



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON, DC

9/11 Anniversary & Day of Service

(7 minutes)

INTRODUCTION

Hello, I'm [NAME], [ROLE] of Student Veterans of America [CHAPTER NAME]. It is my privilege to be here with you recognizing a day that forever changed the United States. It is my hope that in marking this anniversary, we continue to honor those who were lost, as well as the sacrifices that were made, and continue to be made.

And, while many students here today do not personally remember 9/11, I am grateful that we have matriculated at a university that not only remembers the attacks but continues to celebrate the heroes who selflessly responded.

WHY WE GATHER

While the attacks of 9/11 occurred more than two decades ago, the reverberations continue across the globe, particularly for those Afghans who supported U.S. service members. What we've seen unfold in recent years is hard to watch without reflecting on the very nature of service offered by veterans, service members, military families, survivors, caregivers, allies, and supporters. But, it is clear that in unthinkable loss, some of the greatest comforts are the company of those who understand, those who seek to understand, and also, those who grieve or know grief themselves. No one is alone in this and that is exactly we have sought out this SVA chapter and SVA's national community.

Beyond the title of "Post-9/11 veteran" that most of us share, two other things about this annual gathering ring true to the 750,000 current SVA members I represent today: **Remembrance and Service.**

First, Remembrance is what brings us together today. In remembrance we acknowledge the fragility of the lives we lead, as well as the relationships that made us grow, shifting from physical presence to memory. Remembrance acknowledges the changes to our own personal identity in grief, the search for new meaning in life, and the ability to receive the love and support of the community left behind. Loss changes us, but with the grace of those we miss, it makes us stronger. Through hard losses, we receive hard-earned gains— and we remember.

To the other point, Service. Effecting positive change and living in service to others is also what we must take away from this day. If there is any sense to be made on this anniversary of our national tragedy, it is that we must double down and be the change we wish to see in this world.



We must not give in to despair but rise again and create a brighter future, not just for ourselves, but for all in our reach. Which brings me back to our organization.

As you might know, SVA convenes more Post-9/11 veterans than any of the other 45,000 veteran-serving organizations, or VSOs. And, that distinction is woven throughout the fabric of the Mission, which is to act as a catalyst for student veteran success by providing resources, network support and advocacy to, through, and beyond higher education. In doing so, SVA empowers student veterans to lead and live their best lives, forever transitioning their service into a living legacy of leadership, opportunity and service to their communities.

More than that, SVA Chapters and Chapter Leaders have a long history of stepping up to support their local communities. This year we plan to [DETAIL SERVICE PLANS] and as a result, [RELEVANCE OR IMPACT TO COMMUNITY].

Because we know from firsthand experience, many millions of SVA members over, whenever we gather together, we are all stronger, more impactful, and simply better— together.

IN SUMMARY

It is my solemn wish that as we serve together now, we spark the tradition of continuing to do so with each passing year, wherever each of us may be, long after this Day of Service and our own graduation from [UNIVERSITY], as a continual reminder of our collective strengths and vulnerabilities— because in the aftermath of 9/11, all Americans experienced and continue to experience how connected we truly are.

It is, again, my honor to remember and serve here with you today. I would like to offer our continued heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of [UNIVERSITY] alumni lost to 9/11 and the war on terror, on behalf of Student Veterans of America [CHAPTER NAME]. Thank you.

