

Injured Worker Award

Julie Swan-Paez

Julie's pelvis was shattered and her shoulder was ruptured when she was shot at close range on Dec. 2, 2016, during a terrorist attack at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, Calif. Ironically, she was wounded moments after receiving an award for Employee of the Year during a training event and holiday party.

Although emotionally traumatized and facing more surgery, she lives each day with gratitude, faith, compassion and courage, putting her own difficulties second to others. Her positive attitude in the face of pain and adversity exemplifies the spirit of the Comp Laude® Award for injured employees.

Upon receiving the award, she described herself as an advocate working on behalf friends and colleagues who need support. She is also a proponent of responsiveness and compassion on the part of employers, regulated health care inspections and workers compensation legislation to require immediate support from a nurse case manager to employees injured in the course of employment by an act of domestic terrorism. (In California, refer to Assembly Bill 44).

Well-regarded by her supervisors and colleagues, Julie reportedly approached her job duties with same degree of efficiency and grace that she has applied to her recovery. With the help of a physical therapist, she has become mobile while using a walker. One of her goals is to walk freely on the beach with her daughter, Ellie.

Among recent outreach activities, Julie appears in a documentary film, "San Bernardino Strong," produced by Loma Linda University Advancement Films. "I don't want to be a victim or a survivor," she told the filmmakers. "I'm a prevailer. You can prevail over evil or prevail over obstacles."

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