

Wounded Warrior Project Showcases Adventure-Based Mental Health Support for Military at Association of Experiential Learning Conference

Nov. 14, 2024 – Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) will present its innovative approach to addressing military mental health, focusing on adventure-based learning at the Association for Experiential Education's (AEE) 52nd Annual International Experiential Education Conference. The presentation will showcase the partnership between WWP's [Project Odyssey®](#) program and the Department of Defense to address [suicide risk](#) among soldiers stationed in Alaska.



Soldiers stationed in Alaska participating in experiential learning activities with Wounded Warrior Project's Project Odyssey program.

Addressing Suicide Risk in Rural and Remote Areas

"This collaboration serves as a blueprint for advancing the well-being of military personnel through mental health support that taps into their inherent sense of adventure," said Ryan Kules, combat veteran and Project Odyssey director at Wounded Warrior Project. "We're excited to share how our approach bridges gaps in behavioral health support for those who often face barriers to care."

The presentation, titled *Innovating Adventure-Based Mental Health Programming for Active-Duty Military*, will be led by WWP Project Odyssey manager Meg Louk with specialists Adrienne Ross and Janet Wood. They will discuss the collaborative framework between WWP and the U.S. Army to boost resilience among soldiers and break down biases and stigma

surrounding mental health in military communities. The presentation will detail Project Odyssey's use of evidence-based interventions and holistic approaches to equip soldiers with skills that reduce their risk factors for suicidal thoughts or actions.

Project Odyssey is a 12-week program from WWP that uses adventure-based learning to support warriors living with post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and depression. The program includes a five-day retreat that encourages participants to step outside their comfort zones, fostering growth in coping and communication skills. After their retreat ends, participants receive ongoing support from WWP to build on the skills learned, equipping them to achieve personal goals and make lasting improvements in mental wellness.



Adventure and challenge in nature is core to the program Wounded Warrior Project brings to active-duty soldiers as part of their collaboration with the Department of Defense.

Preventing Service Members from Reaching Suicide Crisis

Preventing suicide is core to WWP's mission of supporting the needs of injured, ill, and wounded post-9/11 service members and veterans. Among warriors seeking mental health support through WWP in the past year, 2% were at high risk for suicide, while 27% were at low or moderate risk, highlighting the importance of investing in protective measures and early interventions.

WWP offers free programs focused on bolstering [emotional well-being](#), [financial stability](#), [social connection](#), [physical wellness](#), and even [sleep quality](#) — all proven factors in reducing suicide risk. It also offers resources to address [family struggles](#), which are among the most common issues for warriors at risk. WWP takes a community approach to prevention through education and advocacy, facilitating training and sharing [insights](#) to help our country better understand and develop solutions that meet the evolving needs of the military community.

The 2024 [Association of Experiential Education](#) Conference takes place from Nov. 14-16 in Estes Park, Colorado.

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About Wounded Warrior Project

Since 2003, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) has been meeting the growing needs of warriors, their families, and caregivers — helping them achieve their highest ambition. [Learn more about Wounded Warrior Project.](#)

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