

From 9/11 Loss, a Legacy of Hope: Memorial Museum Honors Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation

Twenty-five years after September 11, a museum exhibit honors Razia's Ray of Hope and two 9/11 widows whose work for Afghan women and girls has come full circle

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, September 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- After losing their husbands in the September 11 attacks, Massachusetts women Patti Quigley and Susan Retik, both pregnant at the time, connected through a shared impulse to do good in the wake of tragedy. Together, they co-founded Beyond the 11th, a nonprofit that has since awarded more than \$1.75 million in grants to organizations supporting Afghan widows.

Through her humanitarian work, Quigley met Razia Jan, an Afghan native living in Massachusetts who had been supporting first responders and rescue workers at Ground Zero since the days after the attacks. Jan was working to establish a girls' school in rural Afghanistan, and Quigley was immediately drawn to her mission. Together they founded Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation, with Quigley establishing U.S. operations and Jan returning to Afghanistan to open a school for girls outside Kabul, serving villages where no girls' school had ever existed.

"Today, more than 900 Afghan girls are receiving an education because Razia turned our collective loss into opportunity and hope for Afghan girls," said Quigley. Razia's Ray of Hope anticipates over 1,000 kindergarten through sixth grade girls in the coming year. The Foundation provides free education, meals, transportation, uniforms, and school supplies, in the only country in the world where girls are barred from secondary education.

The National September 11 Memorial & Museum is sharing the story in a new gallery, "In Their Honor: 25 Years of 9/11 Inspired Service." The exhibit features items from the permanent Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation, including embroidered kite pins, books, uniforms, and photographs from the Foundation's school.

Beyond the 11th is winding down and its legacy will be carried forward through an endowment that will sustain the Razia's Ray of Hope Widow's Program, supporting widowed mothers of students at the school. From September 10 to 12, Quigley, Retik, and 42 supporters are riding the final Beyond the Bike event, a 260-mile cycling event from Ground Zero in Manhattan to Boston, to raise funds to complete the Widow's Program endowment.

Twenty-five years after finding each other through shared loss, Quigley and Retik have come full

circle, serving together on the Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation's Board of Directors in their shared work for Afghan women and girls.

"We chose to not meet hate with more hate. We chose to find humanity in this tragedy" said Retik.

Kayla Nocon

Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation

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