

## Wounded Warrior Project Race Across America Team Close to the Starting Line

Jacksonville, Fla. (June 15, 2012) – Wounded Warrior Project's (WWP) eight-man cycling team, including injured service members, will begin the Race Across America (RAAM) tomorrow. The 3,000-mile course begins in Oceanside, California, ends in Annapolis, Maryland, and is expected to take approximately eight days to complete. Each member of WWP's team will take turns riding for 20-minute stretches, riding as hard and as fast as possible during the grueling round-the-clock race.

Most team members suffered various injuries related to their service in Iraq and Afghanistan, including amputations, post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, and paralysis. The team members are living with both the visible and invisible wounds of war and represent thousands of others. For many team members their cycling experience began with participation in one of WWP's Soldier Rides – a program developed to get wounded service members outside and help them recover by enjoying physical activity and experiencing the challenge of riding a bicycle. From there, the team member's level of achievement has grown to competing in one of the most demanding cycling competitions in the world.

Team members have been preparing for the race for months and attended a team training session in North Carolina this past spring. It was there they began to come together as a team and determine their strategy, focusing on each other's strengths in dealing with the varied terrain that blankets the United States. WWP RAAM team's training and race participation is being supported by Team 4Mil, a U.S. military cycling team.

Words from several members of the WWP 2012 RAAM Team:

- "Cycling has saved my life. It ended up being the integral part of my three years of inpatient hospitalization. [I have learned that] someone always has it worse and life is too short to give up on the things you never thought possible." – Sgt. Brett Miller (retired)
- "Cycling has kept me going. It has brought me great opportunities and challenges I never thought would be possible again. With cycling, I am able to continue wearing a uniform in support of my country and military." – Sgt. Timothy Conner
- "[I decided to participate in RAAM] to prove as an injured veteran I can still do anything I set a goal for." – Former Staff Sgt. Jeff Palenske

To learn more about RAAM, including the race route, please visit [Race Across America Website](#).

## Wounded Warrior Project

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower wounded warriors. WWP's purpose is to raise awareness and to enlist the public's aid for the needs of injured service members, to help injured servicemen and women aid and assist each other, and to provide unique, direct programs and services to meet their needs. WWP is a national, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, [woundedwarriorproject.org](http://woundedwarriorproject.org)

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