

WWP News & Media: Veteran Group Outings, Charity Events, Helping Vets

## Wounded Warrior Project Veterans Empowered While Swimming With Sharks

### **Warriors Enjoy Georgia Aquarium Program Ahead of Shark Week**

ATLANTA, July 29, 2017 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Andrew Davenport sunk deeper into the water, nearly 20 feet down, lost in his surroundings. Manta rays, porkfish, giant trevally, and dozens of other marine life species darted around him. Then Andrew saw the imposing white underbelly of a more-than-40-foot long *Rhincodon typus*, also known as the whale shark.

This moment of joy for Andrew, who is an Army veteran, and other injured veterans took place at a Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) event in partnership with Georgia Aquarium. WWP connects veterans with one another and their communities. Events like this allow WWP to show how it serves warriors with life-saving programs and empowers them to live life on their terms.

"The dive was awesome," Andrew said. "By the time you are down there, you are enjoying everything, looking at everything, checking it all out – you look up and you've lost your crew."

Army veteran Amber Caldara goes to WWP events to connect with others.

"It is something you need when transitioning from the military to civilian world," Amber said.

This gathering was something new.

"I got bumped by a couple sharks."

Georgia Aquarium generously opens its whale shark swim and dive programs to wounded warriors through its Veterans Immersion Program. The aquarium has the largest group of Handicapped Certified Dive Instructors and Dive Masters in the world to make the event safe and enjoyable. Through its partnership with Georgia Aquarium, WWP brings veterans to experience this unique form of therapy.

"The dive was great," Navy veteran Tonya Doss said. "Those sharks are extra friendly."

Army veteran Michael Santiago summed the experience up very simply.

"Awesome."

"This was an excellent experience – I can't tell you how it was; you have to try it for yourself," Army veteran Edward Bryan said.

Army veteran Dave Schlueter had an idea after the dive: "It was amazing. I'd like to go again sometime."

Andrew reflected on his experiences with WWP during the dive.

"It is a really good opportunity to connect with warriors, connect with family of warriors, and get my family connected as well."

### **About Wounded Warrior Project**

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

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

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

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2017-07-29-Wounded-Warrior-Project-Veterans-Empowered-While-Swimming-With-Sharks>