

University of Minnesota Opens its Doors to Wounded Warrior Project

MINNEAPOLIS, Aug. 23, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- M-I-N-N-E-S-O-T-A! The Golden Gophers recently hosted a group of wounded veterans for a day of physical training at their state-of-the-art facilities at the University of Minnesota. Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) sponsored the program opportunity as part of its program offerings designed to help warriors discover new ways to live healthy and active lifestyles.

"I am a former student body president at the University of Minnesota," said Brian Bergson, an Army and Air Force veteran. "If you cut my finger, I would bleed maroon and gold. When I walked into the facility, I was definitely excited to be there. The staff was friendly, helpful, and went out of its way to make me feel comfortable in spite of the fact that I haven't been able to work out since coming home from Afghanistan."

Bergson credits the WWP staff in Minnesota with saving his life, saying that while he has been to many WWP program events, this one was the most personally challenging.

"I have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and I'm nervous all the time," Brian said. "The biggest challenge was just showing up because I believed I can't work out any more since I'm injured. I learned the opposite from the great staff working this event. The trainers saw past my physical limits and helped me understand that just because I'm injured, I'm not broken."

The trainers worked with Brian to modify exercises and stretches to meet his needs. Upon completion of the workout, he and the other warriors sat down for lunch and socialized. WWP believes by bringing wounded warriors together for fun, relaxing activities, they can begin to rebuild that sense of camaraderie they experienced during their military service.

"I was surprised and extremely grateful that such busy people would take time out of their personal lives to help me," Brian said. "I would want to tell others like me to please get off the couch, leave your isolation bubble, and get moving. It feels good to exercise, and you will meet some amazing people who honestly care about you."

Every day, wounded veterans face similar challenges when returning to civilian life after military service; visible and invisible wounds take their toll on even the toughest members of the armed forces. WWP meets warriors in various stages of recovery and provides health and fitness services that include weight training, yoga, cycling, outdoor activities, and nutrition workshops. To learn more, please visit <https://goo.gl/DmKT9n>.

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.