

# Wounded Veterans Delve Deep at Howe Caverns, Day of Discovery

HOWES CAVE, N.Y., April 11, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Leaving the sunshine and sky above for more grounded fare, a group of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) Alumni and family members explored New York state's second most popular natural attraction, Howe Caverns. WWP hosted this subterranean adventure as part of its Alumni program, which is designed to give wounded service members a chance to deepen their bonds through camaraderie at welcoming events in relaxed environments, free of charge.

The caverns offer amateur explorers, without any prior training and equipment required for such an adventure, a chance to go caving. First discovered in 1842, Howe Caverns tours have been ongoing since 1843, letting generations of visitors admire the beauty of what lies 156 feet below the Earth's surface. The cavern's history intrigued Richard Torres, an Air Force veteran and WWP Alumnus.

"It was a fun day," said Richard. "Weather wise it was a snowy day, but underground the weather was perfect! Guides told us all about how explorers found the cave in the late 1800's, and how they went about journeying down into the depths during that era. The tour was extremely informative, we heard details on the geology and the rock formations."

WWP family support member Kristina Sledge-Moorhead enjoyed the outing with her family, explaining that the adventure thrilled her daughter.

"My daughter had a great time interacting with everything around her - she thought it was so cool to be down beneath the surface, and touched all the slimy rocks," Kristina said. "I enjoyed the chance to spend time with my family and talk to WWP staff - they're always so good to us."

Many WWP Alumni face similar challenges, and events like this Alumni program activity offer them a chance to unite and connect with other wounded veterans and family support members.

A boat tour followed the walking exploration of Howe Caverns, and was a highlight for many on the trip. Alumni dined on a healthy lunch, and were given the chance to learn more about WWP's direct programs and services.

"After the delicious lunch, WWP staff talked about other events that are coming up," Richard explained. "They also talked about the programs and services available to me. I attended a Project Odyssey once and welcome the opportunity to do it again because it left me so inspired. I'm also very interested in the Physical Health and Wellness programs available; anything that gets me moving and active is right up my alley."

Through WWP's Physical Health and Wellness (PH&W) programs, wounded veterans can reduce stress and depression, while being empowered to live an overall healthy lifestyle by participating in fun, active, and educational activities. PH&W events are designed to show wounded service members that regardless of their physical injuries, they can maintain an active way of life. From myofascial release and yoga instruction, training plans for running, and healthy cooking classes, PH&W events offer injured veterans a chance to discover healthier lifestyles in a variety of ways. Along with the health benefits associated with PH&W services, Alumni have the chance to bond with other wounded veterans and family support members. In February 2016 alone, 917 WWP Alumni got their blood pumping at a PH&W program event.

To learn more about PH&W programs and events, please visit:

<http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/physical-health-wellness.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](http://woundedwarriorproject.org).

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