

WWP News & Media: Veteran Group Outings, Charity Events, Helping Vets

Wounded Veterans Hit Bullseye

Injured Service Members Bond During A Day of Recreational Shooting

LAS VEGAS, April 11, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Marksmen of all levels who wanted to brush up on their sharp-shooting skills reignited some military camaraderie at a Nevada shooting range recently. As part of an Alumni outing, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) hosted a group of injured service members for a day of recreational shooting at a state-of-the-art indoor shooting range in Las Vegas.

WWP's Alumni program is one of the 20 direct programs and services offered to injured service members, their families, and caregivers free of charge. Through these events, WWP works to help wounded veterans find each other so they can heal through the power of camaraderie. Bonding with other combat veterans who have shared their experiences is a significant part of the recovery process.

WWP Alumnus and Army veteran Jesus Perez said, "The event went well. The WWP staff and the staff at American Shooters Gun Range were awesome. I was able to look at a lot of the guns, handle them, and have my questions answered."

The shooting day was a great way for wounded veterans to test their skills while meeting Alumni who live in the Las Vegas area, and some who traveled from California like Jesus and his wife.

Rolf Blum, Marine Corps veteran and WWP Alumnus, was impressed with the importance the staff placed on weapon safety in the recreational setting. Rolf also came from California to participate in the shooting day event and found it a perfect setting for combat veterans to bond and share "war stories."

"These are great experiences and provide an opportunity for us to get out and meet other warriors. I had never been to American Shooters, but it was safe and well-staffed. I'm used to the environment as former military law enforcement, so that was good to see," said Rolf. "It was important to me to see that the warriors in attendance felt safe."

It is the recapturing of veteran spirit that makes these events so meaningful to injured service members. Isolation is a big challenge in a wounded veteran's transition to civilian life. For many Alumni, WWP events remind them that no warrior coming home will be left alone or without the support they need from the country they sacrificed for on the battlefield.

Rolf described the day as a release that allowed him to get back in touch with his military experience.

"I take any opportunity I can to attend these events because I find they are stress-free, therapeutic, and a good release of energy," Rolf said. "It reconnected me with the combat experience, but while being with my combat buddies. It's that nod, that look, that smile, that exchange. Everyone was competent and has been there."

For Jesus, the biggest reward of Alumni events like the shooting day is that they help him be more open and social, while making him aware of how his military experience still affects him, so he can find healthy coping techniques.

"It was my second WWP event, and I enjoyed being with my brothers and my sisters. I missed the camaraderie. Being around my military family was the highlight of the event: sharing laughs, bonding with one another,

making a new friendship. I just started going on outings with WWP, and am learning more about all they offer. I would love to participate in the Combat Stress Recovery Program, Peer Support, and Project Odyssey."

WWP's four pillars—mind, body, engagement and economic empowerment—take an inclusive approach to helping wounded veterans heal. Injured service members who live with combat stress, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other invisible wounds experience barriers to transition. As part of the Mind pillar, both Project Odyssey and the Combat Stress Recovery Program give warriors the tools to live their lives to the fullest, without the stigmas associated with mental illness.

In February 2016 alone, the Mind pillar served 2,553 warriors and their families. For more information on WWP's Mind pillar, go to: <https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/programs>.

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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