

Warriors Build Confidence, Find Veteran Support on Nature Hike

SAN DIEGO, April 19, 2018 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) recently gave injured veterans the opportunity to experience the healing powers of nature and camaraderie during a six-mile hike on Cowles Mountain's scenic trails.

"I miss the brotherhood that I had in the military and being able to talk to people who understand that life," said Marine Corps veteran Anthone Wiles. "This hike allowed me to spend time with fellow motivators who have been through some of the same things I have, or more."

"I wanted to spend time with my son and had never been hiking on my own before," said Army veteran Loraine Garcia, "so I felt safe doing it with a trustworthy group. This was my first event since moving to San Diego. I recognized two other people, so I felt comfortable talking with them."

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. WWP programs offer settings that provide opportunities for warriors to rekindle those bonds and experience veteran peer support.

"I loved the group of veteran hikers and their guests," said Navy veteran Kathy Blakey. "We were all at various levels of fitness, but everyone encouraged each other. I felt safe to be around others who understand what it's like to suffer from post-traumatic stress and depression."

"Wounded Warrior Project has allowed me to get out and be active," Kathy said. "I, once again, have a sense of belonging."

Activities like hiking and socializing with other veterans can help injured warriors cope with stress and emotional concerns. In a WWP survey (<https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/survey>) of the injured warriors it serves, more than half of survey respondents (51.6 percent) expressed they talk with fellow veterans to address their mental health issues, and 30.3 percent indicated physical activity helps.

"Wounded Warrior Project is a great organization for networking and veteran support systems," Loraine added.

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

About Wounded Warrior Project

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

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