

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

From Hopeless to Hopeful: 7-Year VA Benefits Battle Nears an End

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., April 12, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- In 2016, Charles "Chuck" Clark reached out to Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) when facing back surgery for a service-related injury. A 7-year battle with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) was in its final stages after the WWP Benefits Service team stepped in to assist the injured veteran with his claim, less than 5 months ago.

Chuck is a disabled veteran of the United States Armed Forces, having served four deployment tours in three different military branches—U.S Marines, Air Force Reserves, and Texas Army National Guard—in his 15-year military career from 1995 to 2010.

"My family struggled throughout my enlistment," said Chuck who explains that for every successful stride forward, his family seemed to always endure several disheartening steps backward. After enduring multiple relocations from home to home due to financial struggles, and multiple health concerns during his deployments, Chuck and his family were beginning to fall into the depths of helplessness.

"Mere days into my first deployment, our home loan fell through and my pregnant wife and son were homeless, living in our family vehicle for four days until she found a new rental," said Chuck. During the same deployment, Chuck crushed his right hand in an armored truck door, which later caused a tendon to "snap like a rubber band" inside his arm, forcing his medical evacuation to undergo two surgeries.

Chuck was later diagnosed with diabetes and high blood pressure, and while he hoped to transition to a desk position, he was forced to medically separate.

Years after his medical separation, Chuck and his family continued to struggle financially. "I was working so many hours that I no longer had time to focus on my medical problems. I was losing personal time off at work for every VA appointment, and those seemed to be scheduled weekly," said Chuck. "I could never seem to make enough to cover everything for the month. It was never ending."

Chuck became bitter, resentful, and hopeless and began to feel like a failure. Everyone in his home seemed unhappy and miserable, and his marriage was in trouble.

"Before long, God reintroduced me to Wounded Warrior Project," said Chuck. "I had nowhere to turn until they stepped in to help."

With long-term financial and medical support playing a critical empowerment role in the recovery process, WWP created the Benefits Service program, helping injured veterans navigate the complexities of the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to obtain the care they need. With a success rate above 85 percent, WWP reaches into local communities through a variety of events, filing thousands of claims each year, and immediately changing the lives of injured veterans, their families, and caregivers.

Four months after WWP stepped in to file Chucks claim, he received a 90 percent rating for his disabilities. Then, to ensure Chuck could focus on his post-surgery recovery, WWP provided almost \$4,000 in monetary support for rent, utilities, phone bills, groceries, and more.

"My body has been broken down over the four deployments I have served, and I am ready to settle down and enjoy life for once," said Chuck. "I want to spend time with my family and make it my mission to help other veterans who have experienced the same things I have with my journey. My family and I are very lucky to be in contact with Wounded Warrior Project," said Chuck. "They have taken years of frustration with the system and turned it around for us."

The Clark family is one of more than 100,000 injured service members, their caregivers, and families served by Wounded Warrior Project – more than 2,400 registered Alumni received assistance through the Benefits Service program in February 2016, securing more than \$70 million in veterans' benefits dollars. For more information, go to: <https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/benefits-service>.

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.

Photo - <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20160412/354315>

Photo - <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20160412/354316>

Photo - <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20160412/354317>

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

For further information: Vesta M. Anderson - Public Relations Coordinator,
vanderson@woundedwarriorproject.org, 904.646.6864

Additional assets available online: [Photos \(3\)](#)

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2016-04-12-From-Hopeless-to-Hopeful-7-Year-VA-Benefits-Battle-Nears-an-End>