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Army Honors Wounded, Ill and Injured Soldiers during Warrior Care Month

By Jeff Troth, MEDDAC PAO

Each November the Army highlights the resilience and strength of wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and their Families with Warrior Care Month. This is a dedicated time for the Army to share information and updates on the programs and initiatives provided through the warrior care system.

“Caring for wounded, ill, and injured Soldiers is a sacred obligation and will remain an enduring mission for Army Medicine,” said Maj. Gen. Nadja West, Army Surgeon General and Commanding General, U.S. Army Medical Command. “Since 2007, nearly 70,000 wounded, ill, or injured Soldiers and their families received care from dedicated Warrior Care and Transition Program health care professionals with more than 30,000 (about 44 percent) returned to the force.”

The overarching theme of Warrior Care Month is Show of Strength. This year’s five weekly sub-themes are: Triad of Care, Adaptive Reconditioning, Winning a Job, Open Houses, and Partnering with Local Communities. Throughout the month, Army Warrior Transition Units will host events that align with these sub-themes.

“Warrior care month is a time to showcase the resources the Army has available to our Soldiers who are wounded, ill, or injured,” said Maj. Susan Tallman, commander of the Warrior Transition Battalion on Fort Carson. “It’s important to honor these Soldiers and care providers because they have served honorably.”

The Army asks a lot of its Soldiers and, through the Warrior Care and Transition Program, supports wounded, ill and injured Soldiers by providing the dedicated time, place, and resources to heal successfully, whether the Soldier is returning to duty, accepting a new Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) or transitioning out of the Army.

The Warrior Transition Battalion plays a vital role in supporting these Soldiers while they heal. Each wounded, ill, and injured Soldier benefits from many recovery resources at the WTB including a Triad of Care, a dedicated team supporting them through their recovery and transition.

The Triad of Care includes a nurse case manager, a squad leader, and the primary care manager. The Triad is augmented by an interdisciplinary team of health care and transition specialists, including social workers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, Army Wounded Warrior (AW2) Advocates, and many other professionals.

WTB Soldiers receive detailed comprehensive care plans, detailing a plan of action to facilitate medical healing. The plan is an integral part of a detailed transition plan which addresses medical care, spiritual welfare, behavioral health counseling, family counseling, education and meaningful, productive employment.

The goal is to transition a healed and trained Soldier back into the Army or to transition a healed, educated veteran to productive civilian life.

At Monday's Warrior Care Month opening ceremony at the Freedom Performing Arts Center, Maj. Gen. Ryan F. Gonsalves, commanding general, 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, and Sgt. Elizabeth Marks, world class athlete and Paralympic gold medalist spoke.

"I was injured in Iraq in 2010 and the most painful part of my transition wasn't the physical pain, but being told every day the things that I couldn't do," said Marks. "Luckily I had squad leaders and a nurse care manager that told me that I could. And there is a whole family of people here that want to support the wounded Soldiers."

"In our Army you don't have to do it by yourself," Gonsalves said. "Our warrior care system and care givers are there to support and provide programs to improve the lives of our wounded, injured and ill Soldiers."

Other Warrior Care Month activities include a caregiver workshop for family members supporting wounded, ill and injured troops November 4. The workshop will provide caregivers practical advice and valuable information about available resources.

On November 7, the WTB's adaptive sports staff will have an adaptive reconditioning display at the Fort Carson Main Exchange. Adaptive sports and reconditioning programs enable Soldiers to improve physically and mentally and contributes to a successful recovery and transition.

Maj. Gen. Peggy Combs, chief of staff U.S. Northern Command is the guest speaker at the Warrior Care Month closing ceremony 1:30 p.m., November 28 at the Freedom Performing Arts Center.

A seated volleyball tournament takes place November 29 from 9 a.m. to noon at Iron Horse Gym.

The Soldier and Family Assistance Center (located next to the roundabout on Titus Boulevard and Sheridan Avenue) is hosting a presentation by Paralympian gold medalist Shawn Morelli 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., November 30.

For more information on Warrior Transition Command and Warrior Care Month visit the WTC website at www.WTC.army.mil.



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