

The World Trade Center Health Program Survivors Steering Committee



WTC HP Scientific/Technical Advisory
Committee Presentation
November 9, 2011

Robert Spencer, Labor Co-Chair
Kimberly Flynn, Community Co-Chair

World Trade Center Survivors Steering Committee

- Created under the Zadroga Act
- Successor to the Community Advisory Committee of the WTC Environmental Health Ctr
- Legislative Mandate: To receive input from affected stakeholders and facilitate the coordination of initial health evaluations, monitoring, and treatment programs for screening-eligible and certified-eligible WTC survivors.

Survivors Steering Committee

Member Categories

- Representatives of the population of residents, students, and area and other workers affected by the 9/11 terrorist attacks
- Screening-eligible and certified-eligible survivors receiving initial health evaluations, monitoring, or treatment and organizations advocating on their behalf
- Representatives of the Centers of Excellence providing services to screening-eligible and certified-eligible WTC survivors
- Representatives of New York City

Current & Former Survivors Steering Committee Member Groups

- 105 Duane Street Residents
- 125 Cedar Street Residents
- 9/11 Environmental Action
- Beyond Ground Zero Network
- - Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund
 - - Chinese Staff and Workers' Association,
 - - Commission on the Public's Health System
 - - National Mobilization against Sweatshops
 - - Community Development Project of The Urban Justice Center
- Civil Service Employees Association
- Communications Workers of America District One
- Concerned Stuyvesant Community
- District Council 37 AFSCME
- Ecuadorian International Center
- Good Old Lower East Side, Inc. (GOLES)
- Henry Street Settlement
- Independence Plaza North Tenants Association
- Manhattan Community Board 1
- Manhattan Community Board 2
- Manhattan Community Board 3
- New York From the Ground Up
- New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH)
- New York State Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO, (PEF) Division 199
- New York State Laborers' Union
- Organization of Staff Analysts (OSA)
- Rebuild Downtown Our Town
- Rebuild with a Spotlight on the Poor
- South Bridge Tower Residents Coalition
- Stuyhealth
- Stuyvesant High School Parents' Association
- United Jewish Council of the East Side
- University Settlement
- World Trade Ctr Community-Labor Coalition
- World Trade Center Residents Coalition

WTC Collapse Cloud Engulfs Lower Manhattan on 9/11

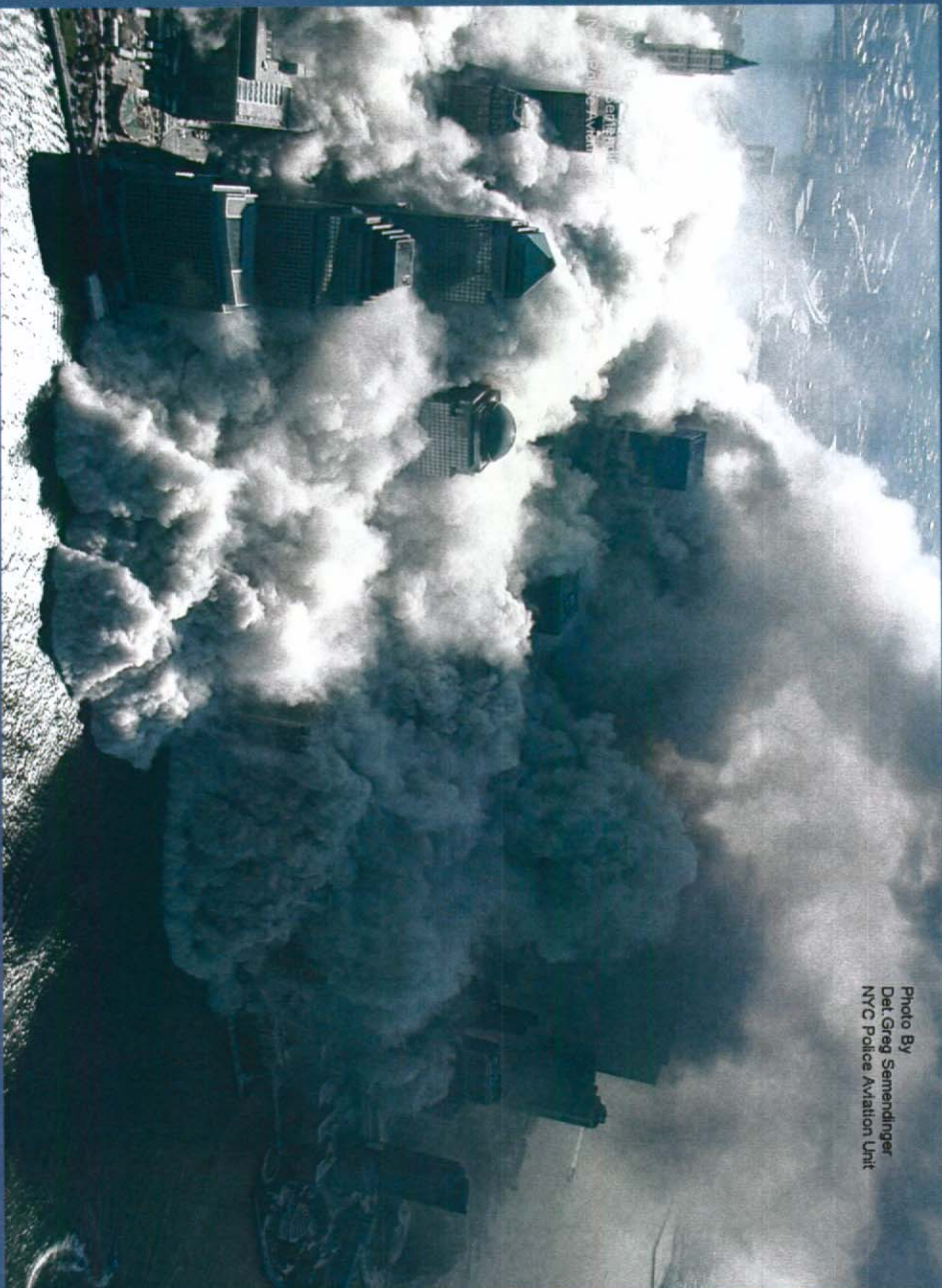


Photo By
Det. Greg Semendinger
NYC Police Aviation Unit

The WTC Collapse Cloud Approaching Chambers St.



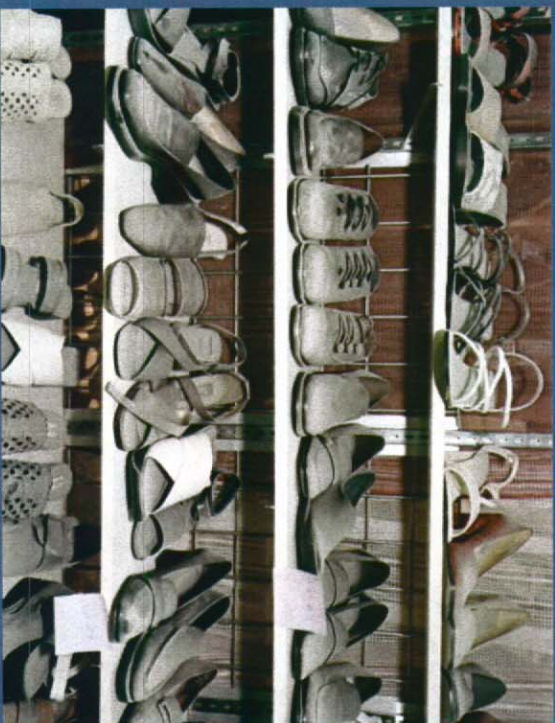
Photo By
D.A. Green Remminger
NYC Police / National Aerial

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The Collapse Cloud Deposited Dust Throughout A Densely Populated Urban Area



The Collapse Cloud Deposited Dust Throughout A Densely Populated Urban Area



Fires Burned At the Site For Months Sending Smoke Throughout Lower Manhattan



Residential Buildings Bordering the WTC Site



EPA Declares Air Safe

“Given the scope of the tragedy from last week, I am glad to reassure the people of New York...that their air is safe to breathe and their water is safe to drink.”

Christine Todd Whitman

EPA Administrator

September 18, 2001

Severely Distorted EPA Risk Communications

- In 2003, the EPA Inspector General reveals that the White House Council on Environmental Quality interfered with EPA news releases providing guidance to downtown residents and workers, minimizing health concerns.
- In 2011, ProPublica, working from documents obtained under FOIA by the NY Committee on Occupational Safety and Health reveals just how far that interference went:

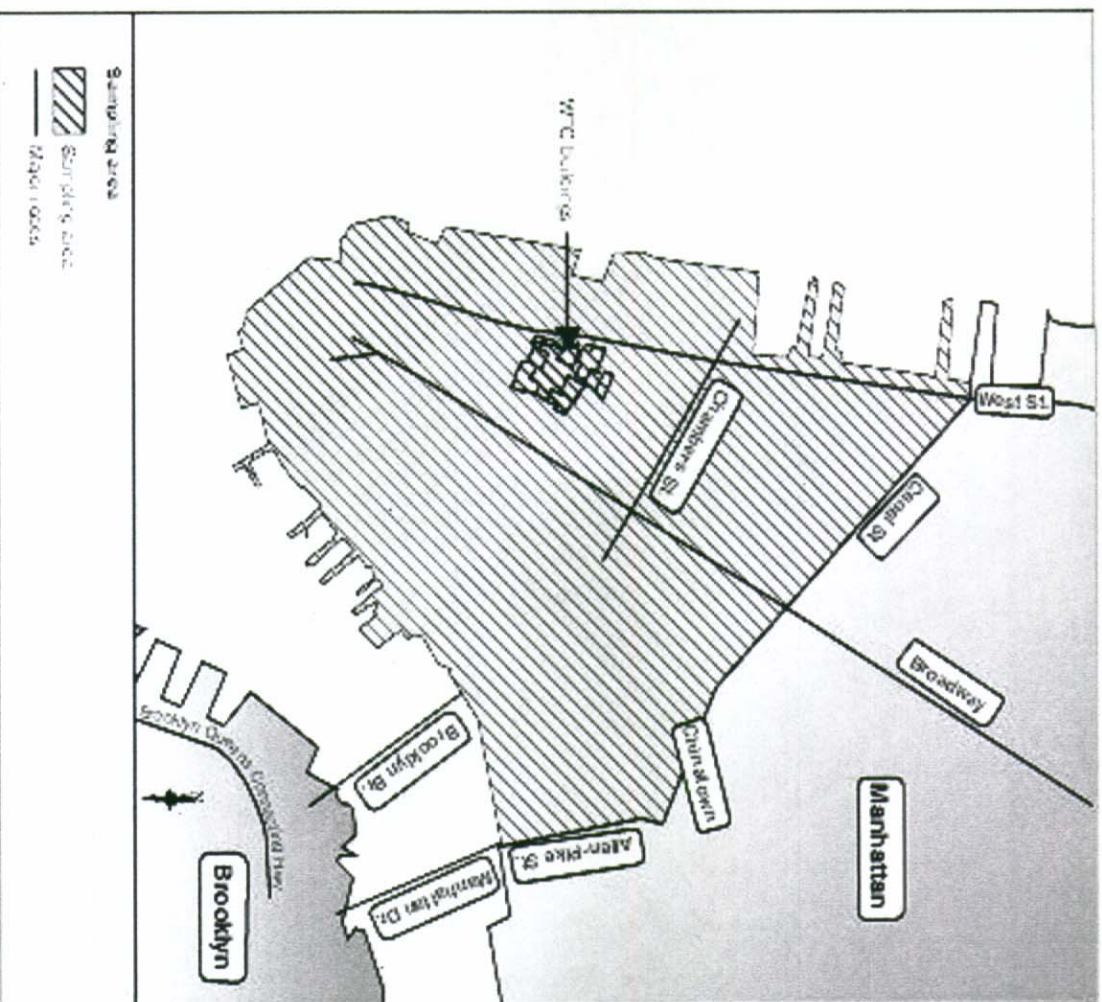
Severely Distorted EPA Risk Communications

“In one instance, a warning that people should not report to work on a busy thoroughfare in the financial district – Water Street – was rewritten and workers instead were urged to return to their offices as soon as the financial district opened on September 17th.”

NYC Department of Health Advisories – September, 2001

- “How should I clean the dust in my apartment when I move back in? The best way to remove dust is to use a wet rag or wet mop.”
- “Do pregnant women and young children need to take additional precautions? No. Pregnant women and young children do not need to take additional precautions.”
- “In a workplace, speak to your supervisor to see if there are special startup and cleaning procedures.”

Figure 3: EPA's 2002-2003 Indoor Clean and Test Program Boundaries in Lower Manhattan



Source: EPA and GAO.

EPA 2002-2003 Test & Clean Program Boundaries

South of Canal St
West Side

South of
Allen-Pike Sts
East Side

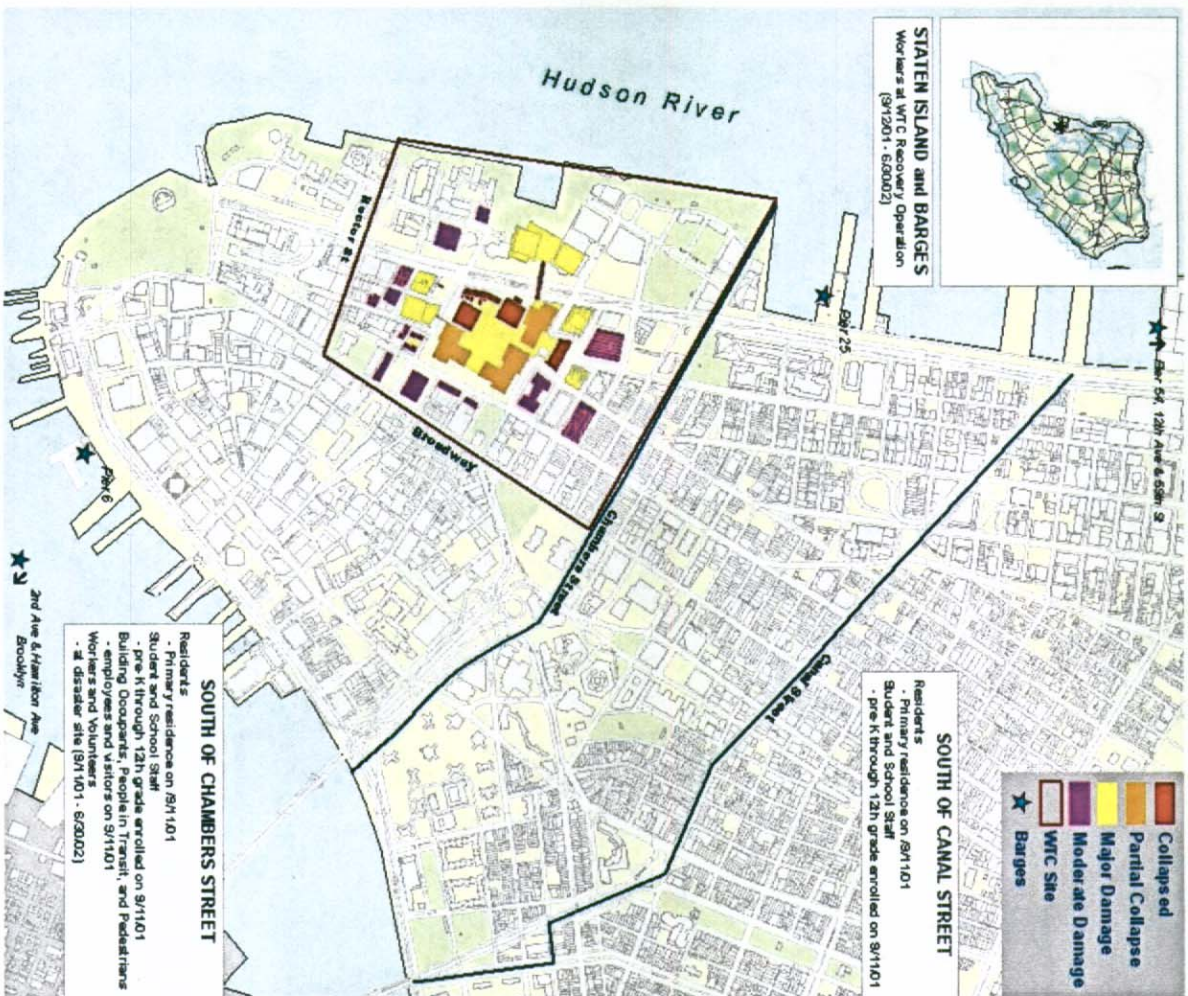
GAO Outlines EPA Failure to Implement IG & Expert Technical Review Panel Recommendations

Figure 5: Key Recommendations and Additional Input Regarding EPA's Second WTC Indoor Test and Clean Program

Key Recommendations and Additional Input	Provided by		Adopted by EPA	
	EPA IG	Panel members	Yes	No
Expand the list of contaminants tested for.		●	●	
Test in dust as well as in air.		●	●	
Address contamination of spaces, rather than re-contamination since EPA's first program.		●	●	
Evaluate potential health risks from pollutants for geographic areas north of Canal Street and in Brooklyn.	●	●		●
Test in HVACs.		●		●
Test in inaccessible areas.		●		●
Treat buildings as a system, rather than individual residential units.		●		●
Evaluate potential health risks from pollutants in workplaces. ^a	●	●		●
Investigate a method to distinguish between normal urban, or background, dust and WTC dust.		●	●	
Use a method for distinguishing between normal and WTC dust to determine the extent of contamination.		●		●

Source: GAO
 Notes: Not all expert panel members made each recommendation.
^aThe program allows commercial building owners to request testing, but it does not permit workers or employers to do so. EPA officials noted that employees who have concerns about their working conditions could file a complaint with OSHA or request an evaluation by HHS's National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.

World Trade Center Health Registry



WTC Health Registry Boundaries

Chambers Street Building Occupants on 9/11

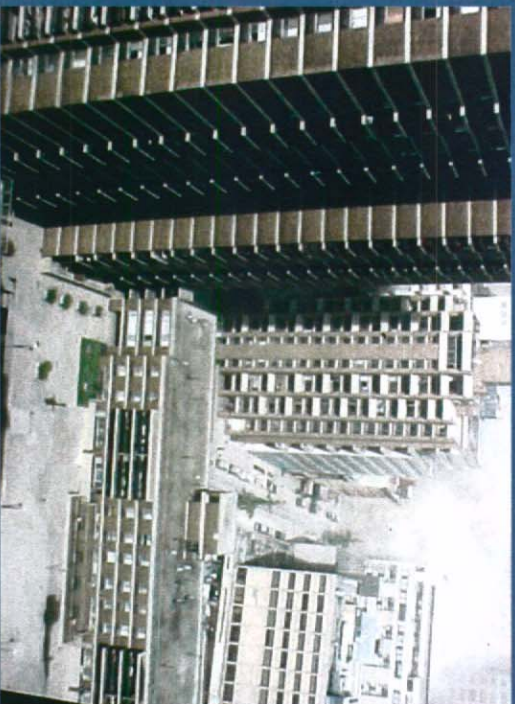
Residents on 9/11
 Students on 9/11
 Workers & Volunteers at Site 9/11-6/30/02

Canal Street Residents on 9/11 Students on 9/11

Mariamama James

- Southbridge Towers resident and parent
- Large apt complex near South St Seaport
- Member, Manhattan Community Board #1, Youth and Education Committee
- On 9/11, Mariama, 8 months pregnant, returned home covered in dust.
- Her father is caught in the dust cloud. Her two children return covered in dust as well.

Collapse Cloud Approaches Southbridge Towers on 9/11



Mariama James

- Dust has permeated the apartment
- Mariama and her father attempt to clean
- Without realizing the risks, she rips up a contaminated carpet
- City Health Department advises no precautions needed for pregnant women and young children.

Mariama James

- Mariama's youngest child, born October 2001, is diagnosed with asthma at 10 mos.
- All 3 children develop 9/11-related aerodigestive problems for which they are on a host of medications. With no WTC program for children, Mariama seeks out a pediatric pulmonologist. Treatment costs are astronomical.

Mariama James

- Her children are now being treated at the WTC EHC's Pediatric Program for chronic asthma, sinusitis and GERD.
- The WTC Pediatric study investigating physical health impacts to children must be funded by NIOSH.

Jo Polett

- Resident at 105 Duane St, 7 blocks north of the WTC site, a 52-story rental high rise built 1990.
- No interior source of lead or asbestos containing materials in its construction
- WTC dust entered through windows, apartment heating and air conditioning units and building-wide ventilation system
- Respiratory problems common for tenants

Jo Polett

- Little visible dust, but contaminants shown to be present via testing
- 12/3/01: Certified Industrial Hygienist samples supply air defuser (hallway vent) on 10th floor by micro-vac according to method 5755-95 published by the ASTM and analyzes sample by TEM for asbestos.

Jo Polett

- Sample tests positive @ 550,000 asbestos structures per sq. cm.
- Expected background for building without ACM < 1,000 asbestos structures per sq. cm. (Some studies show poorly maintained buildings in an urban area might have levels up to 10,000 structures per sq. cm.)
- Either way, asbestos level found is between 50 and 500 times expected background.

Jo Polett

- Shows ventilation system contaminated by WTC asbestos. Presence of asbestos a marker for presence of other contaminants such as fibrous glass, crystalline silica, concrete, PAHs, ultra-fine particulates and metals.
- 7/02: Sampling of entry doorframe of 5th floor apt finds 123,000 asbestos structures per sq. cm. Shows ventilation system circulating contaminants through halls and into apts.

Jo Polett

- Sampling of apt. heating/air conditioning unit unused post-9/11: 37,000 asbestos structures per sq. cm.
- Sampling of apt. heating/air conditioning unit run post-9/11 according to NYC DOH guidance: 16,700 asbestos structures per sq. cm.

Jo Polett

- 5/03: EPA lead wipe sample of bedroom floor: 127 micrograms per sq ft – 5 times EPA's health based benchmark of 25 micrograms per sq ft
- EPA antimony wipe sample: 1090 micrograms per sq ft. EPA health-based benchmark for antimony 627 micrograms per sq ft
- Of 8 apartments sampled for heavy metals and dioxin, four exceeded EPA health-based benchmark for lead

Gail Benzman

- 9/11: not in the immediate area of the WTC
- Works for the NYC Comptroller in the Municipal Bldg (Chambers & Centre Sts)
- Mayor orders non-essential city workers not to return to work
- 9/18: EPA Administrator Whitman issues “air is safe” advisory
- 9/20: Gail and thousands of other city workers ordered back to work

Gail Benzman

- On her return, outdoor air is full of smoke; dust is resuspended and coating surfaces
- She experiences breathing problems almost immediately
- 9/25: Reports health effects to Deputy Comptroller – coughing, sore throat, sinus pain, headaches, pressure in chest, nose bleeds.

Gail Benzman

- Told to go home if she feels sick. Air is safe.
- 10/17: first of many medical appointments; prescribed many medications
- Increasing absences due to illness
- Her employer arranges visit to Mt. Sinai's Irving J. Selikoff Occupational and Environmental Clinic. Diagnosed with new onset RADDS and asthma, then GERD, chronic sinusitis.

Gail Benzman

- Considers disability, files workers compensation claim.
- Attorneys mostly refuse to accept her case since she had not worked on the “pile.”
- Workers Comp Board reimburses for prior medical expenses, as well as lifetime medical benefits.
- 2007: Snag in workers comp case leaves her paying for all meds out of pocket that her primary insurance does not cover.

Gail Benzman

- Retires to Florida in 2010.
- RADS, chest pain, sinusitis, GERD, etc. remain; fewer attacks.
- Finds Florida doctors have little expertise in 9/11 health issues although 1700 9/11 affected people live in the state.
- Not eligible for the WTC Health Registry since she was not at work below Chambers St on 9/11
- Recently examined at WTC Environmental Health Center.

Lillian Bermudez

- Lower East Side resident (above Canal Street)
- Parent of two children: Mitch and Amanda
- Senior Police Administrative Aide with the New York Police Department.
- On 9/11, Mitch was 12, Amanda was 9. No prior health problems.
- Fumes, burning smell is intense and constant, beginning after 9/11.
- Dismissed worries about health risks of breathing fumes because authorities said 'air is safe.'

Lillian Bermudez

- Late October 2001, Mitch comes down with a cold & cough.
- ER visit: Mitch is hospitalized in Bellevue's ICU for 3 days, then 5 more days as he is stabilized/monitored.
- Mitch given new diagnosis of asthma and prescribed medications.
- Continues to have crises - at least 4 require hospitalization.

Lillian Bermudez

- In 2002, Amanda is diagnosed with sinusitis; has recurrences every time she gets a cold.
- Because of where they live, the children did not qualify for the Health Registry.
- In 2007, both children first treated at the WTC EHC and are now “doing great.”

Lila Nordstrom

- Student on 9/11 at Stuyvesant High School, at Chambers Street and West Street
- Patient at WTC Environmental Health Ctr
- Founder of StuyHealth advocacy group for 9/11 health issues of former Stuyvesant students.

Lila Nordstrom

- School engulfed in dust cloud
- Reoccupancy before full remediation
- Debris barge outside school for months
- Alumni now widely dispersed geographically

Lila Nordstrom

- Health conditions heavily reported among student body include respiratory and gastrointestinal disorders. Reports of cancer and autoimmune disorders.
- Amit Friedlander's statement: Significant dust and debris exposure. 4 years post-9/11 diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma

Dust Cloud About to Reach Stuyvesant High School on 9/11



Stuyvesant is
the building
center right in
photo, just
past the
Hudson River
“pier inlet”
lower right

Photo by
Patricia Steinhilber
for the
New York Times

Photo by
Patricia Steinhilber
for the
New York Times

Stuyvesant High School (left) & Debris Barge (right)



Debris Truck Passing Stuyvesant HS & BMCC on West Street



Dust often
became airborne
from debris trucks
traveling from the
“pile” to the Pier
26 barge site