

FireWork

iWomen's Member Newsletter

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Women at Ground Zero: Ten Years Later

By Susan Hagen

Mary Carouba and I are native Californians, and that's where we were the day terrorists forced two commercial airliners into Manhattan's World Trade Center towers. Never could we have imagined how much our lives would change that day, despite living on the opposite coast when the tragedy occurred.

I was a firefighter/EMT with a rural fire department in Northern California's wine country, and Mary was an investigative social worker. As we watched nonstop coverage of the unfolding events, we became more and more disturbed by the media's portrayal of rescue workers as "firemen, policemen, brothers, and our brave guys."

Because we are women, and because we were so aware of the obvious omission, we felt both obligated and compelled to do something about it. Initially, we were motivated by anger. We couldn't just sit there and allow women to slip into the background of American history. Nor were we willing to let current and future generations of children grow up believing that only men are strong, brave, and heroic.

A few weeks later, without any press credentials, literary agents, or inside contacts, we were on a plane bound for the New York City, on a mission to find the women first responders and tell their stories. That's when everything began to change.

A lifelong commitment

We were strangers when we met them, but after sharing ten years in the orbit of a post-9/11 world, we've come to realize how completely the 30 women we interviewed for our book have overtaken our hearts. What began in a moment of outrage has evolved into both a labor of love and a lifelong commitment to honoring these and all women in law enforcement, fire, and emergency services.

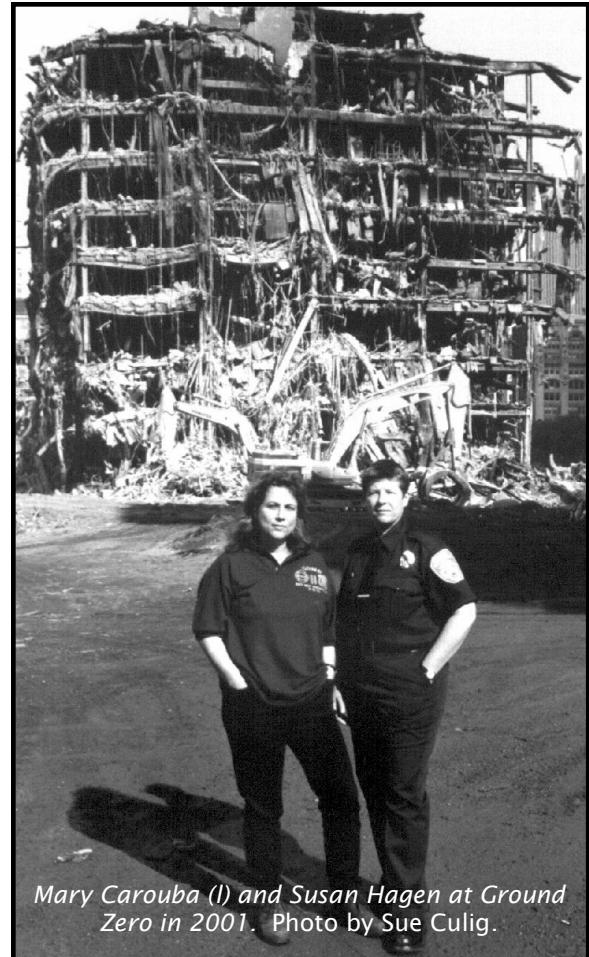
This summer, 22 of the women featured in our book, "Women at Ground Zero: Stories of Courage and Compassion," gathered again at the World Trade Center site.

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Mary Carouba (l) and Susan Hagen at Ground Zero in 2001. Photo by Sue Culig.

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President's Corner

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This month we will honor the 10th anniversary of September 11th, 2001 which represents the loss of thousands of innocent people in terrible tragedies at three separate locations. We lost brothers and sisters in the fire and emergency services that day and we are continuing to see the devastating health effects on many more fire and emergency service personnel. Those of us old enough to remember that day and the graphic pictures will never forget what we were doing, where we were, and the impact it had on this country.

I can't put into words how I felt then and how I feel now other than a sense of loss and great sadness for all the families and friends who lost a loved one that day. However, I think we need to focus on the positives that can be found after such an incident. I am not discounting or disregarding the significance of the events that day, but I try to find something positive in every negative experience. We have a renewed sense of pride and commitment in our profession for one thing. Also, we now have the Department of Homeland Security which has helped bring about changes that have strengthened our response capabilities with funding, training, and a better understanding of terrorism and preparations for events in our own communities.

We should also remember that women lost their lives that day, not just men, and it is a moment of truth that women can and are just as capable of being firefighters as men; sharing the same responsibilities and the same risks. I have been told that there was a slight increase in the number of women being hired as firefighters after September 11th, 2011. I can only speculate as to why. I think there was such an emotional impact on this country and people felt compelled to do something to help others and our profession certainly exemplifies that desire. I would like to see that momentum pick back up again. This is an opportunity for all of us women to recruit others on such an important day for all firefighters and EMS personnel.

In remembrance of that day, I encourage you to watch CNN's documentary, "Beyond Bravery: the Women of 9/11," which airs at 9 p.m. ET on Sunday, September 11th. The documentary is based on the book, "Women at Ground Zero: Stories of Courage and Compassion," by Susan Hagen and Mary Caruba. Copies of this book are available through the iWomen [on-line store](#). A portion of the proceeds from each book sold through our store will benefit the iWomen organization.

Lastly, I would like to encourage you to observe a moment of silence on September 11th to honor those that lost their lives on that tragic day 10 years ago.

Have a good month,



Study Results: Empathy and Propensity for Risk Taking Among Women and Men in 'Heroic' Occupations

by Rebecca Jacques

I recently completed my dissertation research project on rescue-oriented occupational roles that included firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, and career lifeguards. There is very little research regarding the individual characteristics or personality of those who choose to work in rescue occupations. There is even less research on personality differences (or similarities) between women and men in these roles. As a basis for this study, a specific model of heroism and its applicability to rescue occupations was assessed. While not all academics or professionals in the field accept these roles as heroic, there is a strong cultural and social association of heroism with rescue jobs.

The heroism model asserted that heroic individuals possess both high empathy and a propensity to take physical risks, and defined heroism as taking "risks on behalf of one or more other people, despite the possibility of dying or suffering serious physical consequences from these actions" (Becker & Eagly, 2004, p.

164). This definition appeared to apply to rescue occupations. Therefore, in the hope to better understand the women and men who choose rescue careers, this study assessed if the 'heroic' characteristics of empathy and physical risk taking would distinguish rescue occupations from other types of job roles.

Key Findings:

Overall, this study found partial support for Becker and Eagly's (2004) model as applied to rescue occupations. Some physical risk taking behaviors could distinguish individuals in rescue occupations from those in non-rescue occupations. These behaviors included recreational risks (ex. sky diving, wilderness camping, etc.) and prosocial risks (risks taken to help others such as going into a burning building to evacuate people). Physical risk taking also distinguished men from women. In other words, individuals in professional rescuer roles were more likely to engage in these risk taking activities compared to individuals in non-rescue roles, and

men, in general, were greater risk takers than women, in general.

Empathy, on the other hand, did not distinguish the occupational groups or strongly distinguish the women and men. Neither occupational group nor gender group was particularly high or

unusually low on empathy, indicating that empathy was not a distinct motivator for any group.

This study also demonstrated that women in rescue occupations can be quite similar to their male cohorts on empathy and risk taking. High recreational and prosocial risk taking, in particular, helped to distinguish rescue occupations from non-rescue occupations, and in the rescue group women were found to be well matched with the men on these behaviors. Additionally, the women and men in the rescue group were similar on empathy. In contrast, the non-rescue women in this study were significantly different from the non-rescue men on the factors of empathic concern and recreational risks.

Implications:

While not all expectations of this study were met, there are several useful implications for researchers and professionals that can be derived from this study.

First, by understanding the dominant characteristics of specific jobs and the motivational influences behind career selection, job seekers can identify roles that best fit their personality and interests. For example, a propensity to engage in high risk sports and recreational activities may be an indicator of someone who would fit well into a rescue occupational role. Also, individuals who are not particularly high or unusually low on empathy may also fit well into rescue roles.

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Study Results: Empathy and Propensity for Risk Taking among Women and Men in 'Heroic' Occupations By Rebecca Jacques

Additionally, despite traditional views that women are not well suited for rescue work, the rescue women and rescue men in this study were similar in their moderate empathy and high physical risk taking behavior. This suggests that women rescuers, at least in part, are able to embrace the individual qualities required of the rescue job environment.

Finally, the information gained from this study has added to the definition of heroism. Previous research has indicated that high emotionality may interfere with rescuers ability to do their jobs (Scott & Myers, 2005). In the current study, the rescue group demonstrated empathy similar to that of other occupations supporting the idea that having high empathy, which encompasses an emotional response, may actually interfere with the ability to engage in rescue activities. Therefore, empathy may not be the prosocial motivator influencing professional, and perhaps even nonprofessional, rescue behavior. This suggests that Becker and Eagly's (2004) heroism model as defined by the components of empathic concern and propensity to take physical risks may be too limited.

References:

Becker, S. W., & Eagly, A. H. (2004). The heroism of women and men. *American Psychologist*, 59, 163-178.

Scott, C. & Myers, K. K. (2005). The socialization of emotion: Learning emotion management at the fire station. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 33, 67-92.

Rebecca Jacques recently graduated with her doctorate in Clinical and Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Alliant International University in San Diego, CA. To request a more detailed summary of this research study, please contact r-jacques@live.com.



New! iWomen Merchandise
Order yours today at PMI/iWomen Merchandise Store



Pricing & product details are available on the store's website at PMI/iWomen Merchandise Store

Show your support! A portion of all sales benefit iWomen.

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Women at Ground Zero: Ten Years Later By Susan Hagen

This time, they were there to be filmed, photographed, and interviewed by CNN anchor and special correspondent Soledad O'Brien, who is using their stories as the basis for a documentary that airs September 8th and 11th on CNN.

"Beyond Bravery: the Women of 9/11," is the kind of meaningful coverage that should have happened ten years ago, when every media outlet in the country was scrambling for stories about 9/11 heroes. But it didn't. On the first anniversary we were rushing our book into print, hoping it would be the first of many to bring the stories of 9/11 women rescue

workers to light. Ten years later, it's still the only one.

CNN gives women their due
 Today, CNN Senior Producer Rose Arce and her staff are our new heroes, determined to make sure the tenth anniversary of 9/11 includes a major nod to women. Rose happens to be one of the women we interviewed for our book, because of her fearless reporting and the risks she took to broadcast to people trapped in the Towers. What we set out to do with this book ten years ago is happening now, thanks to Rose and her staff: a major news station is finally giving women rescuers their due.

But we haven't done it alone. Over the last decade, many of these women have stepped out of their

comfort zone to become speakers on behalf of women first responders everywhere. For them, "comfort zone" is relative; most are more at home fighting fires than making public appearances. But several have accompanied us on stage as we've taken their stories around the country because they believe the same thing we do: no matter how much time has passed since 9/11, the stories of women on the fire ground still need to be told.

Women were there on September 11, doing what they were trained to do. They were a major part of America's greatest rescue effort, helping to lead more than 25,000 people to safety. Some of our sisters died in the line of duty that day. Many more were injured or forced to give up careers they loved because of subsequent illness. One way or another, it affected them all.

Mary and I wanted so badly to be at Ground Zero this summer for the CNN shoot, but our lives in California kept us from traveling to New York for the reunion. Someone sent me a picture on my cell phone that afternoon, and there they were, the first half dozen to arrive, gathered together in a fuzzy snapshot, wearing their uniforms with humble pride. I felt an immediate and overpowering sense of love for them, homesick for these women who were strangers to me ten years ago.



9/11 first responders (l to r) Brenda Berkman, FDNY; Terri Tobin, NYPD; Regina Wilson, FDNY; Bonnie Giebfried, EMT; Carey Policastro, NYPD; Carol Paukner, NYPD, and Sue Keane, PAPD view new construction at Ground Zero holding photos of colleagues lost in the collapse: (l to r) Moira Smith, NYPD; Yamel Merino, EMT; Kathy Mazza, PAPD.

Photo by Vivienne Foley/CNN

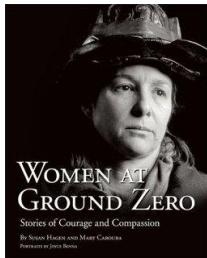
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Women at Ground Zero: Ten Years Later
By Susan Hagen

To us, they will always be our friends, our family, our colleagues, and our heroes – not just for what they did on 9/11, but for who they are every day of their lives.

Susan and Mary are offering their book through the [iWomen online bookstore](#). A portion of the proceeds from each book sold through our bookstore will benefit iWomen.



For signed and/or personally inscribed copies, contact Susan Hagen at 707-824-6886 or suzhagen@sonic.net. Visit the website at www.womenatgroundzero.com for more about the book and author appearances.

CNN's documentary, "Beyond Bravery: the Women of 9/11," which airs at 9 p.m. ET on Sunday, September 11th. The documentary is based on the book, "Women at Ground Zero: Stories of Courage and Compassion," by Susan Hagen and Mary Caruba.

iWomen Membership Renewals

Watch for your iWomen membership renewal notice in your email inbox. Renewal notices are emailed to you from the staff office during your anniversary month.

Not sure if your membership is current? Contact our staff office at 703-896-4858 or via email at staff@i-women.org.

9/11 Memorial

Submitted by the National September 11th Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center Foundation, Inc.

This September, the 9/11 Memorial will open on the 10th anniversary of the attacks. Building the Memorial has been an act of love and gratitude; an expression of our grief and our resilience; and it is a reflection of our commitment to teach and inspire future generations.

As we prepare for the opening of this important national landmark, we also take the time to remember the events of that terrible morning, the loss we have suffered, and the gratitude we owe the heroic rescuers who saved tens of thousands of lives. We can continue to find strength in the memory of those who perished, in the courage they showed, in the love they left us, and in the recognition that we honor their lives by living ours to the fullest.

The first responders were crucial to helping many people escape from the World Trade Center, and their bravery is recounted in stories from many of the survivors. Men and women from the New York Police Department, Port Authority Police Department, the Fire Department of New York, and other emergency service and first responder agencies, raced to the site and responded with unparalleled courage in the wake of unimaginable tragedy. Hundreds perished heroically. The September 11 attacks resulted in the largest loss of emergency responders in a single event in U.S. history.

We invite you to reserve your free visitor pass to come pay tribute to those we lost at the National September 11 Memorial. For more information about the 9/11 Memorial, please visit www.911memorial.org.



Photo by Joe Woolhead



**2012 International Conference
February 8-10, 2012
Wyndham Westshore in Tampa, Florida**

Reminder: *Submission deadline is September 9, 2011.*

The International Association of Women in Fire & Emergency Services (iWomen) is currently seeking proposals to present workshops at our 2012 International Conference which will be held February 8-10, 2012, in Tampa, Florida.

We are looking for workshop proposals for the following program tracks:

- Leadership/Human Relations
- Operations/Tactical – firefighting and EMS
- Wildland Firefighting
- Hands-on - Operations/Tactical

Our conference attendees come from a wide range of areas within the fire service including chief officers, structural and wildland firefighters, public education specialists, arson investigators, fire service educators, human relations officers, EMS professionals and volunteer firefighters.

iWomen can offer each presenter a complimentary registration to the 2012 International Conference and a reduced hotel room rate at the conference hotel for two nights. We will also offer presenters an honorarium of \$300 to help offset travel costs (to include meals, incidentals, and hotel room).

Proposals should be submitted electronically (Word document is the preferred format) to staff@i-women.org.
Submission deadline is September 9, 2011.

Proposals should include the following:

- Your name and current contact information
- Organization/job title
- Workshop Track (see above categories)
- Workshop Title
- Type of Training session (interactive/practical, lecture, facilitated group, discussion, hands-on etc.)
- Brief Description of workshop content to include workshop objectives (please do not send a PowerPoint presentation of your workshop)
- Length of workshop session (prefer classroom workshops that are 2 hours in length and hands-on workshops that are 4 hours in length)
- Description of special equipment or facilities required
- Maximum number of attendees per session
- Any special considerations we need to be aware of to include scheduling/travel restrictions
- Documentation/bio of your credentials for presenting the workshop

Meet our New Trustee

Welcome Firefighter Amanda Haas!

Amanda is currently a Reserve Firefighter with the City of Glendale (AZ) Fire Department.

She joined the fire service when she was 24, starting with EMS. Working in a smaller department she had the opportunity to do so many different things. After completing EMT training she immediately achieved her Fire I & II and Wildland firefighter status. She went on to become Rope I & II certified along with Hazmat, Swiftwater and Scuba rescue certified. Because Amanda had small children she also wanted to become more knowledgeable about medical care with pediatrics and took extra classes regarding PALS.

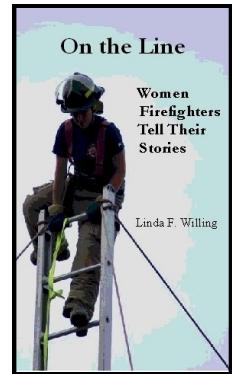
Amanda also enjoys working with the fire department to provide quilts for St. Joseph's Children's Hospital, Christmas programs and supporting their canine arson investigation program. She has also been an officer of the volunteer and reserve program. Amanda first joined Women in the Fire Service (WFS) in 1995.

Firefighter Haas is the trustee of iWomen's Volunteer Section.



On the Line: Women Firefighters Tell Their Stories by Linda F. Willing

This new book features profiles of more than 35 women firefighters from across the United States and Canada, representing departments from the largest in the nation to ones that are entirely made up of volunteers. Four women talk about their experiences on 9/11 at the World Trade Center and Pentagon. The stories demonstrate the diversity of women who do this challenging job, as well as their sense of common mission and love of being firefighters. The stories of the women in this book will also inspire young women to pursue careers and vocations in emergency services, as they see that firefighters come from all types of backgrounds (the book features former teachers, an opera singer, two lawyers, several full-time moms, among others). As one woman said, "It's not just a brotherhood anymore."



A few advance copies are available through www.rwtraining.com. The book will be available from all major online booksellers starting around the middle of September. Please contact linda@rwtraining.com for more information.

Save the Date!

Join us for our
2012 International
Conference
February 8th-10th in
Tampa, Florida



Upcoming Events

Fire Service Women Workshop

Hosted by the Portsmouth (VA) Fire Department and
Norfolk (VA) Fire-Rescue

October 11-12, 2011

For more information please visit their website at <http://www.portsmouthva.gov/fire/Joint%20Registration%20Form.pdf>

Firewomen 2011 Conference

Women and Men Firefighters: Come together in Colorado
October 6-9, 2011!

Sponsored by the Colorado Division of Fire Safety and hosted by the High Country Training Center in Summit County, Colorado, **Firewomen 2011** will offer three days of hands-on training, great classroom workshops, fun social events, and lots of networking time with local firefighters as well as firefighters from all over the country and the world. There will also be two fantastic pre-conference seminars you won't find anywhere else, and a post-conference trip in the Colorado mountains where you can enjoy a few more days with old and new friends.

Go to www.firewomen2011.net to register—full conference registration, which includes all workshops, programs, social events, meals, and a one year membership for new members in iWomen, but act fast because space is limited.

20th Conference Network of Female Firefighters Germany

The 20th conference of the Network of Female Firefighters Germany takes place in Frankfurt/Main from November 4 to 6, 2011. The conference aims to facilitate communication exchange and the advanced training of women fire fighters. The participants come from all categories of professional, full-time, industrial, volunteer and county fire brigades. In recent years it has also been our privilege to welcome colleagues from other countries.

The program offers a mix of theoretical and practical workshops in all areas of fire fighting. However, sports, self-awareness, personality development and women's issues are also on the program. There is time scheduled to share experiences. If you plan to attend the conference and want to extend your stay in Germany or Europe please let us know. We would be happy to assist you. To get an impression about the last conferences browse through our photo gallery.

For registration details please visit: <http://englisch.netzwerk-feuerwehrfrauen.com/13.html>



iWomen is the voice of women in fire and emergency services.

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You have received this newsletter because you are a member of the International Association of Women in Fire and Emergency Services (formerly, Women in Fire Services and Women Chief Fire Officers). If you would like to opt-out of this type of communication, please log into your member account on our website and select "unsubscribe" or contact our staff office via email at staff@i-women.org.