



The Capps Family Firefighters Education Foundation

August 6, 2002

THE CAPPS FAMILY FIREFIGHTERS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Without doubt, every American recalls where they were and what they were doing on Tuesday morning September 11, 2001. They watched in anguish as terrorists under the direction of Osama Bin Laden crashed two fully-fueled jetliners into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, one jetliner into the Pentagon in Washington DC, and one jetliner, which presumably was headed to the White House, into the countryside of western Pennsylvania. My wife Debbie and I were at ground zero at the World Trade Center that Tuesday morning. We were among the many that survived that attack on our country.

Remarkably, under extremely harrowing circumstances we were able to reunite with each other in the Marriott World Trade Center Hotel, sandwiched between the Twin Towers. Debbie was in our hotel room on the 16th floor and I was in a breakfast meeting on the first floor. From there we fled on foot, avoiding falling glass and debris, heading into the direction of the New York Harbor. Barely outside the hotel, we heard initially and witnessed in horror subsequently the second plane crashing into the South Tower. Later we escaped into a New York apartment complex, eventually helping to rescue approximately 30 pre-school children from the Battery Park City Day Nursery. In a nutshell, by foot, by bus to the Harbor, by tugboat across the Harbor to Jersey City, New Jersey, by bus again from Hoboken, New Jersey to Newark, New Jersey, by train from Newark to Washington, DC, and by train from Washington DC to New Orleans, Louisiana two days later and finally by car from New Orleans to College Station, Texas, we returned to our home after an ordeal that lasted from Tuesday, September 11 through Saturday, September 15.

During this time of crisis, people were not panicking or screaming. Instead, those involved were helping or encouraging others. The American Spirit definitely was operating despite the dire chain of events. While there were many heroes on that fateful day, Debbie and I wish to acknowledge foremost the work of brave firemen, specifically those from Manhattan Ladder 12. They were immediately on the scene at the Marriott, within minutes of the first attack on the North Tower. The lieutenant waited with me until Debbie climbed down the flight of stairs that brought us together on the third floor plaza area. Debbie saw the courageous firefighters scurrying up the stairs while she was headed down the seemingly endless stair steps. We now know that the lieutenant and two other members of Manhattan Ladder 12 did not survive as the Towers eventually collapsed.

President
Debbie Capps

Vice President
Kevin Capps

Vice President
Eric Capps

Secretary/Treasurer
Oral Capps, Jr.

To publicly display our gratitude for the heroic deeds of these firefighters in particular, and to all firefighters in general, Debbie and I have set up **THE CAPPS FAMILY FIREFIGHTERS EDUCATION FOUNDATION**. Specifically, the Foundation is organized to administer two educational scholarship funds as follows: (1) the **FIREFIGHTERS RECRUIT TRAINING SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY AND HONOR OF MANHATTAN LADDER 12**, to grant scholarships to support the attendance of any student at the Brayton Fire School at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas; and (2) the **CHILDREN OF FIREFIGHTERS WHO DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY IN HONOR OF THEIR SERVICE OF SAVING LIVES**, to grant scholarships at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas to support the attendance of any child of a firefighter who was killed in the line of duty, with preference given to any child of a Fire Department of New York firefighter who was killed in the line of duty on September 11, 2001.

Over 300 firemen were killed in action on September 11. Without the help of Manhattan Ladder 12, it is doubtful that Debbie and I would have survived. Without the help of the other fallen firefighters, many other lives would have been lost. Seemingly, folks are asked almost daily to donate funds to various charities. We understand the notion of budget constraints, and we also know you want to honor the heroism of those brave firefighters on September 11, the day we Americans will never forget. If you are willing and able to contribute to our Foundation, you may send either by check or by money order, your tax-deductible contribution to:

THE CAPPS FAMILY FIREFIGHTERS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

9204 Sun Lake Court
College Station, TX 77845

Please make your check or money order payable to the Foundation.

May God continue to bless you and your family. May God continue to bless the work of our firefighters across our great Nation. Thank you for the opportunity to share our story and to share in our cause.

Sincerely,

Oral Capps, Jr. and Debbie Capps

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