

September 1, 2007

NEW YORK POST

Rebuttal

To The Editor:

With the sixth anniversary of 9/11 soon upon us, it was disheartening, to say the least, to read the damaging inaccuracies and misleading headline featured in a recent *New York Post* article ("Greedy Cop Group to Hand Out \$9M in 9/11 Donations, August 26, 2007). Shame on you for exploiting the survivors of law enforcement professionals lost on this tragic day and point fingers at a fraternal organization that has worked tirelessly to help those left behind as well as responders who are now facing serious long-term health issues as a result of their heroic rescue efforts --- all for the sake of selling newspapers.

When the Fraternal Order of Police received \$15 million in post-9/11 donations, its foundation made every effort to ensure that the money, half of which was disbursed within 18 months, was used in the best way possible to help the hundreds of law enforcement officers and families affected by this event-- all within the limits of the law.

The majority of the remaining funds was placed in annuities, owned by the FOP Foundation and the WTC Fund and carried on the books as such, and specifically allocated to provide assistance to responders facing increasingly debilitating respiratory and other health-related issues as a result of 9/11. Thankfully, the FOP had the foresight to anticipate such a need, as well as the resources to help ease the financial burdens of those officers who suffered catastrophic injuries and their families, long before any other organization even acknowledged the respiratory issues.

Using the interest from the funds, the FOP has given and has intended to provide donations to such effective WTC medical monitoring programs as the New York Detox Center and Nassau County University Medical Center's WTC Medical Monitoring Program which, through such donations, pioneered treatment and monitoring that lead to creation of the Mount Sinai Hospital Program. Other benefiting charities include Sloane Kettering Cancer Center and Debora Heart and Lung, both of which treat 9/11 responders.

Under the direction of Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, the remaining funds will now be disbursed according to guidelines established by his office, including \$3.3 million to the Mount Sinai Program and the remaining \$6 million to the families of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Although Cuomo's decision is not totally in line with the goals and objectives set by its foundation, as it does not provide for any future post-9/11 health-related needs, the FOP has decided not to argue this decision to save its membership from exhaustive legal costs and to be able focus its efforts on its numerous fraternal community programs, which include helping law enforcement officers in need.

The FOP did not purchase any buildings, pay off any debts or spend any of this money on itself, as your article falsely stated. In the future, we invite your news organization to give us a call for clarification of the facts before they file a story regarding this dedicated organization of law enforcement professionals, so the damage and suffering you have caused by this story will not be repeated.

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The Fraternal Order of Police is the largest law enforcement organization in America with more than 300,000 officers. The New York State Lodge has over 20,000 members representing virtually every police department in the state.