

Female Injured Service Members Enjoy a Colorful Evening

Wounded Veterans and Family Members Take Part in Evening of Painting

MIAMI, March 8, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- In a whirlwind of smells and colors, a group of wounded veterans and their caregivers gathered in Coral Gables to express their creativity. The all-female event hosted by Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) was open to WWP Alumni and family support members.

Participants enjoyed savory Cuban cuisine paired with sparkling cider and fruity club soda, and united to impart their unique takes on one theme for their vibrant paintings: Moonlight Cherry Blossoms.

Elizabeth Giraud, whose husband is a retired Army veteran, said she had an amazing time at the event. "I found it encouraging to meet ladies who are in similar circumstances I can relate to."

The only things attendees needed were their appetites, their enthusiasm, and a willingness to experiment with bold colors. Thanks to a calm atmosphere, the participants were able to create at ease, without the strain of having to create a flawless piece of art.

For Elizabeth, that was a bonus. "No creative skills were required there, so it was nice to do something creative without the pressure of making it perfect," she said, and added that the contacts she made were a highlight. "The connections I made with some of the Alumni and family support members were probably the most meaningful for me," said Elizabeth. "The ladies I met were amazing and very friendly, which can be a rare commodity in Miami. The support that WWP provides to us veterans and our families is truly incredible. This was my first event and I didn't quite grasp how much I would need this. I'm so grateful for the work WWP does."

A major challenge wounded veterans face after returning home is understanding and navigating the complexities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Understanding how benefits work can be a particular challenge. During the painting event WWP Alumni and family support members received a helpful overview on how to use the e-Benefits system, the VA website where injured service members can access their benefits information.

WWP's Benefits Service program provides support and education for Alumni. The Benefits Services team helps the transition to life after injury by identifying a wounded veterans individual needs, and working to ensure the individual can access government benefits they earned.

Through fiscal year 2015, the Benefits Service team has secured more than \$160 million for wounded veterans and their families. Additionally, the Benefits Service program is often the initiator that engages Alumni in other WWP programs and services to ensure access to necessary community resources for a successful post-injury transition. In January 2016 alone, Wounded Warrior Project touched 2,358 warriors through its Benefits Services program: <http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/benefits-service.aspx>.

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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