

# Wounded Veterans and Their Guests Race Through Go-Kart Competition

## Dinner and Racing Bring Injured Service Members Together for Date Night Fun

WHITE MARSH, Md., Feb. 5, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- A group of wounded veterans and their guests gathered at the Autobahn in White Marsh, Maryland for dinner and some friendly go-karting competition.

Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) works to provide experiences that highlight engagement and camaraderie among injured service members. Shared experiences provide a significant component in the recovery of wounded veterans. Social gatherings, like the night at the Autobahn, help injured service members build a personalized network of support in a fun and unique way. WWP offers 20 programs and services to help wounded veterans in their recovery, all free of charge.

WWP Alumnus and Army veteran Latina Gaston, and WWP Alumnus and retired Army Reserve veteran Lonzia Hawkins, Jr. enjoyed the dinner and the competitive spirit of the gathering.

"Being the competitor that I am," Latina said, "I loved the fact that we had the opportunity to receive a print out of the rankings for each race! We were told that the carts go up to 60 miles per hour. If that's true, I would imagine I went that speed."

Lonzia agreed, while admitting his wife proved herself quite a rival and recalling his time in the Army.

"My fastest recorded time was 22:9111, but real 'dragsters' never tell. I know my wife blew by me. I'm not certain how fast I went overall, but I can say I thought I was back in the Army. I was going so fast that I felt I was airborne. Kudos to whoever thought to host the event there."

Latina and Lonzia look forward to future go-karting events so their families can participate in the excitement of racing fun. Additionally, both wounded service members welcomed the opportunity to meet more fellow injured veterans and widen their circles of support to continue aiding in their recovery.

"That's what I love about Wounded Warrior Project! Each and every event I attend I get the chance to meet more of my brothers and sisters. It's a reunion I will always and forever look forward to," Latina stated proudly.

When asked what WWP means to him, Lonzia did not hesitate: "No question, WWP means understanding not only to me, but to my family and fellow Alumni. It is important to know we are not alone as veterans, nor are our family members and caregivers who look after us daily, with our mental, physical and spiritual scars -- sometimes with no thanks at all."

In the spirit of using sports as an avenue to heal, WWP's Soldier Ride is another program that provides an innovative way for wounded veterans to bond and recover. Through a combination of cycling and the bonds of service, teams of WWP Alumni and supporters set out on four days of cycling aboard a variety of standard and adaptive bicycles as a way to uplift spirits, bolster a sense of camaraderie and accomplishment, and overcome physical, mental and emotional wounds.

## **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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