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Hunterdon Remembers Those Lost And Honors Heroes At The County's 20th Anniversary 9-11 Ceremony

A Ground Zero responder from September 11, 2001, serving as Guest Speaker at Hunterdon County's 20th Anniversary 9-11 Remembrance Ceremony, told those in attendance "The attacks of September 11th were intended to break our spirit. Instead, we emerged stronger and more unified."

Dr. Jean Kanokogi of Readington Township, a federal officer who responded to Ground Zero on September 11, 2001, joined Hunterdon County Sheriff Fred Brown, Prosecutor Renee Robeson, and many Hunterdon County First Responders and law enforcement officers, at the County's 20th Anniversary Remembrance ceremony, on the steps of the Historic Courthouse in Flemington.

Sheriff Brown, the sponsor of the annual ceremony noted that sixteen Hunterdon County residents perished at the World Trade Center site on 9-11, along with nearly 400 First Responders and thousands of others, stating, "I believe we have an obligation to honor the memory of their lives each and every year."

The columns of the Historic Courthouse were adorned with banners bearing the names of each the Hunterdon County residents killed in the attacks.

Sheriff Brown added, "We also must remember that on September 11, 2001, this nation was attacked, the most heinous assault on our soil since Pearl Harbor. It was a terrorist attack that murdered thousands, by enemies of our nation, of our values, our freedoms, and our way of life.

That is something that also needs to be burned into our memory."

The Sheriff continued, "Despite the tragedy of that day, there were also heroes – those who ran towards danger, saved lives, and gave their lives to save others.

And our first responders here in Hunterdon County who answered the call on 9-11 are an esteemed part of that group. They are special, selfless people and most deserving of our thanks and recognition."

Sheriff Brown and Prosecutor Robeson presented each of the 9-11 First Responders with a commemorative 20th Anniversary pin, in recognition of their service.

Dr. Kanokogi told the assemblage, "On 9-11 we saw ordinary people choose duty in the face of death; responders continued to help people even as the buildings were collapsing around them. We saw ordinary people choose self-sacrifice for the good of strangers, as the passengers on the plane over Pennsylvania refused to allow the hijackers to succeed."

The Guest Speaker added, "Let us never forget that we were attacked. We must remain vigilant yet heal. With open hearts and an open mind, everyone from every walk of life can and should enjoy the freedoms in our melting pot of a nation."

Sheriff Brown, at the beginning of the ceremony asked those assembled for a moment of silence in memory of the thirteen U.S. Service members killed at Kabul Airport on August 26th and the six individuals who were lost in Hunterdon County during the recent Hurricane Ida storm.

Elected officials in attendance included Senator Mike Doherty, Assembly members Erik Peterson and Roy Freiman, and John DiMaio, Board of Commissioners Director Susan J. Soloway, Deputy Director John E. Lanza, and Commissioner Shaun C. Van Doren and Zach T. Rich.

Many County Veterans were in attendance and Dan Torrone served as Master of Ceremonies.

During the proceedings the Hunterdon Harmonizers performed the National Anthem and the Clinton Church of the Nazarene Worship Band performed Amazing Grace.

Revered Dave Errickson of the Old Rocks Church in Lambertville and Chaplain Larry Coyne, the Chaplain for the Clinton Fire Department and County Fire Chiefs Association, offered the invocation and benediction, respectively.

The New Jersey State Police Honor Guard performed the Presentation of the Colors and a State Police Aviation Bureau Helicopter performed a flyover for the ceremony, where the State Police Mounted Patrol was also represented.