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Ruppert Landscape Helps Install 660,000 Flags on National Mall to Commemorate Pandemic Toll

A flag for each American life lost to COVID-19 was planted on over 20 Acres of exhibition space at the base of the Washington Monument

Exhibit runs September 17-October 3, 2021

Laytonsville, MD – From Tuesday, September 14 through Thursday, September 16, over 150 employees from Ruppert Landscape's Maryland, DC and Virginia branches came together to assist Maryland artist Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg bring to fruition *In America: Remember*, a public art installation commemorating all Americans who have died due to COVID-19. More than 660,000 white flags were installed on 20 acres of the National Mall at the base of the Washington Monument, creating an opportunity for visitors to reflect upon the enormous toll of the pandemic.

Conceptualized and executed by Firstenberg, she describes the project as a memorial that's also a physical manifestation of empathy. Ruppert assisted with bringing her vision to life using a combination of aerial mapping and design software to create a grid that encompasses the National Mall. To ensure symmetry during installation, teams used a custom-made grid tool to install the 4" x 5" white flags.

There are 143 sections, the majority of which are 60' x 60', that each contain 5329 flags. Ruppert had over 350 team members from 10 local branches contributing to the installation over the three-day period. The exhibition is occurring concurrently in the digital sphere, allowing families across the nation to submit messages to personalize flags for their loved ones at inamericaflags.org.

"When people say, 'We couldn't have done it without you,' they are usually speaking figuratively," said Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg. "Without Ruppert Landscape, I literally could not have created *In America: Remember*. From the start, Craig (Ruppert) and his team have been all in—creating two unique systems for planting this massive array, helping with logistics and organization, and working tirelessly to create a layout that meets the needs of the National Park Service, while also allowing for the ever-expanding number of flags. Ruppert Landscape models corporate goodness, setting the bar high for other companies."

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This is the second installation of *In America*, both of which Ruppert assisted with. The first occurred in the fall of 2020 on a four-acre site at RFK Stadium, which was covered in 267,080 white flags, before the exhibition ran out of space due to the mounting toll.

“We are always glad to be involved with projects that bring visibility and awareness to important issues or underserved populations,” said CEO Craig Ruppert. “When Suzanne brought this to us, we knew it was a project that would enable us to put our skills and teamwork to good use and we were glad to get involved.”

Ruppert Landscape, a family and employee-owned business, has been an industry-leading provider of commercial landscape construction and management services for nearly 50 years. Headquartered in Laytonsville, Maryland, the company employs over 1800 people and serves customers from 29 branches in eight primary markets: Philadelphia, Baltimore, D.C., Richmond, Raleigh, Charlotte, Atlanta, and Houston. The company has a long-standing tradition of growing its team and giving back to the community. Learn more at www.ruppertlandscape.com.

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