

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

Wounded Veterans Learn Mixed Martial Arts from the Experts

Gracie Academy Teaches Nearly 100 Injured Service Members

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 14, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- More than 70 wounded service members and their guests took turns on the mat at the Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy last weekend, to learn the basics of mixed martial arts.

It is not all grappling and takedowns. Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) invited the wounded injured veterans to take part in the training to provide an opportunity for fitness and socialization. WWP's vision is to foster the most successful, well-adjusted generation of wounded service members in our nation's history. WWP believes in a comprehensive approach to healing, from the mind and body to engagement, to economic empowerment. WWP offers 20 uniquely designed programs and services for injured veterans, all free of charge.

"Being around other warriors makes me feel comfortable, proud, safe, and we can talk easily," said Carlos Sanchez, a WWP Alumnus and Army veteran. "The Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy was outstanding. It was more than I expected."

While wounded veterans and their guests learned self-defense techniques, they also learned about each other.

Milton Medina is an Army veteran and WWP Alumnus. He almost missed the event at the Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy.

"I'm normally apprehensive about meeting new people, and I almost canceled, but a good friend convinced me to give it a try," Milton said. "I'm glad I did."

Milton and Carlos both benefited from spending time learning from mixed martial arts experts.

"The instructors were amazing. The concept of how they explained each move made it very easy to learn," Carlos said.

"They were extremely approachable and obviously love what they do and have a passion for it," Milton said. "There's few better qualities to find in a teacher."

WWP strives to meet the changing needs of the injured population we serve. More than 80 cents of every dollar raised goes to support wounded veterans. More than 23,000 injured service members responded to WWP's 2015 annual Alumni Survey, sharing insights into their challenges and successes. WWP uses that information to shape the lifesaving programs and services it provides at no cost to the warriors, caregivers, and families it serves. Read the survey, or download the executive summary at woundedwarriorproject.org/survey.

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.

Photo - <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20160114/322371>

Photo - <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20160114/322370>

For further information: Rob Louis - Public Relations Specialist, rlouis@woundedwarriorproject.org, 904.627.0432

Additional assets available online: [Photos \(2\)](#)

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2016-01-14-Wounded-Veterans-Learn-Mixed-Martial-Arts-from-the-Experts>