

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

WWP Hosts Tree to Tree Adventure

Wounded Veterans, Families Visit Tallahassee Museum

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., April 20, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Wounded veterans and their families learned firsthand not to wear bright colors when encountering a leopard. Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) hosted a group of Alumni and family members at the Tallahassee Museum where they enjoyed private tours of native Florida animal exhibits, shared lunch and companionship, and had the chance to zip line over live animal enclosures.

"It was thrilling to see the leopard jump up and try to attack the zip liners flying above her cage," said Kim Starling, U.S. Army injured veteran and WWP Alumna. "When someone with bright colors would soar above her cage, she would try to pounce at them. It was an amazing sight."

An Alumna for several years, Kim always enjoys attending WWP Alumni events. "Two things sparked my interest in this activity: seeing the various animals and enjoying fellowship with other wounded veterans."

Many wounded service members face similar challenges adjusting to their injuries and civilian life. The WWP Alumni program creates support through shared experiences and brings injured veterans together to build camaraderie. By bonding through events and programs, wounded veterans learn they are not alone. The WWP Alumni program is one of 20 direct programs and services offered free of charge to wounded service members, their caregivers, and families.

U.S. Air Force veteran and WWP Alumnus, Ruben Salazar, shared the day with his family on the 52 acres of living wildlife exhibits and nature trails. "We enjoyed meeting other WWP Alumni and the private guided tour to see all the animals at the museum."

Ruben's family also spent time role-playing in historic buildings like the old school, church, and homestead which are set up for group interaction. Eager for the new challenge of zip lining, his three daughters signed up for the tree to tree adventure. "After learning the zip lining basics, they were so excited to try," he said.

At first, Ruben and his family were only familiar with WWP staff at the event. "Our group shares common ground, and although we didn't know anyone at first, everyone immediately interacted as if we knew each other," Ruben said. "My experience has always been positive at events and WWP staff consistently encourages interaction."

"I knew a few veterans at this event; one veteran from the unit I deployed with was there with his family, and I reconnected with a family we met a few weeks ago," Kim said. "The interaction with Alumni is so comfortable since we share the bond of service to our country. Camaraderie with each other, in addition to the actual activities, is why we enjoy WWP events."

Kim's involvement with WWP programs, including Soldier Ride®, Project Odyssey®, and Warriors to Work®, has been life-changing. "I would say that due to WWP programs, events, and the amazing staff, my life has been saved. Because of WWP, I received a recumbent trike, I have a job I truly enjoy, and I am getting help for post-traumatic stress disorder." She continued, "I owe a big 'thank you' to WWP for always being there and providing events for Alumni so we can enjoy camaraderie and fellowship that helps us recover from our war wounds."

In February 2016, Warriors to Work served 2,437 wounded veterans and family support members on their journey toward meaningful careers of their choice. Warriors to Work matches skills with veteran-friendly employers, helps injured service members with their resumes, and prepares them for interviews. For more information, visit <https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/warriors-to-work>.

About Wounded Warrior Project

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. The 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/20160420/357736>

Photo - <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20160420/357737>

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

For further information: Rob Louis - Public Relations Specialist, Email: rlouis@woundedwarriorproject.org, Phone: 904.627.0432

Additional assets available online: [Photos \(2\)](#)

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2016-04-20-WWP-Hosts-Tree-to-Tree-Adventure>