

Wounded Veterans and Their Families Take A Walk On The Wild Side

Injured Service Members Take a Trip to the San Diego Zoo

SAN DIEGO, March 2, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Beautiful California weather provided the perfect opportunity for a group of injured service members and their families to bond by seeing animals in a new light. Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) hosted more than 200 wounded veterans, their families, and their caregivers at the San Diego Zoo.

WWP Alumni and their families enjoyed brunch hosted by WWP. After the meal, attendees got up close and personal with a few furry friends in a private area, then enjoyed the rest of the day surrounded by 100 acres of plants, animals, and wide open spaces.

The WWP Alumni program is one of the 20 free programs and services offered to injured service members and their families – free of charge. WWP works to ensure wounded veterans can share their experiences with other injured service members who have endured similar challenges. Providing wounded veterans with opportunities for bonding and camaraderie is essential to their healing and recovery.

Army veteran and WWP Alumnus Brandon Hicks was thrilled to bring his family along to see the zoo in a new way. "We had a lot of fun!" Brandon said. "We took advantage of the fact that our attendance allowed to see the zoo from a different perspective."

An exhibition highlight of the zoo visit was a presentation where attendees became more knowledgeable about the range of animals that call the San Diego Zoo home. For Brandon, seeing the joy on his son's face during the exhibit was a high point. "My son loved the exhibit and the zoo's guided bus tour. The opportunity to spend time with my family strengthens our relationship by allowing us time to get outside, share new experiences, and create new memories."

During the visit, Brandon learned about other programs and services WWP offers and plans to share the information with his veteran friends. One of the programs WWP offers to injured service members free of charge is the [Independence Program \(IP\)](#), which encourages wounded veterans with moderate to severe neurological injuries to live their lives to the fullest. Through high-touch, interactive experiences that empower them to personally define independence post-injury, IP lets combat wounded veterans know they are more than capable of living their lives on their own terms. In January 2016, IP positively impacted 581 injured service members and their families.

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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