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First Selectman Jayme Stevenson's Speech at Darien's 9/11 Memorial Ceremony

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First Selectman Jayme Stevenson made these brief comments Saturday morning at Darien's 9/11 ceremony.

Here's her speech, as prepared:

Good morning. Thank you for coming together today as one community to remember.

We've felt the anxiety leading up to this day, haven't we? How is it possible 20 years have passed since that tragic morning? A beautiful blue sky day just like today.

I see it in your faces — and in my husband's eyes this morning — the memory of 2,997 innocent lost souls who were our loved ones, our friends and our colleagues. A senseless, unthinkable tragedy.

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Each of us has a deeply personal memory of September 11 — we know exactly where we were as we watched in disbelief, the planes hit the towers and then ... their collapse.

Panicked phone calls were made, parents rushed to collect their children from school and our incredible first responders did as they always do — prepared to run straight into unknown danger to save lives. And our stories continued to unfold for days, weeks and months as we tried to make sense of the incomprehensible. Even today, I search the New York skyline for those towers, once an iconic symbol of American exceptionalism, only to see the void.

But something else happened — something miraculous grew from those dark days. We came together as one community — united by caring and compassion for one another and this great nation. The sense of love and pride for America was palpable — hope began to rise from the ashes that our nation would emerge stronger than ever.

So today, as we hold in our hearts the treasured memories of our lost loved ones and friends and as we honor the service and sacrifice of our first responders, let us also remember that we are One Nation, Under God and indivisible only if we set aside our differences to uphold America's most precious blessings — liberty and justice for all.

Tell your stories.

Pray for our brave soldiers who, for 20 years and to the very last moment, gave their lives in the name of Freedom.

Keep the memory of 9/11 alive.

We must Never Forget.

God Bless America