

Veterans Welcome Autumn at Wounded Warrior Project Orchard Visit

DELANO, Minn., Oct. 4, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Fall is in the air, and a group of injured veterans and family members took full advantage of the season's splendors during a recent Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) visit to Apple Jack Orchards. While taking part in various family-friendly activities, participants experienced firsthand what is possible when exposed to social events that get them out of the house and connected with their fellow wounded warriors.

Parents and children alike enjoyed the seasonal celebration, which included a corn maze and launching apples from a fruit cannon. Marine veteran Donovan DePatto said he and his family were excited to be a part of the unique outing.

"There is nothing like fall in Minnesota, and being able to take my family out to the orchards really was awesome," he said. "We love being outdoors – and who doesn't like getting the chance to shoot an apple cannon?"

"It took me back to my younger years, watching my 5-year-old son jump from hay bale to hay bale," said Army veteran Gina Braswell. "I grew up on a farm so it reminded me of being a kid again. The event was a great opportunity to spend time in the country with my family – in a low-key environment."

Social activities can help wounded 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. WWP program gatherings like this are designed to help injured warriors improve their mental wellbeing through connecting with fellow veterans.

"To me, WWP has been a life-changer," Donovan said. "I personally struggle with isolation, and having events where I can be around other veterans is great because we have gone through the same battles together."

One such opportunity to reduce isolation is the WWP Peer Support program. This special type of therapy reintroduces injured veterans to the unique connections experienced during military service. Rarely duplicated in the civilian world, these relationships act as a secure bedrock that paves the road to recovery. WWP offers a variety of programs and services that assist veterans with mental health, physical health and wellness, career and benefits counseling, and connecting with other warriors and their communities.

"I believe in the power of veterans healing veterans," Donovan said. "Plus, these events give my family something to look forward to. I have been dealing with financial hardships since leaving the military, but being able to forget my worries while treating my family and seeing their smiles makes me feel great again."

Thanks to the generosity of donors, all WWP program resources and outreach gatherings are available free of charge to wounded warriors, their family members, and caregivers.

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/20161004/414924>

Photo - <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20161004/414923>

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

For further information: Mattison Brooks - Public Relations Specialist, Email: MBrooks@woundedwarriorproject.org, Phone: 904-646-6897

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

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2016-10-04-Veterans-Welcome-Autumn-at-Wounded-Warrior-Project-Orchard-Visit>