

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

Wheelchair Lacrosse Bonds Injured Service Members

Excitement of Lacrosse Motivates Wounded Veterans to Continue Living On Their Terms

PHOENIX, Feb. 13, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- One of the great things about lacrosse is that no matter the injury, participants across ability level can enjoy its demanding, fast-paced action. A group of wounded veterans recently found out about the speed, finesse, and teamwork lacrosse requires when 360 Sports and Fitness Center hosted a wheelchair lacrosse clinic at its facility in Phoenix. Ability 360, which supports independent living and peer support for people with disabilities, provided all equipment.

Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) Alumni engaged in an opportunity to build connections through sports and recreation. WWP works to assist injured veterans by providing shared experiences, which are integral to recovery. Wheelchair lacrosse provided an innovative way for wounded service members to build a support network. WWP provides 20 free programs and services to wounded veterans, their families, and their caregivers.

Daniel Piotrowski, Army veteran and WWP Alumnus, is a lacrosse enthusiast who had been looking for a way to get involved with the sport. "I thought this event was awesome because this is a sport I have been interested in for a while," Daniel said. "I had a great time meeting fellow warriors."

Ability 360 staff helped WWP Alumni with wheelchair fittings and testing of protective equipment. Wounded veterans went through a series of drills to sharpen general skills such as wheelchair movement (known as "wheeling"), and lacrosse-specific skills such as throwing, catching, and scooping the ball.

Marine Corps veteran and WWP Alumnus Ben Lunak was the star of his wheelchair lacrosse team. "I scored a goal," he said. "I really enjoyed the camaraderie of the team. I even picked up some new skills, such as how to wheel and hold a lax stick."

Gaining independence is a challenge many returning wounded veterans face. Ben said WWP shows that injured veterans can live their fullest lives on their own terms. "For me, it means that there is an organization out there that teaches veterans how to live independently after the hospitals and rehab," he said.

Dan agreed. "Transitioning into civilian life has been very trying and difficult over the last three years. When I attend a WWP event, I know that I am going to be accepted and welcomed, which is truly comforting," he said. Despite an injury that keeps him from walking, the wheelchair lacrosse clinic gave him the confidence he needed to play sports...with his brothers-in-arms.

"Some of the guys mentioned that they would like to put a team together and start practicing," Dan added.

Wounded Warrior Project's Physical Health and Wellness program, along with its Independence Program, is one of 20 programs and services offered to injured service members free of charge. WWP is dedicated to creating impactful programs for warriors, families, and caregivers that improve physical health and lead to positive, active lifestyles that promote independence. Through high-touch, high-quality programs and events that focus on uniting wounded veterans to live on their own terms, WWP fulfills its mission to honor and empower Wounded Warriors.

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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