

Veterans Honor the Fallen in Tunnels to Towers 5K

Post-9/11 veterans proud to participate in run benefiting first responders and military

NEW YORK, NY (September 24, 2015) – Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) members are honored to participate once again in the [Stephen Siller Tunnels to Towers 5K Run and Walk](#), Sunday, Sept. 27 in Lower Manhattan. The run, which was the first commemorative event created following 9/11 and has been held on the final weekend of September since 2002, benefits the Stephen Siller Foundation honoring U.S. military and first responders.

“Connecting returning vets and their families has been a key element for IAVA since its inception,” said Paul Rieckhoff, CEO and Founder of IAVA and 9/11 first responder. “Through these events veterans are able to connect and reunite with a community. This simple idea is empowering, and I can think of no better occasion to connect veterans with one another than the Tunnel to Towers Run. So many of our service men and women were inspired by the heroes of 9/11 and as we walk and run in the footsteps of Stephen Siller we will also be thinking of our lost brothers and sisters in combat.”

IAVA member veterans, family and friends will also join at a [VetTogether](#) on Friday, Sept. 25 at 5 p.m. ET before the run, for a pasta carbo-load dinner. [VetTogethers](#) are held nationally and are designed to build camaraderie and help service members stay connected following their return stateside.

Firefighter and father of five, [Stephen Siller](#), is one of the many remarkable heroes of 9/11. Siller was off duty when the World Trade Center was attacked, and rushed on foot through gridlocked traffic with 60 pounds of gear on his back through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel to the World Trade Center. Siller was last seen with his brothers of Squad 1, Brooklyn, all of whom died saving others. Participants of the Tunnel to Towers Run retrace Siller’s final footsteps through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel to the World Trade Center site.

What began as a runner-led memorial for Siller eventually evolved into ensuring that honor and service is provided to the brave men and women serving in America’s recent wars, as well as courageous first responders who serve domestically every day.

The run kicks off at 9:30 a.m. ET in Brooklyn. “Team IAVA” will include 40 runners and walkers. After the run, IAVA members are invited to a [VetTogether](#) at Rieckhoff’s home in Lower Manhattan to relax, enjoy good food and conversation, and reflect on their Tunnel to Towers day. IAVA was founded and is headquartered in New York City.