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

Wounded Service Members Take Flight Indoors

Skydiving Event for Injured Veterans Provides Afternoon of Camaraderie and Fun

AUSTIN, Texas, Feb. 12, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- A group of wounded veterans got together recently to test their wings and take flight at an indoor skydiving event hosted by Wounded Warrior Project[®] (WWP) as part of the Alumni program. Fourteen WWP Alumni flew, hovered, and floated their way through an afternoon of camaraderie, fun, and relaxation.

Clarence, an Army veteran and WWP Alumnus, said that it was an amazing experience. "The instructors were very helpful and put us through a safety class to make sure we knew what we were doing. It was a great feeling; like you were just floating there, suspended without strings."

Attendees also learned about WWP programs and services available free of charge. One WWP program that gained attention and recruits at the event was Transition Training Academy (TTA), a hands-on program that helps injured veterans explore the information technology (I.T.) field as a possible career. TTA instruction is a high-touch blended learning model where instructors engage personally with each student by using "learn-by-doing" teaching techniques that increase the potential for student success. This is especially beneficial for injured service members with traumatic brain injury (TBI) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"Learning about the work training opportunities WWP provides was almost as good as the event itself," Clarence said. "I was really happy to hear about this program, as employers are looking for that skill set nowadays. I can get certified and find work in a good field."

It was not the only thing that Clarence would learn that day. Many wounded service members face challenges adjusting to their injuries and civilian life. The WWP Alumni program creates support through shared experiences and brings injured veterans together to build camaraderie. By bonding through events and programs, these veterans learn they are not alone.

"Honestly, it was just good meeting other veterans, getting their perspectives, and hearing their stories," said Clarence. "I talked to one guy about our experiences in Iraq, what our assignments were, and where we were at. It was good to hear from people who know what it was like and who can relate to that time in my life."

Army National Guard Veteran and WWP Alumna Caree Gellinck said that she enjoyed the chance to step out of her comfort zone and be around other veterans who understand her.

"I am taking steps to have an enjoyable life again," said Caree. "Attending the iFly event was one large step I took to force myself to get out there and experience new things within a safe group. I made a promise to myself that this year I will push myself into the uncomfortable zone to experience life, be in new surroundings, and most importantly, meet new people."

Currently, more than 100,000 wounded service members, their family members, and caregivers receive support each year through free WWP programs and services. Through a high-touch and interactive approach, the WWP vision is to foster the most successful, well-adjusted generation of wounded service members in our nation's history.

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.

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