

Veterans Take Historic Walking Tour with Wounded Warrior Project

HARPERS FERRY, W.Va., Sept. 19, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Wounded veterans and family members got a glimpse at a pivotal moment in American history during a recent Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) program event. Attendees enjoyed a guided walking tour through key parts of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. The gathering was designed to give warriors an enjoyable social opportunity that got them engaged with their fellow injured veterans.

Located at the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, Harpers Ferry is more than just a quaint waterfront community. Thomas Jefferson admired it for its beauty, and George Washington designated it as the site for a United States armory and arsenal. It was the latter that turned the district into a catalyst for the American Civil War when abolitionist John Brown led a raid on the arsenal. A guide from the National Park Service shared these stories and more as warriors and family members enjoyed a one-mile walk through the town.

Activities like taking a walk and socializing with other veterans can help injured warriors cope with stress and depression. In a WWP survey of the wounded veterans it serves, nearly 47 percent say talking with other warriors boosts their ability to manage their mental health, and 32 percent of warriors expressed physical activity helps. WWP offers a variety of programs and services that assist veterans with mental health, physical health and wellness, career and benefits counseling, and engaging with other warriors and their communities.

"I like attending WWP outings at least once a month, but I was especially interested in this one because it involved the history of our nation," said Army veteran Khalil Alotaibi. "I love to learn about the people who made sacrifices for our country and fought for its freedom. It's a remarkable place."

For Navy veteran Enrique Jograj, the best part of the tour was learning the stories behind the streets and landmarks. He was fascinated with how they pertain to his own military history, and that of his fellow wounded warriors.

"It is important to understand that military members are responsible for the life-changing events that made our country," he said. "As we travel down roads named for amazing service members who came before us, we should take time to get to know the history behind the names. Having an open mind for history creates a greater curiosity for life around us, and a better appreciation of our past."

WWP staff closely interacted with warriors over the course of the afternoon, advising them of additional services and personalized therapeutic outlets to assist in recovery. Like WWP outreach gatherings, these program resources are available through the generosity of donors and at no cost to the wounded veterans WWP serves.

Whether it is surfing, cooking classes, or historic walking tours, these warrior-centric program activities support the recovery needs of wounded veterans by reintroducing them to the friendships and bonds they forged during military service. Encouraging warriors to recapture that spirit of camaraderie with their peers decreases the potential for isolation and helps them with their healing process.

One such opportunity to reduce isolation is the WWP Peer Support program. Peer support plays an

important role in the recovery process as injured veterans rely upon each other's learned experiences when managing day-to-day challenges. All WWP programs and services have an aspect of this support structure, while the Peer Support program is solely dedicated to ensuring every injured veteran, family member, and caregiver encourages one another in recovery, thus embodying the WWP logo of one warrior carrying another off the battlefield.

"The opportunity to be around others who have served helps to fill a void in my life," Enrique said. "Having conversations with those who know what military life was like – and what life is like now – is calming."

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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