

# ASHEVILLE THERAPY DOG WINS NATIONAL “FIRST RESPONDER PAWS AWARD”

*“Officer Kora” Embodies Hope and Recovery After Helene*

DEERFIELD BEACH, FL, UNITED STATES, December 17, 2024 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- The first certified therapy dog to serve the Asheville Police Department, a Goldendoodle named “Officer Kora” from a rescue litter, is the 2024 winner of the [“First Responder Paws Therapy Dog Award.”](#) The announcement by [FHE Health](#), the organization that hosts the contest as an extension of its commitment to first responders and first responder mental health, aired last Friday. Kora was one of 30 nominees from around the country that competed for votes. She took first place by a wide margin.



“Officer Kora is more than a therapy dog. She has come to symbolize hope, compassion, and resilience for the Asheville area,” said Senior Police Officer Debbie LeCroy, who is Kora’s handler.

Kora and LeCroy were among the first to respond to the catastrophic aftermath of Hurricane Helene, the deadliest tropical storm in the history of North Carolina. The first few days were about rescuing people and answering calls from families trying to reach their loved ones, LeCroy said.

In the weeks that followed, LeCroy and Kora worked 15 to 16-hour days, supporting first responders as they worked round-the-clock to save lives, reunite families, and recover and rebuild. While LeCroy organized the feeding of personnel from her agency — and the more than 600 police officers from across the U.S. and Canada who joined in the relief efforts — Kora comforted those in need. Her training in “compression therapy” equips her to sense and respond

to stress, by using her weight to apply gentle pressure, which has a calming effect.

Officer Kora will receive a \$2000 check from FHE Health, and a \$2500 donation made in her name to FHE Health's partner organization, First Responders Pack Foundation. The non-profit works to improve first responder mental health by helping agencies train and acquire therapy dogs.

#### About FHE Health

FHE Health is a national treatment center that provides quality behavioral health services to adults, ages 18 and up, from all walks of life and with a wide variety of addiction and mental health needs. From its headquarters in Deerfield Beach, Florida, FHE Health serves individuals from around the country with integrated care, innovative neuro therapies, and specialized treatment programs, one of which is [Shatterproof FHE Health](#) for first responders.

Rami Sleiman, COO

FHE Health

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