

## Wounded Veterans Hit the Slopes

### **Four Day Event Offers Adaptive Sports Racing for Injured Service Members**

WINDHAM, N.Y., Feb. 25, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Adaptive Sports Foundation (ASF) recently hosted its eighth annual Learn to Race Camp, a four-day training session and race for disabled skiers. Among the enthusiasts taking on the slopes were five Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) Alumni who attended the event as part of the Alumni program.

"I did a cycling event with Wounded Warrior Project during the summer, where I met a ski instructor who told me about this event. I noticed that his knee was badly hurt," said Air Force veteran and WWP Alumnus, Richard Torres. "I've also had trouble with my knee. But he told me about the adaptive skiing event, and mentioned that he's also a ski instructor. I didn't think I'd have the chance to ski again, but this event made it happen."

Through the WWP Alumni program, wounded service members have a chance to grow closer, be empowered, and deepen their bonds through shared experiences. Many WWP Alumni face similar challenges and events like this offer Alumni a chance to come together and connect with other wounded veterans and family support members.

"I saw Alumni that I met at events in the past, but I also met a new friend who I ended up racing with," said Torres. "We were able to get to know more about each other during our time in training. His family came out to cheer him on and it was very touching to see."

Torres, a skier, spent three days alongside his fellow Alumni, learning about racing techniques and strategies. From there, Alumni would take to the racing track and test out their skills. Each race was recorded, giving participants a chance to review and improve upon what they learned.

"It was an awesome experience, I can't put into words how it felt," said Torres. "The training was excellent. There were children with disabilities there who were also learning how to ski. Being around them was so inspiring and being able to participate in the race with them brought me so much joy."

After three days of the rigorous training camp, attendees would no doubt feel sore. Fortunately, the evenings featured relaxing yoga classes and chances to stretch out muscles that were inundated with stress during the day's practices. WWP Alumni also learned about the biathlon, with instructions on the proper shooting and skiing techniques made famous by the Olympic event. On the fourth and final day of the event, the race was opened to any disabled participants who wished to race.

"I have never raced, and I never imagined that I would ever downhill race," said Torres. "With my knee being what it is, I didn't think I'd even buy skis again, but after this event I did. My knees hurt, but it's an opportunity that everyone should try. I'm 51 years old, but getting out on the slopes made me feel young again."

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. WWP's Physical Health & Wellness (PH&W) program is another service offered by WWP and is targeted to help reduce stress and combat depression while promoting an overall healthy and active lifestyle. PH&W events are designed to show wounded service members that, regardless of their physical injuries, they can maintain an active way of life. In January 2016, 789 Alumni

have been served through PH&W program events.

### **About Adaptive Sports Foundation**

The Adaptive Sports Foundation® (ASF) is a non-profit organization that provides profound and life changing experiences for children and adults with physical and cognitive disabilities and chronic illnesses through outdoor physical activity, education, support and community.

### **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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