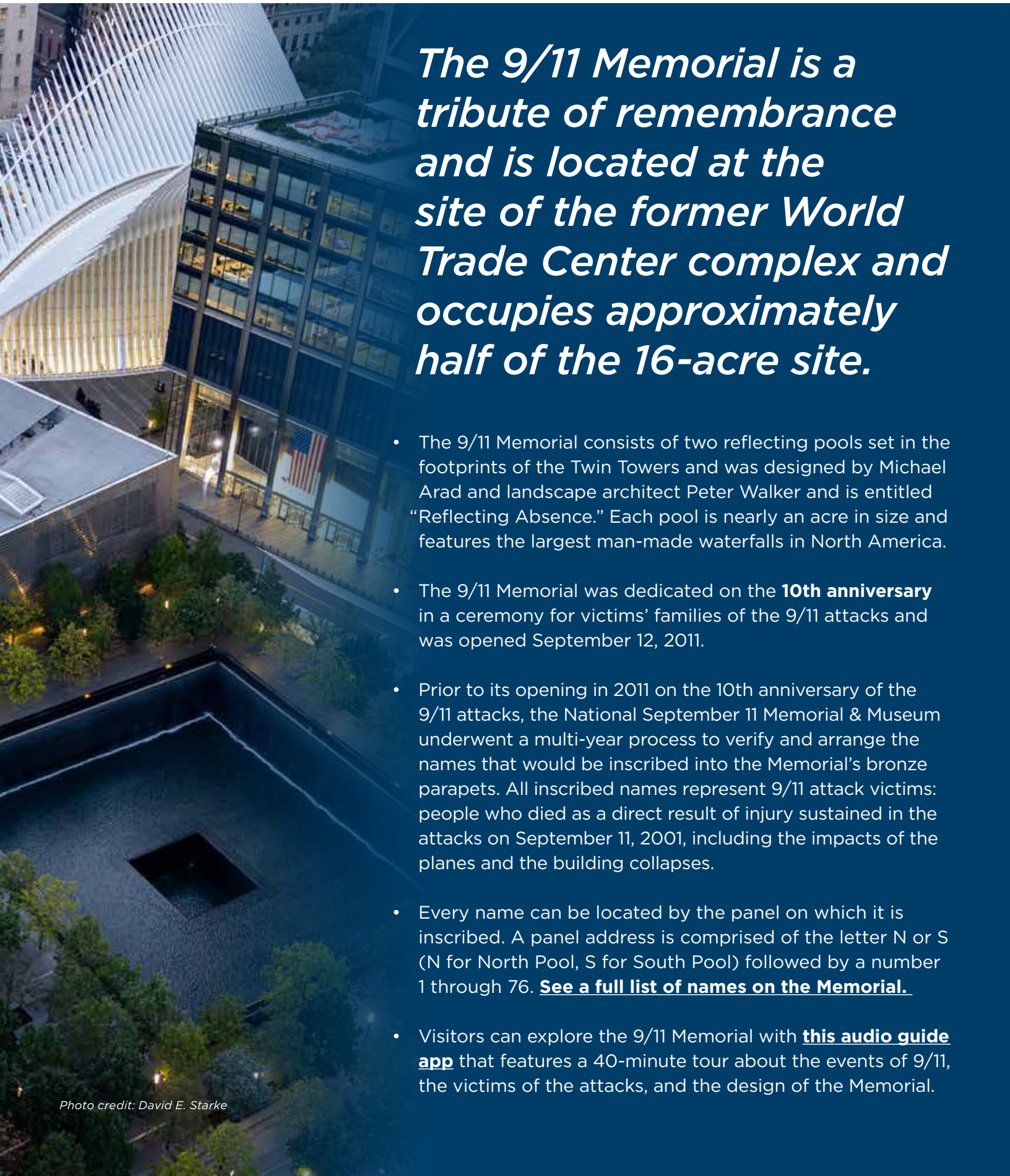
Museum Facts

110,000

square feet of the museum’s exhibition space is located within the heart of the World Trade Center site.

82,000+

physical and digital artifacts are in the collection.

An aerial photograph of the 9/11 Memorial site at night. The two large reflecting pools are visible, with the Oculus building on the left and the new World Trade Center building in the center. The pools are illuminated, and the surrounding area is lit up with city lights.

The 9/11 Memorial is a tribute of remembrance and is located at the site of the former World Trade Center complex and occupies approximately half of the 16-acre site.

- The 9/11 Memorial consists of two reflecting pools set in the footprints of the Twin Towers and was designed by Michael Arad and landscape architect Peter Walker and is entitled “Reflecting Absence.” Each pool is nearly an acre in size and features the largest man-made waterfalls in North America.
- The 9/11 Memorial was dedicated on the **10th anniversary** in a ceremony for victims’ families of the 9/11 attacks and was opened September 12, 2011.
- Prior to its opening in 2011 on the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the National September 11 Memorial & Museum underwent a multi-year process to verify and arrange the names that would be inscribed into the Memorial’s bronze parapets. All inscribed names represent 9/11 attack victims: people who died as a direct result of injury sustained in the attacks on September 11, 2001, including the impacts of the planes and the building collapses.
- Every name can be located by the panel on which it is inscribed. A panel address is comprised of the letter N or S (N for North Pool, S for South Pool) followed by a number 1 through 76. **See a full list of names on the Memorial.**
- Visitors can explore the 9/11 Memorial with **this audio guide app** that features a 40-minute tour about the events of 9/11, the victims of the attacks, and the design of the Memorial.

As part of the 9/11 Memorial's names verification process, victims' next of kin made specific requests about which names would appear adjacent to their loved one's name on the Memorial pools. This arrangement is known as meaningful adjacencies. Some of these requests were for relatives, friends, and colleagues; others were for loved ones to be listed with people they may have barely known or just met, but with whom intense bonds were quickly formed as a result of shared response.

More than **1,200 requests** were honored and reflected on the Memorial. This design allows names of family, friends, and colleagues to be together, as they lived and died. To learn more about how the names are arranged, visit the 9/11 Memorial Guide at [911memorial.org/names](https://www.911memorial.org/names).



Photo credit: David E. Starke

Designed by the original architects of the 9/11 Memorial, Michael Arad and Peter Walker, the 9/11 Memorial Glade is a pathway flanked by six stone monoliths pointed skyward that symbolize strength and determination through adversity in honor of those who are sick or who have died from exposure to toxins in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

Located on the southwest corner of the Memorial plaza, this tribute also recognizes rescue, recovery, and relief workers who acted with courage, selflessness and perseverance. The Glade was dedicated on **May 30, 2019 — the 18th anniversary** of the formal end of rescue and recovery operations at Ground Zero.

Each year the institution, commemorates May 30, 2002, on the 9/11 Memorial Glade for a special ceremony to honor all of the 9/11 rescue, recovery and relief workers, as well as those who are sick or have died from illnesses and injuries linked to exposure to hazards and toxins in the aftermath of 9/11 at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, or near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.





Photo credit: David E. Starke

Located on the Memorial plaza, there is one Callery pear tree, known as the “Survivor Tree,” which is original to the site. The Callery pear tree became known as the Survivor Tree after surviving the September 11, 2001 terror attacks at the World Trade Center. In October 2001, the **tree was discovered at Ground Zero** severely damaged, with snapped roots and burned and broken branches. The tree was removed from the rubble and placed in the care of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

After its recovery and rehabilitation, the tree was **returned to the Memorial in 2010**. New, smooth limbs extend from the gnarled stumps, creating a visible demarcation between the tree’s past and present. The tree stands as a living reminder of **resilience, survival, and renewal** and is featured prominently on the plaza alongside the 413 swamp white oak trees.



Visitors enter the Museum through a pavilion located between the two Memorial reflecting pools, which includes a private space for 9/11 families. The **pavilion is a graceful steel and glass building** designed by Norwegian architecture firm **Snøhetta**. Installed within the building's glass atrium are two massive steel tridents, which were part of the Twin Towers' facade.

The pavilion is a graceful steel and glass building designed by Norwegian architecture firm Snøhetta.

Photo credit: David E. Starke

The 9/11 Memorial Museum is the focal point for preserving the history of 9/11, documenting the impact of the attacks, and exploring their continuing significance.

- The Museum tells the story of the events of 9/11 through artifacts that range in scale from monumental to intimate, as well as through first-person accounts and multimedia displays.
- The Museum is the steward of the site's archaeological assets which are protected under federal preservation law.

[Find current exhibits here](#)

Architects

- Davis Brody Bond: Museum
- Snøhetta AS, LLC: Museum pavilion

Exhibition Designers

- Thinc Design with Local Projects, LLC: Lead Exhibition Design for the Memorial Museum
- Thinc Design: Introductory Exhibits, Memorial Exhibition, and Exhibition Level Design
- Local Projects, LLC: Media Production
- Layman Design: Historical Exhibition Design

- The Museum’s definitive space is Foundation Hall, which is below ground at bedrock level. Foundation Hall houses the Slurry Wall and a variety of archaeological assets. Visitors descend to bedrock alongside the Vesey Street stair remnant known as the Survivor Stairs, which were used by hundreds to escape to safety on 9/11.
- Foundation Hall’s sheer scale conveys a sense of the enormity of the site and reinforces an awareness of the absence of what was once here. In this contemplative space, visitors can reflect on the past as well as the continuing impacts of 9/11, view dynamic media displays, and share their own 9/11 stories in the adjacent recording studio.
- The World Trade Center Slurry Wall, the original retaining wall built to keep water from the Hudson River out of the site, withstood the collapse of the towers and stands in Foundation Hall as a testament to survival.
- In addition to the Slurry Wall stands the 36-foot high “Last Column,” covered with mementos, memorial inscriptions, and missing posters affixed by ironworkers, rescue personnel, and others. It was ceremonially removed from the site on May 30, 2002, marking the official end of the nine-month Ground Zero recovery effort.



September 11, 2001

- The beginning segment of the historical exhibition presents the events of the day as they unfolded on September 11, 2001. Visitors learn how the normalcy of a beautiful day was overtaken by a sense of shock, disbelief, and increasing horror as America came under attack.
- After learning about the day of the attacks, visitors enter a gallery **chronicling the events leading up to 9/11**, including the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.
- The culminating chapter of the historical exhibition guides visitors from the immediate aftermath of 9/11 to the present moment, exploring the character and **challenges of the post-9/11 world**.

**Filming and recording of any kind is not permitted in this exhibition*



Photo credit: Jin S. Lee



“In Memoriam”

- The memorial exhibition commemorates the lives of those who perished as a result of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993.
- Visitors enter a gallery where **portraits of the 2,983 victims line all four walls.** Rotating selections of personal artifacts and touchscreen tables allow visitors to discover additional information about each person, and an inner chamber presents profiles of individual victims through photographs, biographical information, and audio remembrances provided by family members and friends.

**Filming and recording of any kind is not permitted in this exhibition*

The Museum tells the story of 9/11 through artifacts, imagery, personal stories, and interactive technology, with the following on view for 2026.

- **Our Flag Was Still There** - In recognition of the nation's 250th anniversary, the Foundation Hall South installation presents a collection of American flags and highlights additional objects exemplifying the significance of the flag as a symbol of the strength of American ideals in the face of adversity.
- **Dust: Illness and Advocacy after 9/11** - This installation in Foundation Hall explores the impacts of the toxic dust that blanketed city streets and coated the insides of homes, businesses, and schools in the area following the attacks. Every breath that survivors, first responders, and lower Manhattan residents took put them at risk for toxic exposure, underpinning the larger public health impact of the day that changed our world forever. As lived memory turns to history, the Memorial & Museum continues to expand the breadth of its storytelling and create new opportunities to recognize the sacrifice of all survivors, health care advocates, and later victims of the 9/11 catastrophe.
- **Faces of Ground Zero: Photographs by Joe McNally** - In the weeks following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, New York-based photographer Joe McNally captured people who reported to Ground Zero in the immediate aftermath of the attacks to aid in rescue, recovery, and relief efforts. A selection of 18 portraits including first responders, survivors, bereaved family members, government officials, and others are shown at approximate life size, communicating the devotion and heroism of responders from a large cast of government agencies, trade unions, volunteer groups, and other organizations who risked their physical safety and health to repair New York City. **This installation** is in the Museum's North Tower Excavation.
- **In Their Honor: 25 Years of 9/11-Inspired Service** - As a generation comes of age with no lived memory of September 11, this special exhibition explores a legacy from the catastrophe of 9/11 that has endured: purposeful dedication to acts of service. Opening September 2026.

[Find current exhibits here](#)

The 9/11 Memorial & Museum education programs are committed to providing students and teachers with the tools to understand what happened on 9/11 and how the attacks continue to impact our lives.

Anniversary Digital Learning Experience

Offered every year on and around the 9/11 anniversary, this interactive program, formerly known as Anniversary in the Schools, connects participants with Museum staff and guest speakers to learn about the attacks and the importance of commemoration. Its centerpiece is a **30-minute film** highlighting the stories of individuals who experienced 9/11 and its aftermath. It also includes an overview of what happened on 9/11. The program consists of two parts: the film that can be screened on demand to accommodate all schedules and time zones, and a live chat with 9/11 Memorial & Museum Education staff that has already reached over 5 million students, educators, and others to date from all 50 states and more than 60 nations.

School Programs

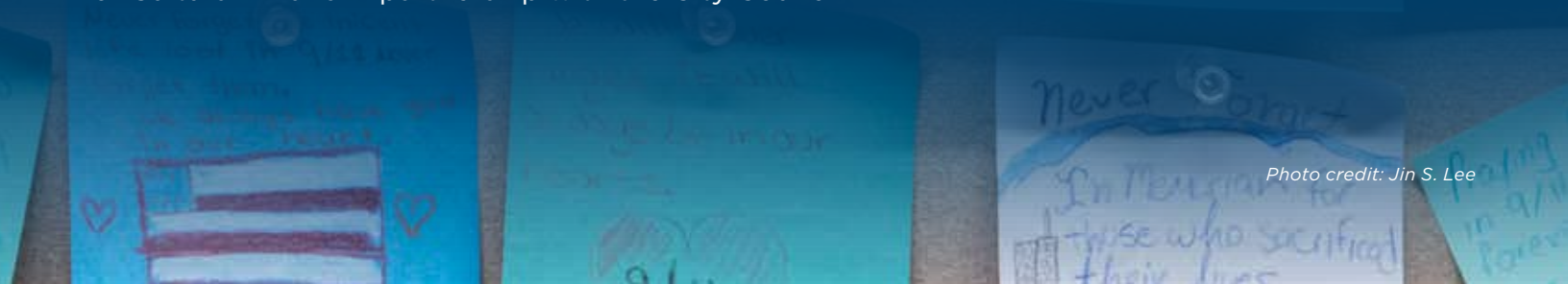
We are now offering both **on-site** and **virtual** field trips for grades 3-12. Onsite field trips to the Museum are free for all New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut schools. Virtual field trips are also free for New York City and New Jersey schools thanks to generous support from the Wilf Family Foundations, the Gary Sinise Foundation, and, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

Lesson Plans

These inquiry-based activities explore the history of the World Trade Center, the events of 9/11, the role that first responders played, and the many ways the country has changed in a post-9/11 world.

Teacher Professional Development

Teacher workshops address the challenges of teaching difficult content and explore interdisciplinary connections to curriculum through Museum tours, hands-on activities, and group discussion. The 9/11 Memorial & Museum is an approved CTLE sponsor.



Our [Professional Programs](#) draw upon the Museum's historical archive and expertise, to speak directly to the history, identities, and missions of participating organizations. We work with a wide range of law enforcement, intelligence, military, and first responder agencies, in addition to companies in the private sector.

Leading Through Crisis

Leading Through Crisis, our newest offering, codifies key elements of crisis response, including decisive action, empathetic leadership, clear communication, and culture formation. These traits were brought into clear relief on 9/11 and continue to resonate nearly **25 years** after the attacks. The new training provides access to exclusive, in-depth interviews with leaders like Michael R. Bloomberg, Frank Bisignano, Kenneth I. Chenault, Roger W. Ferguson, Jr., Robert Iger, Jeh Charles Johnson, Admiral William H. McRaven, USN (Ret.), and Caryn Seidman-Becker.

Visionary Network

The 9/11 Memorial & Museum [Visionary Network](#) brings together people between the ages of 21 and 45 through acts of advocacy, commemoration, and engagement that deepen their connection to the 9/11 Memorial & Museum and ensure that their generation and future generations remember 9/11 and its aftermath.

The Visionary Network was founded in 2020 by a group of individuals dedicated to preserving the memory of their loved ones and honoring the commitment to never forget.

[Meet the council.](#)



The 9/11 Memorial & Museum's **public programs** explore a range of topics reflecting on the ongoing impacts and continued resonance of the attacks, their historical context, and their aftermath.

New programs are typically added in mid-August and early January and the majority of our programs take place in the Auditorium, located on the Atrium Terrace (second floor) level of the Museum. In the event of a fully booked program, a simulcast screening is offered in an adjacent space on the Atrium Terrace. Most public programs are available via livestream on our website and past programs can be found in [our archive here](#).

25 Years Later: Reflections on 9/11 and the War on Terror

January 2026 – [Click Here to Watch Replay](#)



Designing Memory: A Look Back at the 9/11 Memorial Competition

September 2025 – [Click Here to Watch Replay](#)



Stories of Service at Ground Zero

May 2025 – [Click Here to Watch Replay](#)



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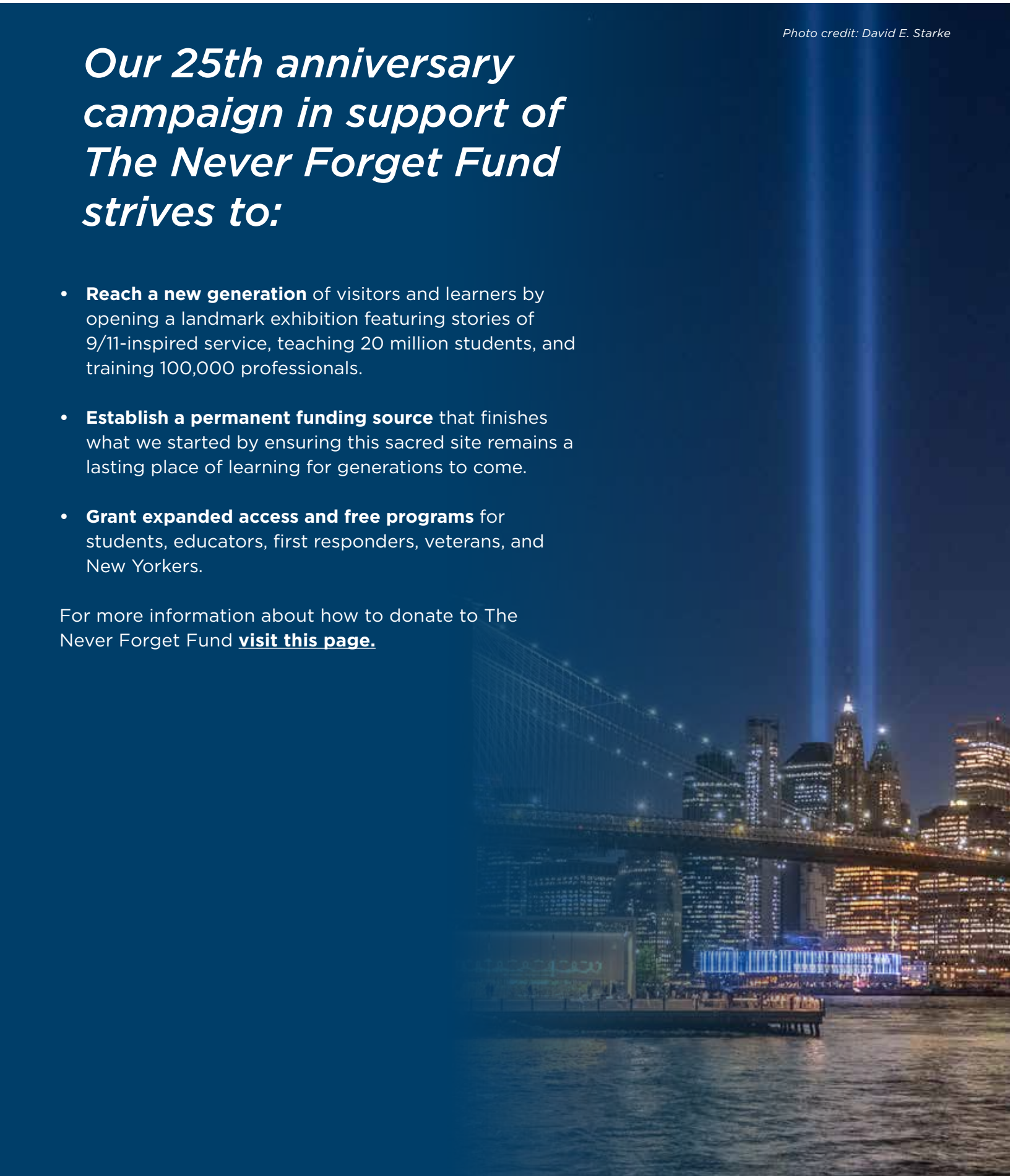


Photo credit: David E. Starke

Our 25th anniversary campaign in support of The Never Forget Fund strives to:

- **Reach a new generation** of visitors and learners by opening a landmark exhibition featuring stories of 9/11-inspired service, teaching 20 million students, and training 100,000 professionals.
- **Establish a permanent funding source** that finishes what we started by ensuring this sacred site remains a lasting place of learning for generations to come.
- **Grant expanded access and free programs** for students, educators, first responders, veterans, and New Yorkers.

For more information about how to donate to The Never Forget Fund [**visit this page.**](#)



High-resolution photos and high-definition video footage are available for download at:
911memorial.org/digitalassets.

Social Channels



facebook.com/911memorial



instagram.com/911memorial
or [@911memorial](https://instagram.com/@911memorial)



www.x.com/Sept11Memorial
or [@sept11memorial](https://www.x.com/@sept11memorial)



tiktok.com/@sept11memorial
or [@sept11memorial](https://tiktok.com/@sept11memorial)

Official Hashtags

- [#911Museum](https://twitter.com/hashtag/911Museum)
- [#911Memorial](https://twitter.com/hashtag/911Memorial)
- [#NeverForget911](https://twitter.com/hashtag/NeverForget911)

References to the institution

- 9/11 Memorial & Museum OR The National September 11 Memorial & Museum
- 9/11 Memorial (Memorial)
- 9/11 Memorial Museum (Museum)

Geo-Location Tag

National September 11 Memorial & Museum, 180 Greenwich Street

Website

911memorial.org