

# Passaic County Technical Institute

*“Passaic County’s Award-Winning Public High School for Academics, Careers & Technology”*

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## PRESS RELEASE

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## PCTI Graduate Designs National “911 Heart Symbol”

**Wayne, NJ – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** –Thirteen years ago, the tragedy of 9/11 shook our very nation to its core. One of Passaic County Technical Institute’s (PCTI) very own alumnus, Louie Ponstingel, was so deeply touched by the event that he created what became known as the 911 Heart Symbol, an emblem that pays tribute to those who perished on that fateful day.

Days before the high school’s traditional 9/11 assembly, 1980 PCTI Commercial Arts graduate, Louie Ponstingel, delivered a beautiful white flag bearing the 911 Heart Symbol. The design was inspired by his grief and was an attempt to do something in the wake of tragedy. “I just went down to my studio and started drawing. Then I created stickers and distributed them to family and friends in an effort to comfort them.”

The 911 Heart Symbol filled the void left in the wake of tragedy. According to Mr. Ponstingel, the emblem was used in famous campaigns by the likes of singer/performer Paul McCartney, the NY Yankees, former President George W. Bush, and was most recently featured on the Yes Network’s 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Special.

Today, Louie is playing the waiting game while his 911 Heart Symbol is making its way through congress to be declared a national symbol. “Something like that could take years,” he added. In the meantime, he says his emblem will be featured on postage stamps.

Louie Ponstingel has also built and designed a memorial in Paterson, NJ and has started a nonprofit organization that folds into the Wounded Warrior Project. His great efforts seek to encourage people to remember those lost on 9/11 and to prompt a discussion about what have become pages in America’s history.



**Photo Caption 0366: Louie Ponstingel delivers his specially designed 911 Heart Symbol flag to his alma mater, Passaic County Technical Institute. Students Rohmi Rathy (Paterson) and Shivani Topiwala (Clifton) accept the flag on behalf of the PCTI community.**