

Veterans, Guests Connect, Celebrate Island-Style with Wounded Warrior Project

KAPOLEI, Hawaii, Feb. 27, 2017 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Warm ocean breezes and opportunities to bond with fellow veterans awaited guests during a recent Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) luau. Injured veterans and guests experienced a taste of true island culture and the benefits of connecting with the community and fellow service members.

Attendees enjoyed boat rides, getting temporary tattoos with Polynesian designs, making leis, and witnessing traditional Hawaiian practices such as casting fishing nets and shucking coconuts. Dinner festivities started with a gathering around the underground oven – also called an imu – to see the removal of the roasted pig. While the warriors dined on native delicacies, dancers put on a show to represent the islands of Hawaii, Tahiti, Fiji, Samoa, and New Zealand.

"This luau was a cultural event that allowed warriors and their ohana – their family – to understand Hawaii and its people," said Army veteran Penny Kalua. "I knew a few of the people there and got to meet lots of other veterans, which made it even more of a positive experience."

These connection events support the recovery needs of warriors by reintroducing them to the bonds experienced during military service. In a [WWP survey](#) of the injured warriors it serves, more than half of survey respondents (51.7 percent) talked with veterans to address their mental health issues.

WWP staff advised warriors of additional services that could benefit their recovery processes. WWP offers programs that assist injured veterans with mental health, physical health and wellness, career and benefits counseling, and connecting with other warriors. Generous donors make it possible for wounded warriors to benefit from program resources at no cost to them.

"I have not been with Wounded Warrior Project for very long, but I already feel that sense of not being alone," Penny said. "Words cannot do justice to what I feel in my heart for the unconditional support they have provided me and those close to me."

To learn and see more about how WWP's programs and services connect, serve, and empower wounded warriors, visit <https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/>, and click on multimedia.

About Wounded Warrior Project

Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) connects, serves, and empowers wounded warriors.

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

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