

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

Farewell to Summer: Families, Veterans Celebrate with Wounded Warrior Project

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., Aug. 17, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Before the hustle and bustle of a new school year, many families like to get out in the sun and enjoy one last bit of summer fun. Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) recently helped a large group say goodbye to the carefree season in style with an end-of-summer celebration at The Getaway in St. Petersburg.

More than 100 injured veterans and family members took part in the celebration, which included water activities and a make-your-own taco bar. WWP teamed up with Urban Kai to provide paddleboarding and kayaking to willing participants.

An avid fan of kayaking, Army veteran Sandra Bermudez was eager to bring her family to the program gathering to partake in the sport and meet members of her extended WWP family.

"I love to kayak, and I just love the atmosphere of being close to the water," she said. "It was great to share that with my family and fellow WWP wounded warriors. It was nice to see veterans enjoying the celebration."

The kinship was also a drawing factor for Jessica Hughes, whose husband served in the Army and was wounded in Iraq.

"We always enjoy getting together with WWP families and staff," she said. "I love being outdoors, as do my kids. We thought this would be a fun outing, and it was. Getting out on the water on the kayaks and paddleboards with my family was great."

Beach celebrations and other fun activities can go a long way in supporting the long-term recovery needs of warriors. Reintroducing injured veterans and their families to the unique bonds experienced during military service discourages isolation and advocates socialization in a friendly atmosphere.

"It promotes a good feeling and really brings everybody together in a fun, relaxed environment," Jessica said.

"This provides the opportunity to be surrounded by others who understand what I've been through," Sandra said. "It has helped me realize I've been fortunate to come back and not feel so sorry for myself. I have even gotten motivated to share more with my family, which has helped them better understand what I've been through."

While mingling with wounded warriors and families, WWP staff answered questions and advised participants of additional services to assist in their recovery. Programs, activities, and other resources are available through the generosity of donors, with no financial obligation to veterans and family members.

By providing assistance with educational and employment goals, and physical, mental, and emotional recovery, veterans service organizations help injured warriors gain and maintain their independence.

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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