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CONTRIBUTED

Whippany Park Memorial to Honor Lance Corporal Chris Cosgrove and 9/11 Victims

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Five years ago, Hanover Township Police Officer Jim Grawehr began a mission. After working at the funeral services for fallen United States Marine Lance Corporal Christopher B. Cosgrove III in 2006, Grawehr wanted to do more. He approached Cosgrove's parents and became involved in several memorial efforts; but volunteering his time to events, such as the Annual L.Cpl. Chris Cosgrove III Golf Outing, wasn't enough for Grawehr. In 2009, he started a project that would span many years and see the donation of funds, time, materials, and expertise from all corners of the community.

At Whippany Park High School this October, Cosgrove's parents, the Hanover Township community, and Officer Grawehr, who currently serves as the high school's resource officer, will witness the opening of a special memorial to the victims September 11th and Lance Corporal Chris Cosgrove III, who gave his life defending his nation in Fallujah, Iraq.

Cosgrove was a 2001 graduate of Whippany Park where he played lacrosse, football, and was on the wrestling team. He graduated from Monmouth University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history. Prior to graduating college, Cosgrove enlisted in the U.S. Marine Reserves with G Company, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marines, based at Picatinny Arsenal. In October 2006, Cosgrove was killed by a suicide car bomber at an entry control point in Fallujah.

"Honoring Chris has become very important to me; but this story isn't about me It's about Chris Cosgrove and the many members of the community who have come forward to donate their time and resources to this worthy cause. This memorial will help keep Chris's memory, and the memory of those lost on 9/11, alive," comments Officer Grawehr. The memorial, which features a sculpture of angel wings with a plaque dedicated to Chris

Cosgrove's memory and a steel beam from the World Trade Center with a plaque commemorating those who lost their lives on September 11th, is located in the plaza by the main entrance to the football field at Whippany Park High School and serves as a permanent reminder to students and the community of life's fragility and the important sacrifices made by others.

The memorial is slated to open on October 1, 2016, the ten-year anniversary of Lance Corporal Christopher Cosgrove's untimely death. Whippany Park High School principal Christopher Kelly adds, "It is a privilege to honor the life and memory of Chris Cosgrove as well as the victims of 9/11. It's my hope that those who visit this monument will take a moment to consider the profound sacrifices of the fallen whom we honor."

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