

Governor Quinn Honors Fallen Heroes on Tenth Anniversary of September 11, 2011

Written by Andrew Mason

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Unveils Portrait of a Soldier Memorial Exhibit, Encourages Remembrance and Service

CHICAGO – September 11, 2011. Governor Pat Quinn today joined Gold Star families to honor the sacrifices that Illinois servicemembers have made in the global war against terrorism since Sept. 11, 2001. Governor Quinn unveiled the Portrait of a Soldier Memorial exhibit this morning at DePaul University in Chicago.

“As we observe the anniversary of one of America’s darkest days, we must remember those who have given their lives to protect our country and the debt we owe them that can never be repaid,” Governor Quinn said. “I am proud today to stand with some of Illinois’ true heroes – our Gold Star families – as we honor the sacrifice they and their loved ones have made.”

The Portrait of a Soldier Memorial exhibit, which has been viewed by thousands of people throughout Illinois, is a series of hand-drawn portraits of more than 250 Illinois men and women who have died in service to our country since Sept. 11, 2001.

Starting today, the exhibit will be on display at DePaul University’s Loop campus at 333 South State Street through September 16.

Artist Cameron Schilling of Mattoon drew the first portrait of a soldier in August 2004, after Army

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Spc. Charles Neeley, also of Mattoon, was killed in Iraq. Schilling presented the portrait to Spc. Neely's parents to convey his sympathy for their loss. In Oct. 2005, while a student at Eastern Illinois University, Schilling decided to draw a portrait of every Illinois servicemember who has fallen during the Global War on Terror.

Governor Quinn is encouraging Illinois residents to pause today and recognize the servicemen and servicewomen who have lost their lives fighting for democracy overseas and the thousands of Illinois troops that have served around the world in the 10 years since September 11, 2011. All state buildings have been directed to fly their flags at half-mast from sunrise to sunset.

In recognition of the victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks, Governor Quinn also proclaimed today a day of service and remembrance. A copy of the proclamation is attached.

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