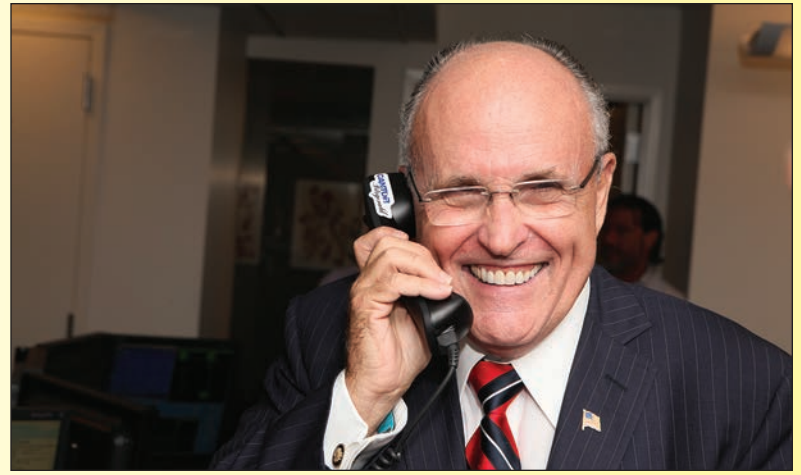


# Making a Difference

## Generating Positive Change

An Interview with Edie Lutnick,  
President and Co-Founder, Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund



Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani raising funds at Annual Charity Day hosted by Cantor Fitzgerald, BGC, and the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund at Cantor Fitzgerald's New York office on September 11, 2013

**EDITORS' NOTE** Edie Lutnick is President and Co-Founder of the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund. Under her leadership, the fund has distributed over \$280 million to victims of terrorism, natural disasters, and emergencies, as well as to numerous direct service charities. Post 9/11, she emerged as a strong advocate and family leader, not only on behalf of the families of the Cantor Fitzgerald employees who perished in the World Trade Center but of all 9/11 victims' families. She is the author of the Five-



Edie Lutnick

Star Amazon-rated book, *An Unbroken Bond: The Untold Story Of How the 658 Cantor Fitzgerald Families Faced The Tragedy Of 9/11 And Beyond*, and founder of the charitable giving initiative, *IHaveNeverHeardOfYou.com*. Lutnick, a labor lawyer, turned her practice over to her partners in the wake of 9/11 in order to devote her energies to the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund. She holds a B.S. from the University of Rhode Island, and a J.D. and M.B.A. from Syracuse University. Lutnick is a sought-after public speaker and a respected voice on several 9/11 advisory committees including the National September 11 Memorial & Museum. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund, *My Good Deed*, *Evolve*, and an Honorary Board member of *A Caring Hand: The Billy Esposito Foundation*.

**ORGANIZATION BRIEF** The Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund ([cantorrelief.org](http://cantorrelief.org)), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, was founded on September 14, 2001, with a \$1-million personal donation from Cantor Fitzgerald, L.P. Chairman and CEO, Howard W. Lutnick. Mr. Lutnick, along with the firm's partners, underwrites 100 percent of the expenses of the fund so that every penny of its income is paid out to those in need. In addition to the families of Cantor's employees who were lost on 9/11, the Relief Fund provided assistance to family members of World Trade Center victims from 14 companies. The Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund has since expanded its scope from victims of terrorism to victims of natural disasters and emergencies, including from Hurricane Sandy, wounded members of the U.S. military, and direct service charitable organizations.

### How has the fund's mission evolved?

My brother and I founded the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund to take care of the families of victims of 9/11. In 2006, we expanded our mission to include

supporting those who were affected by natural disasters and other emergencies. The Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund, supported by the generosity of Cantor Fitzgerald and its affiliate, BGC Partners, also provides sustainable financial assistance to charities around the world through our annual Charity Day.

As we move forward, I am committed to raising public awareness about the fact that Charity Day – which, to date, has raised and distributed over \$100 million – is a concept that can be replicated by other companies and organizations.

While always honoring those we lost on 9/11, we have taken the lessons learned through assisting the 9/11 community and applied them to accomplish positive change in the world.

### Is the awareness of Charity Day expanding?

We have been effective at communicating what we have done, but we can become better at letting people know how they can help us expand the reach and scope of our assistance.

On Charity Day, 100 percent of the revenues generated by Cantor Fitzgerald and BGC Partners go to charities that are important to our employees, clients, and celebrity ambassadors, who represent participating charities by joining us on our trading floor. Together, they make Charity Day a positive and uplifting experience for our extended community.

In 2014, my goal is to let the public know that they can be a participant in Charity Day by donating to the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund. One hundred percent of every dollar will go directly to our participating charities. Last September 11th, we raised \$12 million. Can you imagine what can be accomplished with the assistance of the public?

Charity Day should act as an affirmation to other corporations and organizations that it is possible to dedicate one day per year in a way that resonates with each company and assists the charities it supports.

### Are you surprised that the model is so adaptable considering its original mission?

It never occurred to me that people would read my book, *An Unbroken Bond*, and come to hear me speak because it was providing them a blueprint for dealing with their individual trauma that had nothing to do with 9/11.

However, the more I talked with people, the more I realized that what we had learned was transferable.

By 2012, our 9/11 families were more stable, and we could start to look at how the Relief Fund could evolve. We were having conversations

about expanding our breadth of care when Sandy struck. Sandy, like 9/11, impacted our community directly and with terrible force. Most of Cantor and BGC's current 3,200 New York employees (we had 302 post 9/11) were not directly involved with what happened on 9/11. Sandy was the first 'trauma that impacted all of them directly. So it was a real opportunity for us to apply the lessons we had learned on 9/11 to an environment that none of us had ever contemplated before.

We utilized our model of providing direct financial assistance because we believe a family member is in the best position to decide what is in the best interests of his or her family.

First, we went to those 3,000-plus employees and immediately gave any of them harmed by Sandy \$1,000 in emergency assistance. Then, we did the same for our 9/11 community.

We then adopted 19 public elementary schools in areas hard hit by Sandy in communities that were especially close to our employees' hearts. We gave every impacted family who had a child enrolled in those elementary schools \$1,000 in direct financial aid.

When the Oklahoma tornado hit, we felt a real connection because Oklahomans had been so supportive of our community after 9/11. So we applied the process that we had learned from our experiences with 9/11 and Sandy, and visited Moore, Oklahoma to offer the same kind of direct financial assistance to those families.

### In terms of tackling these issues, will success come down to a public/private partnership?

In the United States, 86 percent of charitable giving goes to 1 percent of the charities. This means that in the face of disasters, those who are best at marketing get most of the money.

I would like to see if there is a way we can change the way that people give their money philanthropically. We started a site called *IHaveNeverHeardOfYou.com*. I have met a lot of charity leaders and they tell me about the good work they're doing, and I always ask, "How come I have never heard of you?"

This site will allow people to nominate charities, and we'll use our experience to screen them, tell their story, and publicize their links on this new Web site so that members of the public can donate. More important than money or volunteer hours will be the awareness and buzz that is created about that organization. When disaster strikes, people can seek out and support highlighted local organizations that are doing good work but had not previously gotten the attention they deserve. ●