



# America's Heroes



## Remembering September 11 Through Service

(NAPSA)—Over one year ago, President Bush signed into law the Unity in the Spirit of America initiative (USA) in response to the attacks on September 11. The USA initiative, sponsored into legislation by Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Jon Kyl (R-AZ), mandated the Points of Light Foundation to serve as the lead nonprofit organization to coordinate volunteer projects in honor of those who perished on that dark day in the nation's history.

The USA initiative, which kicked off in June 2002 and ended during National Volunteer Week in April 2003, resulted in 500,000 people doing 5,000 volunteer projects across the country in honor of the 500 persons listed on the USA Web site ([www.USA.PointsofLight.org](http://www.USA.PointsofLight.org)). Families that wanted their loved ones honored through volunteering submitted biographical information that was added to the honoree database on the Web site and used to match projects with the names of those lost.

Volunteer projects were conducted in every state: Florida had the most projects with a total of 454; California engaged the most volunteers, with a total of more than 45,000.

Large organizations as well as individuals conducted USA initiative projects; for example, Woodmen of the World installed flagpoles and presented flags at 740 public ceremonies nationwide in 2002, and this year they conducted another 400 ceremonies on September 11.

Mrs. Waneta Worstine, a Special Education teacher from Wilson Vance Intermediate School



**Former President and Mrs. Bush take part in the Unity in the Spirit of America initiative by reading to children in College Station, Texas.**

in Findlay, Ohio, coordinated another example of a USA project. Mrs. Worstine's students chose to share their compassion with the children of New York City firefighters lost on September 11 by writing more than 100 sympathy cards and collecting more than 100 books and about 173 stuffed animals to send to the children.

Major sponsors of the USA initiative included DisneyHand, the worldwide outreach program for The Walt Disney Company, and Ronald McDonald House Charities. Their commitment included financial support as well as use of their marketing resources and channels for raising national visibility of the program.

A lasting legacy of the USA initiative is One Day's Pay. The goal of this initiative is to permanently establish September 11 as a national day of voluntary service, charity and compassion. To learn more or to pledge your participation, please visit [www.onedayspay.org](http://www.onedayspay.org).

To view the online scrapbook of USA initiative service projects and the honorees visit [www.USA.PointsofLight.org](http://www.USA.PointsofLight.org).