



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Riverside Citywide Day of Service on Sept. 11 Will Honor First Responders

Annual event offers chance to serve community while remembering 2001 attacks

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside will remember the Sept. 11 attacks and honor our first responders during a Citywide Day of Service that starts with an opening ceremony at La Sierra University and concludes with an event at City Hall and a commemoration during the City Council meeting.

Community members are invited to attend either or both of the events and/or participate in one-hour clean-up events that will be held Sept. 3-11 in cooperation with Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful.

“Riverside has a special connection to the events of 9/11 because our first responders played a strong role in the rescue and cleanup efforts at Ground Zero those many years ago,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “The Citywide Day of Service is our community’s way to thank them every year, while also providing a public venue for remembering those we lost that day.”

The Riverside Fire Department is a member of California Urban Search and Rescue Task Force 6, which also includes fire personnel from Cal Fire, and the Corona, Hemet, Norco, Murrieta and Palm Springs Fire Departments, civilian K9 handlers, and structural and medical specialists.

Retired Fire Chief Mike Esparza and retired Deputy Chief Dave Austin will speak at the opening and closing ceremonies, respectively, about their service at the World Trade Center. A piece of steel I-Beam from the World Trade Center will be available for viewing at the closing ceremony. It was donated to Task Force 6 by the Port Authority of New York in gratitude for the team’s assistance.

People will begin gathering for the opening ceremonies at 8:30 a.m. at La Sierra University, 4500 Riverwalk Parkway. Music will be provided by the La Sierra University Department of Music, and the Alvard and Riverside unified school districts.

The ceremony begins at 9:11 a.m. Mayor Bailey will welcome attendees and introduce remarks from City Councilmembers Mike Gardner and Jim Perry, as well as Dr. Randal R. Wisbey, President of La Sierra University. Vocalists from La Sierra University's Music Department will sing patriotic songs.

First Responders Luncheons are scheduled at participating restaurants and food outlets around the city during the noon hour, hosted by Councilmembers Gardner and Perry as well as the planning committee: Kleinfelder, Bank of America, Office of the Mayor, La Sierra University, American Red Cross, LifeStream, Alvord Unified School District, Riverside Unified School District, Keep Riverside Clean & Beautiful, Best, Best & Krieger, Index Fresh, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, and many others.

A major part of the event is the service component. For those who wish to donate blood, LifeStream will be set up at Riverside City Hall, 3900 Main Street, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. For details, visit LStream.org. Other service opportunities include helping the American Red Cross install smoke alarms. Please contact Lynn Anderson at 951-826-5242 for more information.

Volunteer clean-up teams are encouraged to organize an hour of service with friends and co-workers, then connect with the event at RiversideCA.gov/SocialMedia and share photos with the hashtags #Riverside911DayofService and #ILoveRiverside.

To organize a community clean-up team and to ensure your efforts recognized during the events, contact Alex Rendon at 951-683-7100, ext. 212 or arendon@riverside-chamber.com.

“This event is an opportunity each year to look back in remembrance, but also to look forward to a brighter future together,” said Councilmember Gardner, who sits on the organizing committee with Councilman Perry. “I encourage all residents of Riverside to get involved in something that really has great meaning for our community.”

The event will continue at 5:30 p.m. at Riverside City Hall, 3900 Main Street, with a performance by the UCR Pipe Band and a reflection on the Day of Service from retired Deputy Fire Chief Dave Austin, who led a rescue and cleanup effort at Ground Zero in New York shortly after 9/11.

During the City Council meeting at 6 p.m., Mayor Bailey and City Councilmembers Gardner and Perry will thank event partners and sponsors and speak on what the event means to Riverside residents.

“From the west end to downtown, Riverside always turns out on the Citywide Day of Service to show our respect to and give thanks for our first responders,” Councilmember Perry said. “Our partners in the business and non-profit worlds make all of this possible, and we thank them for that.”

Mayor Bailey recently discussed the upcoming event on his “Riverside Monthly” show. That video can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqF3fXYm9E0&feature=youtu.be>