

WWP News & Media: Veteran Group Outings, Charity Events, Helping Vets

## Wounded Veterans Learn About Sea Life

### **Veterans and Families Tour Institute for Marine Mammal Studies**

**GULFPORT, Miss.** (August 6, 2015) – Injured service members and their families recently enjoyed a hands-on, and educational experience at the Institute for Marine Mammal Studies in Gulfport, Mississippi.

Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) brought the group to the Institute June 30 as part of its Alumni program. Through shared experiences, WWP hopes to help injured service members become more engaged in their community and with other veterans. The Alumni program provides long-term support and camaraderie for wounded warriors through events, discounted services, and an online community.

While at the Institute, veterans and their families had the opportunity to touch an alligator, starfish and stingrays, while learning about the mission of the facility. The Institute for Marine Mammal Studies helps sick and injured marine mammals heal, educates the public, researches marine life, and assists in conservation efforts.

Dwight Blackman took his family along for the experience. He says the Institute staff made the day special, with the hands-on approach being an aspect his family really enjoyed. “Our children enjoyed the interaction with the animals they were allowed to touch and pet,” Blackman said. “We all learned many new facts about turtles, snakes, starfish, and birds.”

The families also enjoyed watching dolphins and a sea lion work with trainers in outdoor tanks. “It was interesting to learn how the sea lions are rescue animals who most likely would have died if not rescued by the Institute,” Blackman said.

The gathering also gave wounded veterans an opportunity to learn about the other free programs and services provided by WWP.

“Getting together with my fellow Wounded Warriors helps me know I am not alone in my struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder, that I have many brothers by my side,” Blackman said.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about Wounded Warrior Project, contact the WWP Resource Center at 888.WWP.ALUM (888.997.2586) or [resourcecenter@woundedwarriorproject.org](mailto:resourcecenter@woundedwarriorproject.org).

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## About 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, visit [woundedwarriorproject.org](http://woundedwarriorproject.org).

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