



**NORTH SUBURBAN
YMCA**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers Honor 9/11 Heroes with Service Projects at YMCA

Northbrook, IL: The somber 16th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks became a cause for reflection and community service at the North Suburban YMCA. A group of almost 50 volunteers gathered at the Y to remember the fallen and contribute something positive by beautifying outdoor public spaces.

The projects were made possible by a \$1000 grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency that partners with local organizations like the American Legion to promote community service. The grant was supplemented by a generous donation of supplies from Lowe's of Northbrook.

"We were honored to receive the September 11th National Day of Service & Remembrance American Legion Auxiliary grant," said Kelly Clippinger, NSYMCA Director of Event Operations. "It was great to see our community come together and lend a hand to help with our social responsibility projects, especially at a time that is so meaningful to all Americans."

Volunteers including members of the American Legion Auxiliary, local Boy Scouts, Y employees and members, and community families started the morning with a flag ceremony. A Scout honor guard lowered the flag to half-mast, and YMCA President/CEO Howard Schultz offered a thoughtful and motivational speech on the importance of community.

Following the ceremony, the volunteers worked together to clear brush from a creek bed, spread mulch for a garden, and perform other much-needed landscaping tasks. Children decorated stepping stones with colorful glass to enhance the garden space.

After a morning of hard work, the volunteers were treated to a pizza lunch provided by Lou Malnati's of Northbrook. The break gave participants an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of their experience in the context of the 9/11 tragedies.

Marie Luke, who served in the National Guard and did two tours in Iraq, came with her young daughter and father-in-law, who is also a Veteran. "I am so grateful for an opportunity like this to serve my community," said Marie. "I look for unique opportunities to serve the 9/11 tragedy and immediately chose this one at the Y. It is important to me to expose my daughter to experiences that are meaningful."

"So many people care and want to help on a day like today. We need all the kindness and generosity we can get," commented Tara Wesselink, NSYMCA Social Responsibility Chairman.

Even children who were not yet born at the time of the attacks were moved by the significance of the event. “This is really cool because 9/11 was such a bad thing,” noted 11-year-old Kaitlyn Fielding, the daughter of a YMCA staff member. “I feel we are doing something good in return.”

About the [North Suburban YMCA](#)

The North Suburban YMCA serves 15 northern suburbs of Chicago, and for over 48 years has provided programs and services that address youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility every day. Working together for good is who we are: An association of people united in a common effort to help individuals become healthier, more connected, and confident. There is no other nonprofit quite like the Y: We have the national and local presence and partnerships to not just promise, but deliver, positive change, making sure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive. For more information, visit nsymca.org.



1) Local Boy Scouts opened the 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony by lowering the flag to half-mast in front of the North Suburban YMCA.



2) NSYMCA President/CEO welcomed guests to the Remembrance Ceremony. He commented on the dedication of 9/11 survivors and families affected by the tragedy, who made the National Day of Service a positive legacy for their loved ones.



3) Participants included the American Legion Auxiliary, USO of Illinois, NSYMCA staff members, employees of Lowe's Home Improvement of Northbrook, and community volunteers.



4) Northbrook Village Board Member Jason Han helped to clear brush as part of the project to beautify the Y's community outdoor spaces.



5) Children decorated paving stones to be placed at the NSYMCA.



6) Volunteers distributed mulch and completed other landscaping projects at the Y.