

## Veterans Fire Up the Grill With Wounded Warrior Project

KNIGHTDALE, N.C., Jan. 5, 2017 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- During a recent Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) connection event at Prime Barbecue, a specialty catering service that also offers barbecue preparation classes, injured veterans talked grilling and received trade secrets from an expert. Gathering around the pits, participants spent the afternoon learning cooking techniques and connecting with fellow service members in an environment that accommodates their physical injuries and social anxieties.

More than 35 veterans attended the Ultimate School of BBQ, where barbecue pitmaster Christopher Prieto – featured on the TLC television series "BBQ Pitmasters" – taught them tips for preparing beef brisket and smoked turkey.

"I absolutely love to cook out, so when I heard about this class I was very excited," said Army veteran Thomas Holcomb. "I cook out at least three times a week, but this class has opened up a whole new realm of what I can do on the grill."

Even grilling novices enjoyed the experience.

"I am definitely not a grill master – I'm more of a slow-cooker user," joked Jose Sierra, who is active duty Army. "But I figured this would be an opportunity to get some good knowledge. I enjoyed the visual and hands-on learning."

In addition to the cooking lesson, warriors connected over lunch. Gatherings like this encourage interaction with other veterans as well as the community. These connections minimize the potential for isolation and create a support structure during the healing process.

"Any time we can get out, have a good time, and enjoy fellowship is very healthy," Thomas said. "It definitely helps with my rehabilitation."

Connecting with other veterans can help injured warriors cope with stress and emotional concerns. In a [WWP survey](#) of the injured warriors it serves, more than half of survey respondents (51.7 percent) talked with fellow Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn veterans to address their mental health issues.

WWP staff members interacted with the aspiring pitmasters throughout the afternoon, advising them of additional programs and services to aid in their recovery processes. The programs assist injured veterans with mental health, physical health and wellness, career and benefits counseling, and connecting with other warriors and their communities. Through the generosity of donors, WWP connection events and program resources are available at no cost to wounded warriors and their families.

To learn more about how WWP's programs and services are making an impact on the lives of wounded warriors, visit <https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/>.

## About Wounded Warrior Project

**We Connect, Serve, and Empower**

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. WWP connects wounded warriors and their families to valuable resources and one another, serves them through a variety of free programs and services, and empowers them to live life on their own terms. WWP is a national, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, visit [woundedwarriorproject.org](http://woundedwarriorproject.org).

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

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