

Veterans Join Wounded Warrior Project for Night of Food, Basketball, and Camaraderie

BROOKLYN, N.Y., Dec. 30, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- A group of injured veterans and their families served by Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) recently had the opportunity to attend a Brooklyn Nets basketball game and connect with other warriors. For Army veteran Carlo Arellano, it was more than just a night out with his son. It was a chance to build relationships with other warriors from his area, in an environment that took away the stress of meeting new people.

"Who doesn't love a good basketball game?" Carlo said. "Even though I'm a Knicks fan, spending time connecting with my son and other warriors was a needed energy boost for me."

It was military appreciation night at the game, and veterans from all branches of service were honored with a color guard and special presentation. Before the game, warriors sat down over a meal to break the ice, learning more about one another and some of the programs and services WWP offers.

"A part of what makes these events so great is Wounded Warrior Project staff like Jason take the time to talk with me," Carlo explained. "He knows my story; he knows what I'm going through. He does that with all of the veterans around him. He and the other staff make these events feel like family gatherings."

For many veterans, the experiences they had in the military were some of the best of their lives, filled with fellowship, meaning, and direction. But upon return to civilian life, the isolation they face can be one of the most significant struggles wounded warriors deal with. It can be difficult knowing how to overcome that challenge.

That's why WWP hosts connection events like this, which give wounded warriors an opportunity to get out of the house and connect with fellow service members in their area. 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.

"I had been to several Wounded Warrior Project connection events with my family before this basketball game," Carlo said. "At one event, I saw a couple who I ran into again at the game. We hit it off, exchanged numbers, and we text frequently. They were from Long Island, and I'm from Jersey, so having Brooklyn as this middle ground area where we can meet up is great. I don't think I would've enjoyed the game as much if the other warriors weren't there. The whole experience made it really easy to build friendships that wouldn't be there otherwise."

The generosity of donors allows WWP to offer free programs that provide opportunities for injured veterans to form bonds with one another that lead to support networks. The programs also assist warriors with mental health, physical health and wellness, career and benefits counseling, and connecting with their communities.


Carlo was able to pull himself away from the game long enough to take some photos at the event. To see them, visit <http://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/> and click on multimedia, then images.

About Wounded Warrior Project
We Connect, Serve, and Empower

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. WWP connects wounded warriors and their families to valuable resources and one another, serves them through a variety of free programs and services, and empowers them to live life on their own terms. WWP is a national, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, visit woundedwarriorproject.org.

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

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