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Two Commercial Fishermen Died Tragically at Sea in 2017. Now Their Relatives and a Law Firm Have Created A Foundation to Spare Others from This Fate.

DETAILS TO BE PROVIDED AT UPCOMING NEWS CONFERENCE

The story will soon be told in New Bedford of an important, new foundation that will stand by fishermen and their families in their darkest hours and will fight for greater safety in the industry.

The **Seaworthy Foundation** is to be introduced during a news conference on **Tuesday, Oct. 12, 3:00 PM**, at the law office of **Flynn Wirkus Young, 48 North Water St., New Bedford**. (The organization's full name is *Seaworthy: The Michael Roberts/Jonathan Saraiva Foundation for Fishing Safety, Inc.*)

Media and the public are encouraged to attend.

A non-profit charitable corporation, The **Seaworthy Foundation** is dedicated to promoting safety within the commercial fishing industry by working closely with vessel owners and management, vessel captains and crew, and organizations that provide safety education within the industry.

Seaworthy also seeks to improve every aspect of vessel safety and the commercial fishing workplace by sharing vital information with elected officials, regulatory agencies, vessel owners and their insurers. The emphasis will be on fostering positive relationships among all.

Seaworthy was created in honor of Mike Roberts and Jonathan Saraiva, two fishermen who perished in the December 2017 sinking of the vessel on which they were working. Vowing to make something positive out of such sadness and tragedy, Mike's widow, Tammy, and Jonathan's father, Phil, along with their attorney, Mike Flynn of FLYNN|WIRKUS|YOUNG, created **Seaworthy** and contributed to its initial funding. Roberts, Saraiva and Flynn now sit on **Seaworthy's** Board, and Flynn serves as its Executive Director.

Roberts, Saraiva and Flynn are pleased to announce they have jointly made contributions to Fishing Partnership Support Services, the Shaw Fund for Mariners' Children and the Seamen's Bethel in New Bedford.

"Our civil litigation system affords only so much justice," said Mike Flynn, "and I have always hoped to be able to do more with the knowledge and insights I've gained in representing my clients -- particularly when it comes to commercial fishing. Too often, the health, safety and well-being of the rank and file crew members -- the heart and soul of the industry -- is largely ignored."

Flynn continued:

“I have experienced firsthand with Tammy and Phil what they went through, and I have witnessed how committed they are to using their voices to make this industry safer as a legacy to their loved ones. That has truly inspired me, and frankly, everyone at my firm wants to help them in any way we can.”

Flynn added:

“**Seaworthy** is the embodiment of everything that we’re trying to do to make sure that Mike and Jonathan’s sacrifice is never forgotten.”

Commenting on the upcoming **Seaworthy** announcement, Mary Anne Macaulay, executive director of The Shaw Fund, said:

“The fund works closely with Flynn|Wirkus|Young to try to meet the needs of fisherman on the job. That's where our two organizations intersect. We are pleased and grateful that their clients have felt the need to pay forward the assistance we have given them to other fishermen who find themselves in similar situations. We look forward to continued collaboration with the firm and the foundation.”

BACKGROUND

LAW FIRM

FLYNN|WIRKUS|YOUNG (FWY) is a personal injury litigation firm with offices in Braintree and New Bedford. Founded in 1998, FWY is dedicated to representing people from all walks of life who have been injured as the result of the negligence of others. This includes victims of wrongful death, medical malpractice, construction site accidents, commercial fishing vessel accidents, maritime accidents, Jones Act injuries, Death on the High Seas Act cases, motor vehicle accidents, product failures and defects, occupational illnesses and injuries, and toxic torts, including exposure to carcinogens such as PFAS and benzene. The firm devotes a significant part of its practice to the representation of injured and deceased fishermen and their families for whom, in the last five years alone, FWY has achieved several multi-million-dollar settlements.

Mr. Flynn created FWY in 1998 and remains the firm’s President, managing partner and lead trial attorney. A *summa cum laude* graduate of UMass-Amherst and Boston University School of Law, Mr. Flynn has been practicing law since 1991. He has tried dozens of cases to verdict in Massachusetts and courts throughout the country. In addition to **Seaworthy**, he serves on the UMass Commonwealth Honors College Advisory Board and volunteers for several charitable organizations.

Fishing Partnership Support Services

The Fishing Partnership is a non-profit support services organization dedicated to improving the health, safety and economic security of commercial fishermen and their families. It provides critically needed services and programs to more than 20,000 New England fishing families.

Seamen's Bethel

The New Bedford Port Society, founded in 1830, maintains the historic Seamen's Bethel and Mariner's Home located on the top of Johnny Cake Hill in the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. The Seamen's Bethel has been serving the maritime community for over 175 years.

Shaw Fund

The Shaw Fund for Mariners' Children is a private foundation dedicated to supporting New England fishermen and others who work at sea. Established in 1853, the Shaw Fund has been providing financial assistance and resource and referral services to mariner families residing in Massachusetts, Maine and New Hampshire for over 150 years.