

Written by Leslie Wertheimer
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Lauds "Portrait of a Soldier" Exhibit in Chicago; Let us "Remember, Reflect, Serve"

CHICAGO – September 11, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn called for a day of “remembrance, reflection and service” to honor the victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks and servicemembers killed in the global war on terror. The governor today unveiled the “Portrait of a Soldier” traveling exhibit now on display at the Chicago Public Library Archer Heights Branch. This riveting collection by Mattoon artist Cameron Schilling features 250 hand-drawn portraits of each Illinois servicemember killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thus far in 2012, 10 Illinois service members have been killed in Afghanistan.

“On this anniversary of one of America’s darkest days, let us remember, reflect and serve,” Governor Quinn said. “We should never forget the horror faced by those in the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the courage of the passengers on United Flight 93, and the ultimate sacrifice made by our 6,600 fallen heroes in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

Governor Quinn directed state buildings to fly their flags at half-staff today and also called on Illinois residents to take time to thank a veteran, help a military family or salute a Gold Star family. Illinois residents can learn ways to help veterans and military families at OperationHomefront.org

which is among the nation’s most popular and informative sites in support of our troops. The entire “Portrait of a Soldier” exhibit can also be viewed there.

Governor Quinn Salutes Illinois Fallen Heroes on September 11

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Seen by thousands of people at more than 100 venues across the state since 2005, "Portrait of a Soldier" is a tribute to the 250 men and women from Illinois killed in the line of duty since 2001. Artist Cameron Schilling drew the first portrait in 2004, when he sketched Army Spc. Charles Neeley, a 19-year old Mattoon resident who died in Tikrit, Iraq, and presented the sketch to Neeley's parents. Months later, while a student at Eastern Illinois University, Schilling committed to draw a portrait of every Illinois service member.

"These sketches are a moving tribute to those Illinoisans who gave their 'last full measure of devotion' to protecting our freedoms," Governor Quinn said.

The "Portrait of a Soldier" exhibit can be seen at the Chicago Public Library Archer Heights Branch and at Kaskaskia College in Centralia September 11 to 24. Lt. Governor Sheila Simon will officially open the "Portrait of a Soldier" exhibit and honor military families at 6 p.m. tonight at Kaskaskia College.

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