

September 11, 2001: Resilience and Remembrance

On 9-11-01 we unexpectedly became victims of a crime against humanity. It shook our basic sense of trust, safety and security, brought us into two wars and changed our lives forever. Members of the NJPA Disaster Preparedness Committee were mobilized and every NJPA member assisted patients who were impacted and traumatized by 9-11. New Jersey was heavily impacted since it was convenient to live in New Jersey and commute to the World Trade Center. Cantor Fitzgerald was constructing a branch office in Shrewsbury, but due to construction delays these workers were still working in New York, which contributed to the 658 casualties from that company. Not only did the events of 9-11 impact our professional functioning, but it also affected our neighbors, friends, families and ourselves.

Members responded to 9/11 with various organizations, provided voluntary disaster mental health outreach services and signed up for NJPA's program – At a Time of Trauma and Grief – to provide free office-based consultations for 9/11 survivors. NJPA received an APA Erich Lindemann Disaster Response Grant and a commendation from the Assembly of the APA "for exemplary service rendered in response to the attack on America September 11, 2001."

Although the American Spirit has recovered with a triumph of freedom over fear, some of our patients are still deeply scarred and are being assisted by New Jersey psychiatrists. September 11, 2001 emphasized our need to fulfill our mission to facilitate the recovery of victims from this as well as other traumas and to better understand the causes of human violence.