

**The Wheatley School**  
**Remembering September 11th**  
**11 September 2017**

Sixteen years ago today, on a beautiful morning that seemed filled with promise and potential, the lives of thousands of New Yorkers, Americans, and humans throughout the world were altered dramatically as the result of terrorist attacks in New York, the Pentagon and Pennsylvania. Over 400 Long Islanders—friends, family members, colleagues—died in the attacks. Across our country and in many other nations, we pause today to remember those who lost their lives and those who died in service to others.

We pause to remember these attacks not only out of respect for the thousands of victims, but also to be reminded that these attacks did not have a singular impact on our country and our world. Since the attacks of September 11th, our country has fought two open wars and engaged in countless other covert skirmishes. Our federal buildings are fortified in a way that they simply were not in the past, security cameras are a regular part of our lives, and we remove our shoes before boarding airplanes. Since the attacks, over 5 million men and women have worn the uniform of our armed services—many of them facing dangerous situations daily. Nearly 7000 US soldiers have lost their lives in the ongoing conflicts, with over a million U.S. servicemen suffering crippling injuries and trauma. These are staggering numbers. Many of these soldiers are not much older than those of you here today. We must never forget them.

A few years after the attacks, President Bush declared 9/11 a “National Day of Service.” This federally-recognized day of unity and charitable service has become the largest annual day of charitable service in the United States. We use this day to “kick off” our Annual Day of Service and Learning.