

WARRIOR CARE MONTH

SPECIAL EDITION
DEC. 2014



AN E-NEWSLETTER FOR WOUNDED, ILL, AND INJURED SERVICE MEMBERS,
RECOVERY CARE COORDINATORS, FAMILIES AND MILITARY CAREGIVERS



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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF WARRIOR CARE POLICY

Mr. James A. Rodriguez



Caring for our nation's wounded, ill, and injured Service members, their families, and their military caregivers will never lose importance and remains a national priority. Warrior Care Month, established in November 2008, is an annual observance that recognizes the strength – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual – and resilience of our wounded, ill, and injured Service members. Every day, they demonstrate this strength and resilience, and this year, over 300 wounded, ill, and injured Service members were able to showcase the results of their will to overcome during the Invictus Games in London and Warrior Games in Colorado Springs.

During the month, we also strove for a greater awareness of the programs and resources available to the wounded, ill, and injured Service members, their families, and their military caregivers. The [Office of Warrior Care Policy](#) plays an integral role in overseeing some of these crucial programs guiding Service members through recovery, rehabilitation, or reintegration or transition into active duty or civilian life. Programs that evaluate a Service member's ability to continue in the military, facilitate opportunities for Service members to expand their education, rehabilitate themselves through sports and reconditioning activities, acquire necessary job-related skills, and offer caregivers the tools they need to take care of themselves.

We commend the strength and tenacity of all wounded, ill, and injured Service members. In recognition of Warrior Care Month's 2014 theme "Show of Strength," we encourage you – as a community member, employer, or engaged citizen – to continue to show how strong your support is. Participate in volunteer activities at a local military, veteran, or non-governmental organization, engage in a veteran hiring initiative, or start a meaningful dialogue to educate yourself and others about the issues and triumphs of our wounded, ill, and injured Service members, families, and military caregivers. Help us celebrate and spread the word, to help elevate warrior care during Warrior Care Month, and well beyond. ■



WARRIOR CARE MONTH: SHOW OF STRENGTH



November marked Warrior Care Month in which the U.S. Department of Defense and military Services honored the courage of wounded, ill, and injured Service members, and highlighted the resources and

programs that help them learn new life skills that enable them to reintegrate to active duty or civilian life. This year's theme, "Show of Strength," showcased the courage and resilience of our wounded, ill, and injured Service members, their families, and military caregivers on their roads to recovery.

Throughout the month, the Office of Warrior Care Policy and all of the Services' Wounded Warrior Programs highlighted various activities, stories of recovery, and personal triumphs. Warrior Care Month is not only about what is being done for our Nation's wounded, ill, and injured Service

members, but also about what they do for us, how they continually give back to our communities, their families, and this great Nation that they have sacrificed so much to protect.

Want to learn more? The Department of Defense launched a special page dedicated to Warrior Care Month here: [DoD Warrior Care Month Page](#)

Visit us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) and use the hashtag #WarriorCare or #ShowofStrength to view a recap of events that took place during Warrior Care Month. ■



DISCOVER RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS

Click on the links below to connect online

Office of Warrior Care Policy



Navy Safe Harbor



Air Force Wounded Warrior



Army Warrior Transition Command



Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment



USSOCOM Care Coalition



2014 WARRIOR GAMES RECAP

Colorado Springs, Co.
 Courtesy of Military Health System



The 2014 Warrior Games kicked off to a rousing start on September 28, as more than 200 wounded, ill, and injured military athletes celebrated the games' opening ceremonies at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

"Through these games, we celebrate the athletes and warriors, and you inspire America," said Under Secretary of Defense for Personal and Readiness Jessica Wright.

Wright praised the athletes for their courage and dedication, and thanked all of the family members and military caregivers who've assisted them on their journey from recovery to competitive adaptive sports.

"You have so much to be proud of," Wright said, praising the athletes. "It gave me chills to see you march in."

The athletes, representing teams from the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Special Operations Command, competed in seven adaptive sports throughout the week of September 28th through October 4th. Events included: archery, cycling, wheelchair basketball, sitting volleyball, shooting, track and field, and swimming. Each service nominated competitors for the Ultimate Champion, a pentathlon style event in which

Service members and veterans competed against each other in a variety of disciplines. Competition took place at the U.S. Olympic Training Center, Fort Carson, and the Garry Barry Stadium at Wasson High School.

"What impressed me the most was, it's one thing to have all the wounded warriors down there in their uniforms, but what I think

"Through these games, we celebrate the athletes and warriors, and you inspire America."

*Jessica Wright,
 Under Secretary of Defense for Personal and Readiness*

this is about is the healing," said Air Force Lt. Gen. Douglas Robb, Director of the Defense Health Agency. "When you look up in the stands and see the families supporting them in their team colors and cheering them, that's what impressed me."

In 2011, the Department of Defense created the Military Adaptive Sports Program (MASP), overseen by the Office of Warrior Care Policy, to enhance warrior recovery by engaging wounded, ill, and injured Service members in ongoing, daily adaptive activities, based on their interest and ability. Since

its inception, MASP has involved more than 158,000 wounded, ill, and injured Service members in 325 structured camps, clinics, and daily activities, including: basketball, cycling, track & field, swimming, golf, sitting volleyball, yoga, and gardening.

"The Military Adaptive Sports Program is important because it not only helps with the physical rehabilitation, but it also helps with the mental and psychological rehabilitation," said James A. Rodriguez, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Warrior Care Policy. "And, it's a common fact that in order to be well recovered that it has to involve the psychological training, the mental training, and physical training."

Adaptive sports and athletic reconditioning play a key role in recovery and rehabilitation for wounded, ill, and injured Service

members and veterans. They expose Service members to opportunities for physical and mental fitness and activity, and introduce them to sports and activities they may not have participated in or even heard of before their wound, illness, or injury, such as yoga, gardening, and dominos.

"Every day, our wounded, ill, and injured Service members demonstrate their strength and resilience, and this year, they were able to showcase the results of their will to overcome during the Warrior Games," said Mr. Rodriguez. ■

USO'S ART THERAPY PROGRAM AIDS WOUNDED WARRIORS

Courtesy of Defense.gov



Ashy Pallipambil, an art therapist in charge of the United Service Organizations' Art as Therapy Program, explains the concepts behind two pieces of artwork created by wounded warriors and displayed at the USO Warrior and Family Care Center at Fort Belvoir, Va., May 21, 2014. DOD photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone C. Marshall Jr.

The United Service Organizations' (USO) Art as Therapy program provides comfort and a creative refuge for wounded warriors in the healing process.

Ashy Pallipambil, an Art Therapist and Hospital Services Program Specialist, has led the USO Art and Music Program here since August 2012, focusing on recreational programs which serve as a therapeutic release for wounded troops while creating a "safe space" to create art while they recover.

After seeing over 1,000 people participate in the first year alone, Pallipambil said she feels as though the program has made a difference in terms of helping wounded troops recover and providing a creative outlet for active duty Service members and their families.

The unique program operates exclusively at the Naval Support Activity Bethesda, Maryland and Fort Belvoir USO Warrior and Family Centers where there are a high number of wounded, ill, and injured troops undergoing the recovery process.

Some of the services offered through the art and music program include wood carving, acrylic and watercolor painting, drawing, collaging, sculpture, writing, multimedia, poetry, and spoken word workshops. ■ Full Article: [HERE](#)

OPERATION WARFIGHTER SPOTLIGHT

Sergeant First Class
Steven Ogletree, USA (Ret.)
Operation Warfighter Intern



SFC Ogletree began his 21-year Army career in Darmstadt, Germany and from there he began the first of many deployments. The last chapter of SFC Ogletree's military career was in the National Capitol Region where he served with the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard). He had been previously diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but it began to worsen, and so he was assigned to the Warrior Transition Brigade at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

SFC Ogletree had an inspiring attitude to recover, seek guidance and prepare for life after the Army. With determination and a relentless spirit, SFC Ogletree participated in two Operation Warfighter internships with the Federal Communication Commission and The National Reconnaissance Office. They provided him with the opportunity to decide which career path to pursue, meet many contacts, and adjust to the transition from the military to civilian life. In March 2012, SFC Ogletree earned his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Strayer University with a 3.9 GPA.

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OPERATION WARFIGHTER SPOTLIGHT

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As SFC Ogletree recovered at Walter Reed and prepared himself for what would have been his third internship opportunity before transitioning out of the military, he was offered employment with the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency as a Contract Specialist.

SFC Ogletree's experience allowed him to not only relate to other wounded, ill, and injured Service members, but also motivate them on the path to recovery.

SFC Ogletree's advice for other wounded, ill, and injured Service members is, "Stay in the fight. Never underestimate your ability to live your own life. No matter what your injury, ethnicity, background or whether you are a four-star general, private, man or woman, you are in control and never give up. Continue to stay in the fight!" ■



SFC Ogletree was recently featured speaking on OWF during an NBC 4 special, "Saluting Our Veterans." View a clip of it [here](#).

2014 INVICTUS GAMES RECAP

Courtesy of Fisher House Foundation



Last year when Prince Harry attended the Warrior Games, he saw the amazing impact adaptive sports had on the recovery for not only wounded warriors, but for their families as well. As a result of his experience, he started the inaugural Invictus Games in London, an international sporting event for wounded, ill, and injured Service men and women.

Thirteen countries participated in the games, which were held from September 10-14 in London. Fisher House Foundation was the only American sponsor and the only charity sponsor for the games. The Foundation also provided the uniforms to the US athletes, and support gear to their families in attendance. Our Hero Miles program sent 160 family members to

London to support their loved ones who were competing in the Games. During the opening ceremony, the US Team proudly marched on the field carrying the American flag.

"Military Service members prove every day how resilient they are," said Ken Fisher, Chairman and CEO of Fisher House Foundation. "The Invictus Games served as an incredible opportunity for these wounded, injured, and ill men and women to show their families just how far they have come in the recovery process. Not only was it great for the athletes, but it was equally important for the families to share in the fun and excitement."

A special video message from First Lady Michelle Obama was played to the audience. She said: "Some of the most inspiring moments I have had as First Lady are when I've met wounded warriors like so many of you." ■

2014 REHABILITATION EXPO AND JOINT SERVICES SITTING VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

In recognition of Warrior Care Month, the Office of Warrior Care Policy hosted a Rehabilitation Expo featuring the artwork and sculptures of wounded, ill, and injured Service members, and the U.S. Army Warrior Transition Command (WTC) hosted the Fourth Annual Joint-Services Sitting Volleyball Tournament at the Pentagon.

Joint-Services Sitting Volleyball Tournament

The Joint-Services Sitting Volleyball Tournament involved fifty-two wounded, ill, and injured Service members and veterans from the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Special Operations Command. The military athletes competed in a series of matches, Service against Service, in the four-hour long event.

The Opening Ceremony included remarks from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and Commander of the Warrior Transition Command, Colonel Chris Toner.

The Air Force took third place, defeating Navy 15-10 in the second set. Meanwhile, the Marine Corps and Army battled each other in the championship match with the Marine Corps winning the first place title in the third and final set 25-23, making it their second consecutive win.

The annual tournament was one of many activities that took place across the nation to celebrate Warrior Care Month.

Since 2008, the Department of Defense and Military Services have recognized Warrior Care Month each November by highlighting various programs and resources available to recovering Service members, their families, and military caregivers.

Rehabilitation Expo

The Inaugural Rehabilitation Expo, a major event during the 2014 Warrior Care Month, was designed in an effort to increase awareness of additional adaptive reconditioning programs and resources available to wounded, ill, and injured Service members and veterans outside of the purview of adaptive sports.

During the Expo, military Services, agencies, and non-profit organizations highlighted resources that support wounded, ill, and injured Service members, their families, and military caregivers. Participants at the Rehabilitation Expo included Operation Warfighter, United Service Organizations, National Intrepid Center of Excellence, Ride 2 Recovery, Computer/Technology Accommodation Program (CAP), and Human Engineering Research Laboratories (HERL) from University of Pittsburgh.

Wounded, ill, and injured Service members representing all military Services showcased their paintings, sculptures, and poetry which were created through various art therapy programs. Many of the wounded, ill, and injured Service



members discovered the benefits of art as a vehicle to their recovery and rehabilitation once they began participating in the programs.

Some wounded, ill, and injured Service members found that art therapy serves as a path to release emotions often associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Some Service members spoke about how art therapy aided them on their road to recovery by providing an outlet for them to express their emotions. Chief Averill Malone (U.S. Navy) provided personal remarks about the impact that art therapy has had on his battle with PTSD.

Malone suffered from PTSD after his deployment to Iraq in 2007 and 2008. For many years he battled with PTSD quietly because he didn't know where to seek help. In 2013, Malone checked himself into Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, MD. It was there that he learned about the Navy Wounded Warrior – Safe Harbor program, and became active in adaptive sports and art therapy.

“Through art and adaptive sports, I'm in a better place today,” Malone said.

To learn more about adaptive reconditioning programs and other resources available to wounded, ill, and injured Service members, families, and caregivers, visit www.warriorcare.mil. ■