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## Harrison firm gives award in memory of Southeast mom killed by drunken driver

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She was called a "tough cookie" but with a "heart of gold" and a penchant for the color purple.

Those were some of the descriptions colleagues gave of Lori Donohue Friday at Dorian Drake International's company luncheon at the Renaissance Westchester Hotel where an employee service award in her name was presented to a co-worker and close friend.

Donohue, 37, worked for the Harrison-based export management company for 17 years before she was struck and killed last June, along with her 8-year-old daughter, Kayla, by a drunken driver who was in the country illegally. Mother and daughter were walking out of the little girl's dance class in Brewster.

"She was tough in a strong way. She was always willing to do the tough jobs and not afraid to tell you what she thought," said group manager Ed Pysa, who reminisced about her one day walking into his office and asking him "What's wrong? You look miserable."

"Ultimately, she wanted you to be happy," he said. "She wanted to know what was wrong so that she could find a way to make you happy."

Dorian Drake established the annual "Lori J. Donohue Circle of Excellence Award," company President Ed Dorian, Jr., said, to keep her memory and spirit alive and to commemorate her strong work ethic and team spirit. The Southeast mother of two worked as an inside sales manager for the company's industrial and environmental group.

"She was a great teammate. She was always there for you," said Dorian Jr. "She had a commitment to giving great service."

The award was presented to corporate Controller Robin Wallace, who, in addition to working with Donohue, shared lunch with her every work day and was her bowling partner, she said. A tearful Wallace said she was so honored to receive the award.

"Lori would always want us to remember the good times and to never be afraid to wear purple," Wallace said. "Lori is a loving, honest, hardworking person. I could stand up here all day talking about Lori because I loved her."

Donohue's parents, John and Anita Luhrs, attended the banquet, visibly moved by the support. Earlier, Dorian Jr. mentioned that the company, through staff contributions and other donations, had raised close to \$40,000 for Donohue's 5-year-old son, Christopher's college fund.

"It's a special honor. Just to see the outpouring of love you had for our daughter and Bob's wife is absolutely amazing," John Luhrs said. "I look up at that award and see Lori's picture and it warms my heart. Robin, I think you're very deserving of that award."

On Jan. 13, Luhrs, 70, of Bethel, Conn., gave a victim impact statement at the sentencing of his daughter's killer, Conses Garcia-Zacarias, saying "our hearts are absolutely broken — no, our hearts

have been ripped out." Garcia-Zacarias, who was convicted on two counts of vehicular homicide, received the maximum sentence of 8½ to 25 years in state prison.

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