



# Fort Carson-MEDDAC News

## Education and activities highlight Warrior Care Month

By: Stacy Neumann, Medical Department Activity Public Affairs

The Fort Carson Warrior Transition Battalion cadre sat silently as Specialist Robert Trujillo described "a moment that would redefine the rest of my life, but I would not let it define me."

The 27-year-old played video from September 19, 2010, when Trujillo was hit by an IED blast in Afghanistan. Raw footage shows Soldiers administering care and encouraging him to talk about his wife and newborn son.

Trujillo's presentation to the WTB cadre was part of the unit's Warrior Care Month activities. The Army marks November as the time to highlight the importance of supporting wounded, ill and injured Soldiers.

"It's no mistake that we have this observance in the same month as Veterans Day," said Lt. Col. Mechelle Tuttle, WTB commander. "It allows us to focus on Soldiers and their Family members who have sacrificed and remember the challenges they continue to face."

The theme for this year is "Success through Transition – Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship."

Trujillo knows about transition. Medical personnel had to revive him twice. He had broken bones and then developed a condition called heterotopic ossification. Trauma caused parts of the bone to go into a type of "over-drive" and bone tissue continued to grow outside of the skeleton. Trujillo said he had "more surgeries than I can count" to address the problem. Once his health was better, he wanted to focus on the future and employment.

"I have a family at home. I don't want to leave them hanging so I started to pursue things right away," he said.

The WTB set him up with an internship at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. The U.S. National Parks Service personnel there are dedicated to helping veterans translate their military skills into civilian life. Trujillo called it "a dream come true" and was eventually offered a full time job with the service in Denver.



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"The WTU actually made it easy because they have all the programs here to help us. From school counselors to someone who can talk about the GI bill to Operation Warfighter (which provides internships with federal government entities), every avenue is possible here. They can point you in the right direction," said Trujillo. He wrapped up his presentation with a slide entitled "Tru Resiliency."

Tuttle then told the group, "I asked Spec. Trujillo to come here so we remember what our Soldiers have gone through. It's important. We want them to know they aren't alone in this process. We have the right people on board to facilitate that transition process. We're all dedicated to the challenge."

The Fort Carson WTB is holding a number of events for its Soldiers during Warrior Care month. There is a Fall Festival for its Soldiers as well as a Commander's Stakes competition full of adaptive sports activities at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. The cadre also participated in an Army-wide Warrior Transition Command Stand Down to focus on customer service.

Right now, there are about 10,000 wounded, ill or injured Soldiers assigned to Warrior Transition Units and Community-Based Warrior Transition Units.

