

Wounded Warrior Project Sweetens Holidays for Warrior Families



ORLANDO, Fla., Dec. 30, 2016 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) veterans and family members kicked off the festive holiday by making chocolate delicacies at Ferris and Foster's Famous Chocolate Factory in Orlando, Florida. The event was one of WWP's gatherings that educates warriors, their families, and caregivers about additional programs and services to help in the recovery process, creates support through shared experiences, and builds camaraderie by connecting injured veterans to one another and warrior families.

Often, the road to recovery begins by getting out of the house. WWP program events and activities are held in settings that accommodate physical injuries and social anxieties and often introduce warriors to the benefits of connecting with other injured veterans and getting involved with their communities.

"These connection events are important to warriors and their families," said Anthony Johnson, U.S. Navy retired veteran from Melbourne, Florida. "They allow us to get out and engage in family bonding – all while building camaraderie with our service brothers and sisters. These activities incorporate local businesses that support Wounded Warrior Project and injured veterans. It's so important for wounded warriors to see there are people out there who truly care about us and our families. It renews a sense of belonging to something much larger than oneself."

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.

"Establishing the warrior-to-warrior support structure in the civilian world is vital as veterans rely upon one another's learned experiences when managing day-to-day challenges," said WWP CEO Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Mike Linnington. "Thanks to the generous support of donors, in 2016, WWP was able to support more than 100,000 warriors and their family members."

In three separate 90-minute sessions, nearly 100 veterans and their families and guests made 90 pounds of various chocolate creations to take home. The goodies ranged from chocolate truffles and suckers to chocolate-covered strawberries and snack cakes. The treats were created on "Lucy," the well-known conveyor belt that played a large role in an episode of the old comedy series "I Love Lucy." Luckily, event participants had better control of the situation than Lucille Ball and weren't forced to cram sweets into their mouths or shirts to keep up with the conveyor's pace. Although tempting, they all were able to restrain themselves.

The event was a sweet success as each family left with new memories, friends, smiles, and plenty of holiday treats.

WWP offers a variety of programs and services that assist injured veterans with mental health, physical health

and wellness, career and benefits counseling, and connecting with other warriors and their communities. These resources empower warriors to achieve educational and employment goals, maintain independence, and stay connected with their families, communities, and one another. Generous donors make it possible for wounded warriors to take part in connection activities and benefit from program resources at no cost to them.

To learn more about how WWP's programs and services are making an impact on the lives of wounded warriors, visit <https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/>.

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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Additional assets available online: [_Video \(1\)](#)

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2016-12-30-Wounded-Warrior-Project-Sweetens-Holidays-for-Warrior-Families>