

Wounded Warrior Project Veterans Heal by Brush

TAMPA, Fla., March 27, 2017 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- First, a line of bright green streaked across a field of white. A darker shade of green followed, and next, a dark shade of blue. Brush strokes connected the colors and stretched them to the other side of the canvas, creating a patch of grass that started a special St. Patrick's Day-themed painting.

Wounded warrior Andrew Larocca and artist Craig Todd worked together as this masterpiece took shape during art therapy at the Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) office in Tampa recently. When the pair finished, they showed off the painting featuring the American flag over a green, grassy field with shamrocks. And for the warriors, there are therapeutic benefits.

"It is so much more than brush strokes," said Dave Truman, Andrew's father and caregiver. "It feeds the brain. The warriors are doing movements that help stimulate their brain functions."

Andrew, an Army veteran, has participated in art therapy for several years now, assembling a small gallery of work at home and creating hope for his loved ones.

"Andrew has gained so much confidence through art therapy," Dave said. "He wasn't able to talk since his injury seven years ago. But he started vocalizing again about three months ago. I strongly believe he is regaining some of his speech because of painting and music."

Four warriors each created their version of the shamrock painting with Craig's help.

"We use movement and different tactile and visual stimulation to create brain activity," Craig said.

WWP hired Craig through the organization Art Without Boundaries to provide art therapy sessions for warriors in WWP's [Independence Program](#). The Independence Program is designed for warriors with moderate to severe brain injury, spinal cord injury, or other neurological conditions.

Independence Program works with wounded warriors, their families, and caregivers to develop individual goals and a plan to accomplish them. The program connects warriors to their communities and meaningful activities, like art therapy, to aid in recovery.

"Independence Program has meant so much to Andrew – and all of the warriors here," Dave said.

To learn and see more about how WWP's programs and services connect, serve, and empower wounded warriors, visit <https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/>.

About Wounded Warrior Project

Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) connects, serves, and empowers wounded warriors.

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

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