

Wounded Veterans Dive at Devil's Den and Blue Grotto

Wounded Warrior Project Alumni Obtain Diving Certification at Program Event

WILLISTON, Fla., March 30, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Taking a deep breath and stepping into the depths of the Devil's Den and Blue Grotto, wounded veterans recently became certified divers, thanks to an Alumni program event hosted by Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP). The two-day diving class allowed Alumni to become scuba certified. Instructors were on hand to guide participants through the process of diving, adjusting gear in the water, and learning how to communicate underwater effectively.

"I have been dreaming about getting my diving certification since I first tried scuba," said Marine Corps veteran and WWP Alumnus Paul McCrimmon. "Today, I finally got it and it was due to Wounded Warrior Project. I've already gone and purchased my gear and I'm going diving again soon."

Through direct programs and services like the Alumni program, wounded service members have a chance to deepen their bonds through camaraderie at welcoming events in relaxed environments. Many WWP Alumni face similar challenges and events like this offer them a chance to come together and connect with other wounded veterans and family support members. For WWP, there is a distinct difference between members and Alumni; the term Alumni indicates a mutual shared experience and denotes your place in an organization was earned. There are no membership fees or dues at WWP - those were paid by wearing the uniform and on the battlefield. It is for that reason that all WWP programs and services are offered to Alumni free of charge.

"WWP is helping me to continue my education right now, and I was able to dive with some of my classmates and enjoy time with them outside of the classroom," said Paul. "Plus I was able to meet a few new people and we all hit it off. A couple of us will be going to the advanced class together."

What lies below for Paul after the advanced class? He wants to tackle his dream dive one day.

"If it's in the ocean, I want to dive it," Paul enthused. "If I could go anywhere though, I would go to Cozumel and dive the reefs off the coast. It's absolutely beautiful there."

More than 100,000 wounded veterans, caregivers, and family members receive access to WWP programs and services. Among those programs and services is Combat Stress Recovery Program (CSRP), which addresses the mental health and cognitive needs of wounded veterans returning from war. CSRP provides military rehabilitation services at key stages during an injured service member's readjustment process. While post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and combat stress are common after war-time experiences, WWP approaches these issues from the veterans' perspective and challenges them to think about goal-setting and understanding their "new normal." In February 2016, WWP supported 2,553 Alumni as they journeyed to their new normal as part of WWP's commitment to mental wellness. To find out more about WWP's programs and services, please visit: <https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/programs.aspx>.

About Wounded Warrior Project

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. The WWP 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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<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2016-03-30-Wounded-Veterans-Dive-at-Devils-Den-and-Blue-Grotto>