

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

From Backpacks to Mental and Brain Health, Wounded Warrior Project Hits 20 Years of Service

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Aug. 29, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Nearly 20 years ago, Army veteran Brian Neuman was injured during the Iraq war. While in a military hospital, a volunteer brought Brian a backpack filled with comfort items. That simple act of kindness for those injured in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars evolved into Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP), whose mission for the past 20 years has been to honor and empower post-9/11 wounded warriors.

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"I didn't know anything about the organization back in 2004 but that backpack meant so much to me," said Brian. "All I had was my hospital gown, so I needed clothes. That backpack gave me clothes and my dignity back."

While WWP still delivers its backpacks to wounded warriors, today it offers a wide range of direct programs and services related to mental and brain health, career counseling, connection, and long-term rehabilitative care. More than 240,000 wounded veterans and family members utilize those services. Nearly 75 new warriors and family members register every day. WWP also advocates for policy changes to address the needs of millions more veterans.

Army veteran Danielle Green also treasures the WWP backpack she received. "I am still proud to have my backpack," Danielle said. "It meant so much when I got it in 2004, and it still does today."

"When Wounded Warrior Project began, we focused on the immediate needs of injured veterans coming off the battlefield," said WWP CEO Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Mike Linnington. "We still help those injured in service, but we have a generation of veterans with additional needs including employment, mental health, and more. Wounded Warrior Project continually innovates programs and services to meet the needs of warriors and their families."

Over two decades, WWP innovations have improved the lives of veterans:

- 2007: Created a mental health workshop known as Project Odyssey® to help wounded veterans heal from invisible injuries.
- 2008: Started Warriors to Work® to help improve financial wellness in veteran families.
- 2013: Launched Independence Program to support our nation's most severely wounded veterans, their families, and caregivers.
- 2015: Created Warrior Care Network®, a first-of-its-kind clinical treatment option for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.
- From 2003-2022: Invested more than \$2 billion in programs and services for wounded warriors, families, and caregivers.

As a warrior who initially needed the support, Danielle is now the one carrying others. She recently helped lead 40 veterans on a group bicycle ride through Manhattan and Long Island. She also shares her story around the nation for WWP.

Brian also gives back through WWP. He was one of the organization's first employees. He now helps veterans deal with some of their most complex challenges.

Danielle and Brian were drawn in by the mission to honor and empower wounded warriors. Both have watched as WWP evolved to meet the needs of injured veterans and their families.

WWP is recognizing 20 years of serving veterans with events for those veterans and supporters in more than a dozen cities. Part of that commemoration includes new spotlights on veterans' successes through the years. With themes like "[20 Years of Possible](#)" and "Just Getting Started," these messages help remind veterans of the support available to them and how far they have come in the past two decades.

From humble beginnings filling backpacks for wounded warriors to creating an innovative approach to address PTSD and TBI, WWP has come a long way. But as it has learned from the veteran population it serves, Wounded Warrior Project is just getting started.

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

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

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2023-08-29-From-Backpacks-to-Mental-and-Brain-Health,-Wounded-Warrior-Project-Hits-20-Years-of-Service>