



Statement on behalf of Downtown Soccer League, Downtown Little League and Downtown Giants re: the Essential Workers Monument

On behalf of three major local youth community organizations - the Downtown Soccer League (est. 1994), Downtown Little League (est. 1993), and the Downtown Giants (est. 2006) - we issue our strong support of Community Board 1's proposal to relocate the Essential Workers Monument from Rockefeller Park.

As parents and proud members of the Downtown community, we wish to honor the sacrifices and heroism of the essential workers that carried the city through the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, a nightmare that affected all of us, including our children. However, we wish to do so appropriately and, as such, strongly disagree with the decision to dramatically alter a precious community resource, Rockefeller Park, to build a hardscape memorial without community input or impact assessment.

Since its inception in 1992, Rockefeller Park has been one of the few large grass parks in Lower Manhattan and, like many parks throughout the city, the space offered a place of relief, comfort, and fresh air during a time of great uncertainty. It has long been an oasis where children play freely, friends and neighbors enjoy picnics, and visitors see firsthand what makes our city and Battery Park City so special. In sharp contrast, a hardscape monument that would replace a considerable portion of this precious green-space with concrete, flagpoles, centered around an eternal fire-feature, is incongruent with recreational park usage.

Our leagues provide social and competitive play for more than 4,000 children (ages 5-17) in Lower Manhattan with thousands more serving as proud alumni. Many children's first memories are formed in this park, playing little league or attending a soccer practice with Coach Manny, and we believe it is vital to the health of these young people, our neighborhoods and our communities to preserve and maintain this open and thriving green space.

We stand with Community Board 1 to prudently evaluate the placement of the Essential Worker's Monument with input from the community. Please show your support by signing the change.org petition [here](#).

Signed,

Eileen Connaughton Montague - President, Downtown Soccer League

Randy Williams - President - Downtown Little League

Michael Barbieri - Executive Director, Downtown Giants