

# Warriors Channel their Inner Van Gogh During Wounded Warrior Project Paint Night

CARMEL, Ind., Dec. 12, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Date nights do not always have to include dinner and a movie, as a group of injured veterans and guests learned during a recent Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) program event. During the Paint with Your Mate Date Night, participants spent the evening learning to paint unique masterpieces with step-by-step guidance from an experienced art instructor. As they honed their talents, they connected with their plus-ones as well as fellow wounded warriors.

Army National Guard veteran Chris Tucker said the outing was a welcome getaway for him and his wife, Nikki.

"We're the parents of two young boys, and she is pregnant with our third," Chris said.

"Needless to say, we do not get to go out much. We both figured it would be a great date night – and it was. We are always in good company when we go to these events. Once people start opening up, we have great conversations. These are people like me, who understand what we've all been through in our military service."

WWP outreach events support the long-term recovery needs of warriors by reintroducing them to the bonds they experienced during military service – in environments that accommodate physical injuries and social anxieties. Encouraging warriors to recapture that spirit of camaraderie with their peers decreases the potential for isolation, which is often one of the most significant struggles they deal with after serving their country.

"It's definitely important for veterans to support each other," Chris said. "Everybody has a different background and a different story, but we all have a common bond. It's great to be in an environment with wounded warriors. There's no one else I'd rather spend this time with, aside from my family."

In a [WWP survey](#) of the injured warriors it serves, more than half of survey respondents (51.7 percent) talked with fellow Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn veterans to address their mental health issues. 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.