



## Hallway of Heroes (Grades K–6)

Students will create connections with real-life heroes in their community by sending letters and questions to learn more about their jobs and the sacrifices they make; creating customized thank you projects, and displaying these projects in a school hallway dedicated to community heroes. Local heroes will be invited to an Appreciation Day where they can walk the Hallway of Heroes themselves!

### Learn! Questions to investigate before getting started

- **Have students consider** what being a hero means to them.
- **Learn more** about what happened on September 11, 2001, and the heroic acts of emergency personnel, many of whom lost their lives that day. This could be done by interviewing those who remember that day and the days that followed, or by visiting [911day.org](http://911day.org).
- **Have students brainstorm** a list of the real-life heroes in their community—police officers, teachers, nurses, etc.
- **Ask students how much they know** about what firefighters, police officers, healthcare professionals, and other heroes do every day to help your community. Encourage them to share personal examples from their lives that certainly don't have to link to law enforcement, or to read local newspapers to learn more.
- **In order to illustrate an example** of local heroism, ask students if they know the location of the local firehouse or police station. Challenge them to estimate the number of firefighters and police officers who protect their community.
- **Read** about real students who honored fallen firefighters who died on September 11, 2001, by designing and making a quilt of remembrance. Visit <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/newsroom/news/2001-02/20020528?&print=true>.

Share your good deed on Twitter and Facebook using #911Day.  
(Or visit [911day.org](http://911day.org))

### Plan! Helpful hints to prepare for your 9/11 Day Project

- **Explain the project** to students and decide which type of personal heroes you will be honoring. Get the address(es) of the firehouse or whatever facility you'll need to contact based on your decision.
- **Select a date** to honor local heroes at the Hallway of Heroes.
- **Select a hallway** in the school to designate as the Hallway of Heroes. Get permission from school stakeholders (administration, teachers, custodians, etc.) to use the hallway.

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- **Create a list** of questions to ask the heroes who are chosen to learn more about their jobs, their sacrifices, and what they do to protect, serve, or improve the community. Make several copies of the list of questions so each local hero who participates in the project can have one. Include a space for “heroes” to write their names and how long they have been in their chosen professions.
- **Have students** write their letters to a local hero of theirs, introducing themselves and explaining that they would like to learn more about what their hero does for the community. Include the list of questions along with the letter and collect all letters together in one packet to send to the firehouse, hospital, or whatever facility is appropriate.
- **Send the packet of letters along with a cover note explaining** that students would like to honor the heroes they’ve chosen for the project. Request that individual doctors, teachers or whomever the subjects might be fill out the answers to students’ questions and, if comfortable, include their names and how long they have been in their job. A photo would be great, too!
- **Get** art materials for the thank you projects donated from a local crafts store.

### Do! Ready, set, go!

- **Once the letters come back** from the local heroes, have students read them. What can they learn from the letters? What surprises them most? What commonalities can they identify among all of the heroes? What would they want to say to these heroes?
- **Give** students ample time to create projects of thanks for the local heroes. This project should include information about the hero and what he or she has done to protect, improve, and serve the community. It can be a thank you letter, a poster, a sculpture, a diorama, a picture, or anything that could be featured in the Hallway of Heroes. Encourage students to include specific information about the hero they are featuring.
- **Create and send invitations** to the police station or other facility inviting all local heroes to come walk the Hallway of Heroes on the designated date.
- **Invite parents and other community leaders** so they can also say thank you!
- **Come up with ideas** for how the projects can be displayed in the hallway and organize groups of students to decorate and create the displays. Make a “red carpet” from bulletin board paper for the heroes to walk down!
- **Assign different roles** for students on the day of thanks, including greeters, speakers, photographers, videographers, etc.
- **On the day of thanks,** greet each hero and walk him or her down the hallway. Have students line up to clap and thank each hero!

### Think! Reflect on how your 9/11 Day Project has impacted students and the community

Have students create a graffiti wall (on butcher paper or a bulletin board) that shares what being a hero means to them. If possible, display the graffiti wall in the Hallway of Heroes.

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### Keep It Going! Ideas to continue your 9/11 Day Project or inspire others to get started

- **Have students** write a letter about their experience to the local newspaper so that all community members recognize their local heroes.
- **Have students** continue communicating with their local hero by sending a letter or postcard each quarter.
- **Visit [serve.gov](http://serve.gov)** for more ideas.

### Make Your 9/11 Day Pledge!

- **Visit [911day.org](http://911day.org)** and make your pledge as a class to observe 9/11 by engaging in good deeds. Share your plans on the site, and post on Facebook.



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