

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION SECTION HALLOWEEN HAPPY HOUR

# Supporting Loyal, Canine Companions for Veterans

■ By Deborah B. Richman

THE GUESTS AT THE WILDLY WICKED Workers' Compensation Section Halloween Happy Hour passed the "witch's cap" and raised \$340 for Team Foster. The Section held its annual Halloween Happy Hour at the new Brickwall Tavern in Philadelphia on Oct. 25.

Participating in the frightful festivities were Sonny, a wounded veteran, and his blue-eyed Huskie mix, service-dog-in-training, Juno. Juno and Sonny were brought together through Team Foster, the charitable beneficiary of the happy hour.

Team Foster is an organization that raises money to partner service dogs with tristate-area veterans suffering from combat-related illnesses, including post-

traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury, at no cost to the veterans. The charity was founded in 2014 to honor friend and hero, Erick Foster, who was killed in 2007 while engaging enemy forces in Iraq. Team Foster has an innovative partnership with the Camden County jail, where low-level offenders volunteer to train the service dogs and receive a marketable skill, and lots of puppy love in return. Not only does the dog help the veteran with daily tasks, but also with skills proven to reduce depression and anxiety.

One service dog can take more than two years, and upward of \$25,000, to be properly trained and prepared to partner with a veteran. Neither the U.S. military, nor the Veterans Administration or the U.S. government provides funding or

support for service dogs. Team Foster has several fund-raising events each year, including the Foster 100, a 100-mile fully supported bicycle ride from Philadelphia to Cape May, New Jersey; the Ruck March at Valley Forge National Park; and the Ruff Ride, a 24-hour spin relay.

To learn more about Team Foster, participate in a fund-raising event, make a donation or purchase a No Hero Left Behind jersey, t-shirt or hoodie, visit [TeamFoster.org](http://TeamFoster.org).

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*Deborah B. Richman (bdrichman@tthlaw.com), associate at Thomas, Thomas & Hafer LLP, was a 2018 cochair of the Workers' Compensation Section Charitable Events and Community Service Committee.*



Sonny and Juno.

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