



Dear Educator,

When we first piloted *The September 11 Education Program* in the fall of 2008 at River Dell High School in Bergen County, New Jersey, we did not know how students would react. Even though September 11, 2001, is viewed as a defining day in American history, educators across the country have grappled with how to preserve and harness its vital lessons and many have never broached the subject with their students.

Following that first class, as you might suspect, students were eager to register their opinions: Dan McConnell, a junior at the time, said, “The lesson brings history alive.” The student explained, “In World War I, you can be told they all fought in the trenches, but it’s another thing to see them all sitting in the mud.” Another student, Heather DeSavino, offered that the event is already “overlooked.” Principal Lorraine Brooks agreed and said, “Because engaging 9/11 materials simply do not exist, many schools around the country choose not to examine the topic, and that is a great disservice to our nation’s youth. As educators, we are always seeking ways of making education relevant to students, and this program does just that.” River Dell High School U.S. History teacher, Lisa Torres, the first educator in the nation to teach the program, added, “This interdisciplinary curriculum, which promotes critical thinking, civic and visual literacy skills, can be easily incorporated into any curricula; be it a history, psychology, sociology or AP course.”

The September 11 Education Program was developed over several years by the September 11th Education Trust, a prominent 9/11 organization comprised of victims’ family members, survivors, rescue workers and educators, united in the cause of teaching about 9/11 and its aftermath. Our comprehensive lesson plans are unique in that they are personalized and enriched through first-hand accounts, filmed oral histories, and authentic, primary archival materials to permanently record this shared historic event in a way that is not stagnant, but inspiring and relevant to the nation’s youth.

We believe that building on the story of 9/11—the courage, compassion and unprecedented civic responses—will translate well beyond the classroom and will be lessons that our nation’s youth can apply to lead more meaningful, productive lives.

It is our hope that this comprehensive program, which incorporates written lessons, an interactive DVD and web based resources, will enable you to impart the vital lessons of this tragic, yet inspiring time in American history.

Sincerely,

Patricia Reilly,
Sister of Lorraine Lee
Chairman

Anthony Gardner,
Brother of Harvey Joseph Gardner III
Director