



MISSION

To build hope and provide healing to people around the world to continually “pay it forward” for the humanity, kindness, and volunteer spirit New Yorkers – and all Americans – experienced on 9/12.

WHAT SETS US APART

September 11 and the period that followed demonstrated that bravery, generosity, and resourcefulness are keys to the human spirit. Through our unique service model, we empower disaster survivors as volunteers to “pay forward” this spirit of hope and healing to communities whose hardships may not benefit from the level of resources focused on New York City. NYSTY achieves its results by focusing on the immediate and long-term needs of communities affected by disaster through activities that use the memory and experience of disaster to inspire hope and promote a culture of service.

For the past few years, we have operated five interrelated programs: 9/11 Anniversary Big Build, Hurricane Sandy First Responder Rebuilding Fund (completed in 2014), National 9/11 Flag Restoration (completed in 2014), 9/12 Generation Project (managed by the APEF 2/2015), and Stars of HOPE® (SOH).

We plan to leverage our expertise and experience in the coming years to advance two programs that have the potential to create large-scale, systemic change in disaster relief and recovery:

Stars of HOPE® (SOH). SOH is a global disaster relief/community art project dedicated to empowering children to transform communities impacted by disaster through colorful art and messages of hope and healing. Through SOH, children in communities devastated by disaster paint hopeful messages, inspirational words, and colorful designs on wooden stars as part of their personal, and their community’s collective, healing process. These stars are planted on street corners and attached to poles and fences throughout their communities, where they serve as tangible evidence of hope and bolster individual and communal mental health through the long-term recovery process. To date, we have transformed 126 communities in 22 countries through SOH.

We recently developed a streamlined approach, Stars of HOPE Box of HOPE (SOHBOH) by pre-packaging the materials into kits. SOHBOH will extend the global community of caring by empowering children and adults to send their messaged stars to people in need of hope in their own neighborhood, across the country, or across the world.

Build for LIFE (BFL). NYSTY started Build for LIFE following Hurricane Katrina to rebuild the homes of cancer patients and to empower cancer survivors to volunteer on these time critical and life-affirming rebuilding projects. Currently, there are no major disaster relief organizations that prioritize rebuilding the homes of cancer patients in disaster areas. Nor are there any organizations focused on empowering the large and motivated cancer survivor community as volunteers in the rebuilding effort. Build For LIFE is poised to create systemic change in the disaster relief space while scaling up one of the largest survivor empowerment and women’s empowerment volunteer organizations in history. The goal is to activate 100,000 cancer survivor volunteers - along with their friends and families - to help rebuild the homes of cancer patients in major disaster areas, including those still waiting to get home from Hurricane Sandy.

LOOKING AHEAD

Through more than a decade of responsiveness, bootstrapping, and grass-roots efforts, New York Says Thank You has assisted thousands of disaster survivors, empowered tens of thousands of volunteers, and inspired hundreds of thousands of students with programs encouraging service, hope, and community. As we enter our second decade, we seek to extend these successes and formalize the administration of our distinctive programs in order to reach our constituents more effectively while enhancing the sustainability of our organization.