

Family Affairs

9/11 | VICTIMS REMEMBERED BY NEW PORT AUTHORITY POLICE CHIEF

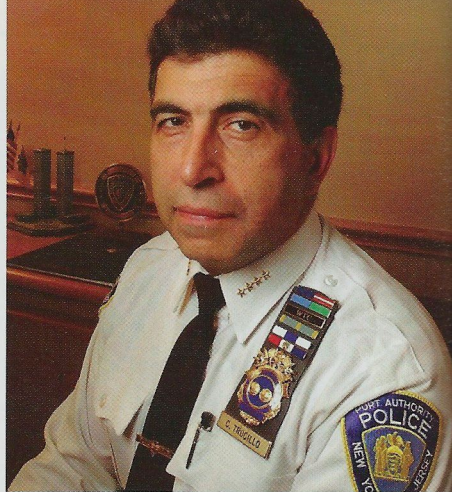
• On September 11, 2001, Christopher Trucillo—who at the time headed the Internal Affairs Bureau for the Port Authority (PA) police—was at a symposium in Atlantic City when he learned that a plane had hit Tower One of the World Trade Center. Besides his many friends and colleagues who worked there, his brother-in-law, Antonio Rocha, was employed at Cantor Fitzgerald on the 105th floor. "I immediately headed for my car," says Trucillo (NCAS'78, SCJ,91). "As I listened to the radio on the drive north, I thought about all the families who were going through what my family was going through."

In those first few hours, the officers in his unit asked for permission to head for the site to assist in the search-and-rescue mission. "I redirected them to what, in a lot of ways, may have been a more difficult task," says Trucillo. "We needed to immediately reach out and open up the lines of communication to the 37 families who had reported a loved one missing." He and his family would also soon be grieving for the loss of his brother-in-law.

This September 11th marks three years since Trucillo first mobilized that group from his unit. Trucillo, along with retired detective Barbara Mahon, has continued to serve as a PA liaison to those families. "In many respects, the families are the true heroes," says Trucillo, promoted to chief of the entire PA police department in February. "While going through such terrible grief, they have represented us with an incredible amount of dignity and class."

In the days and months that followed, Trucillo's unit helped the families provide the medical examiner's office with DNA samples from their loved ones. His unit also communicated any news from that office to the families; the remains of only 18 of the 37 PA officers who lost their lives were recovered. "We haven't forgotten the families and are still at their service," says Trucillo, who grew up in Harrison and lives in Old Bridge.

Trucillo says that there isn't a day that goes by when he doesn't find himself asking, "What if?" For five years, his office was on the 84th floor of Tower One. Says Trucillo, "Several of my close friends and colleagues who rushed to the scene to assist with the rescue that day died."



Trucillo oversees police operations for metropolitan area bridges, tunnels, and airports.