

Wounded Warrior Project Veterans Take Center Stage at 2017 NFL Draft

PHILADELPHIA, May 3, 2017 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- At the 2017 NFL Draft, warriors served by Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) had a unique chance to experience the action. They gathered on the main stage as they were honored during the national anthem and watched from the stands among hundreds of thousands of enthusiastic football fans, thanks to the NFL.

"I'm a Cleveland Browns fan, so seeing Myles Garrett taken as the first pick was amazing," said Army veteran Shane Parsons. "Taking it all in, seeing the fans, seeing the Joint Service Color Guard present – it was awe-inspiring. I'm grateful that Wounded Warrior Project and the NFL gave me the chance to see it."

Isolation is one of the most significant struggles wounded warriors deal with after serving their country. It can be difficult knowing how to overcome that challenge and rekindle bonds similar to those formed in the military. That's why WWP works with partners to provide opportunities for warriors to forge those relationships.

"Me and another warrior, Richard Torres, were able to move around the venue pretty freely," Shane said. "We got to meet Roger Goodell, Jim Brown, and a few other Hall of Famers. But meeting Richard was a definite highlight – I'm hoping we will stay in touch."

The connection with Richard was one that Shane's mother and primary caregiver, Cindy Parsons, noticed. For her, seeing them bond over their love of football, fishing, and their experiences as service members was one of several moving moments during the evening.

"It was very emotional to see the crowd chanting 'USA, USA' as Shane, Richard, and the Joint Service Color Guard walked up," Cindy said. "The warriors spent a good amount of time with the Joint Service Color Guard talking about their service and deployments. It was great to see everyone relaxed and having a good time. As a mother, it's so uplifting to see him being social with others who understand him."

WWP programs and services are offered free of charge to warriors, their [caregivers, and families](#), and they assist with mental and physical health, [career and benefits counseling](#), connecting warriors with one another and their communities, and long-term care for the most seriously wounded. To learn more, visit newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/.

About Wounded Warrior Project

Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) connects, serves, and empowers wounded warriors. Read more at <https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/>.

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