

Injured Veterans Empowered Through Stand-Up Paddleboarding in Ocean

HALEIWA, Hawaii, June 27, 2018 [/PRNewswire-USNewswire/](#) -- Injured veterans, their families, and guests spent a relaxing morning on paddleboards and experienced the unique perspective of the ocean shore during a Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) connection event on the north shore of Oahu's Haleiwa Beach Park.

"Stand-up paddleboarding has been something I've always wanted to try, especially in Haleiwa," said Army veteran Heather Elliott. "My favorite part was actually having the confidence and courage to stand up on my board. I have a traumatic brain injury, vertigo, back and knee injuries, on top of post-traumatic stress – so balance, in itself, can be a challenge. When I returned to the shore, others commented that I was glowing with enjoyment and confidence."

"I'm new to the island and heard that paddleboarding has many physical benefits," said Air Force veteran Modesto Reyes. "I thought it was amazing. This was an opportunity to try something outside my comfort level. I didn't think that paddling with the turtles around me would be so therapeutic."

WWP program gatherings offer settings that provide opportunities for injured veterans to form bonds with one another and their communities. WWP also serves warriors by focusing on mental and physical health and wellness, financial wellness, independence, government relations, and community relations and partnerships.

"There were four male veterans who also attended," Heather said. "I was treated like a sister in arms by them all. We talked quite a bit and stuck together as a team while in the water. I enjoy outdoor events that pull me out of my comfort zone and that I can attend as a single person."

"I met an amazing Army veteran," Modesto said, "and we've become friends because we have lots in common."

"Being part of Wounded Warrior Project has given me a sense of belonging and an extended family — not to mention interaction with individuals who have similar injuries," Heather said. "When I'm struggling with a situation or need help and guidance, I have peer support. We always have each other's backs."

WWP has been connecting, serving, and empowering wounded warriors for 15 years. To learn more, visit <http://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org>.

About Wounded Warrior Project

Since 2003, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) has been meeting the growing needs of warriors, their families, and caregivers – helping them achieve their highest ambition. Learn more: <http://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/about-us>.

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

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