

Press Release

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Amelia Academy 9/11 Never Forget Remembrance

On Tuesday, Sept. 11, the students of Amelia Academy got up early to arrive at school by 5:30 a.m. in order to place small American flags on the front lawn of the school. For the past eleven years, the Academy has memorialized the victims of the terrorist attacks of that tragic day in our nation's history.

In her opening remarks, Madison Barnard, president of the Student Government Organization, paid a special tribute to the 412 first-responders who died while trying to save others. "It is the least we can do to pledge never to forget them," she said, "and to remember the 2,977 lives that were taken that day."

This year's program, held in the gymnasium, included a special flag with the names of all the first-responders who died. The ladder truck, displayed on the front lawn with the flags, was in service with the Horseheads, New York, fire department, over 200

miles from New York City. The department stood ready to serve if needed on that day. The truck, currently owned by Carroll Harris, an Amelia resident, displays a memorial to the fallen fire fighters and other first-responders who served New York on Sept. 11.

After an opening prayer, led by Jason Morris, the Nottoway County High School Navy JROTC Color Guard presented the colors. Angela Anderson, also a faculty member and Academy parent, sang the National Anthem.

Students in grades pre-k through 4th grade performed songs led by Jaime Llewellyn, the Academy's music teacher.

The guest speaker for the ceremony was James Triesler, Director of Education at the Virginia War Memorial. Mr. Triesler taught in Chesterfield County Schools for many years and was named Teacher of the Year in Chesterfield as well as on a national level by several organizations.

In his remarks, Mr. Triesler said that Sept. 11, 2001 is his generation's Pearl Harbor. He spoke of the emotion World War II veterans have expressed about the day, December 7, 1941. "We have that same sense of anger and pain that remains fresh when we remember where we were on Sept. 11, 2001," he said. "What are we called to remember about that day, other than our own personal story of where we were?" he asked the audience that represented many generations of Amelia's citizenry.

We must remember the stories about the bravery of men and women who served our nation on that day and in the War on Terror that

continues today, Mr. Triesler said. We must remember the patriotism and love of country that spread across our nation after Sept. 11. Quoting President George W. Bush's State of the Union address in 2002, he said, "None of us would ever wish the evil that was done on September the 11th. Yet after America was attacked, it was as if our entire country looked into a mirror and saw our better selves. . . We began to think less of the goods we can accumulate, and more about the good we can do."

Mr. Triesler presented the official 9/11 memorial flag that will be displayed during the Commonwealth of Virginia program at the War Memorial tonight. He said that the flag is one more way that Virginians will never forget the tragedy of the attack on our nation on that fateful day.

The program closed with a prayer offered by Callie Walker, pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Amelia, and an Academy alumnus.