Bravery, grace, spirit and strength... the feelings the American flag evoke in its citizens mirror those felt watching a national treasure -- the space shuttle -- launch on missions to explore and discover our universe. The nation admires its flag in times of celebration, competition, war, peace and tragedy. A few days after the collapse of the World Trade Center towers on Sept. 11, 2001, "The National 9/11 Flag" waved in the breeze attached to the scaffolding of a building directly south of the attacks. Even torn and tattered, it made an impact on the Space Coast community... as local heroes stitched a Florida restorative patch to the flag at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex on Feb. 18.

Jeff Parness/Director, New York Says Thank You Foundation: There's this cathartic element of 'Well, I can finally do something. I can hold this needle and thread and I can finally put a stitch in and try to make this whole, you know, from what was taken away from us.

LeRoy Haynes/Former Fire Marshal and Commander, FDNY: This is awesome, this is awesome. The fact that it's here and that I'm here. We're both survivors.
Today, the flag is on a cross-country journey to be restored to its original 13-stripe design using pieces of fabric from American flags destined for retirement in all 50 states. Kennedy's Visitor Complex was the official stop for the state of Florida. The star-spangled banner, which brings new meaning to national collaboration, has already touched thousands of lives aboard the USS Missouri at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, during the home opener for the New York Giants, at Fort Hood, Texas, at the Gateway Arch in St. Louis and at Wisconsin's Marian University. And at Kennedy's Visitor Complex as it was raised over the Rocket Garden, where American ingenuity flourishes with rockets and capsules from NASA's Mercury, Gemini and Apollo days.

Joe Dowdy/Special Operations Manager, NASA's Kennedy Space Center: You know, I kind of think of America as this magnificent mosaic that's composed of all these various events, and various places that make us a special country. And, you know, our history is replete with all kinds of examples of sacrifice, 9/11 certainly is very fresh in our memories, but also here
Narrator: Once complete, "The National 9/11 Flag" will become a part of a permanent collection of the National September 11 Memorial Museum being built at the World Trade Center. There, America's flag can evoke a sense of pride, unity and hunger to keep achieving greatness just as the nation's space shuttles have for the past 30 years.