



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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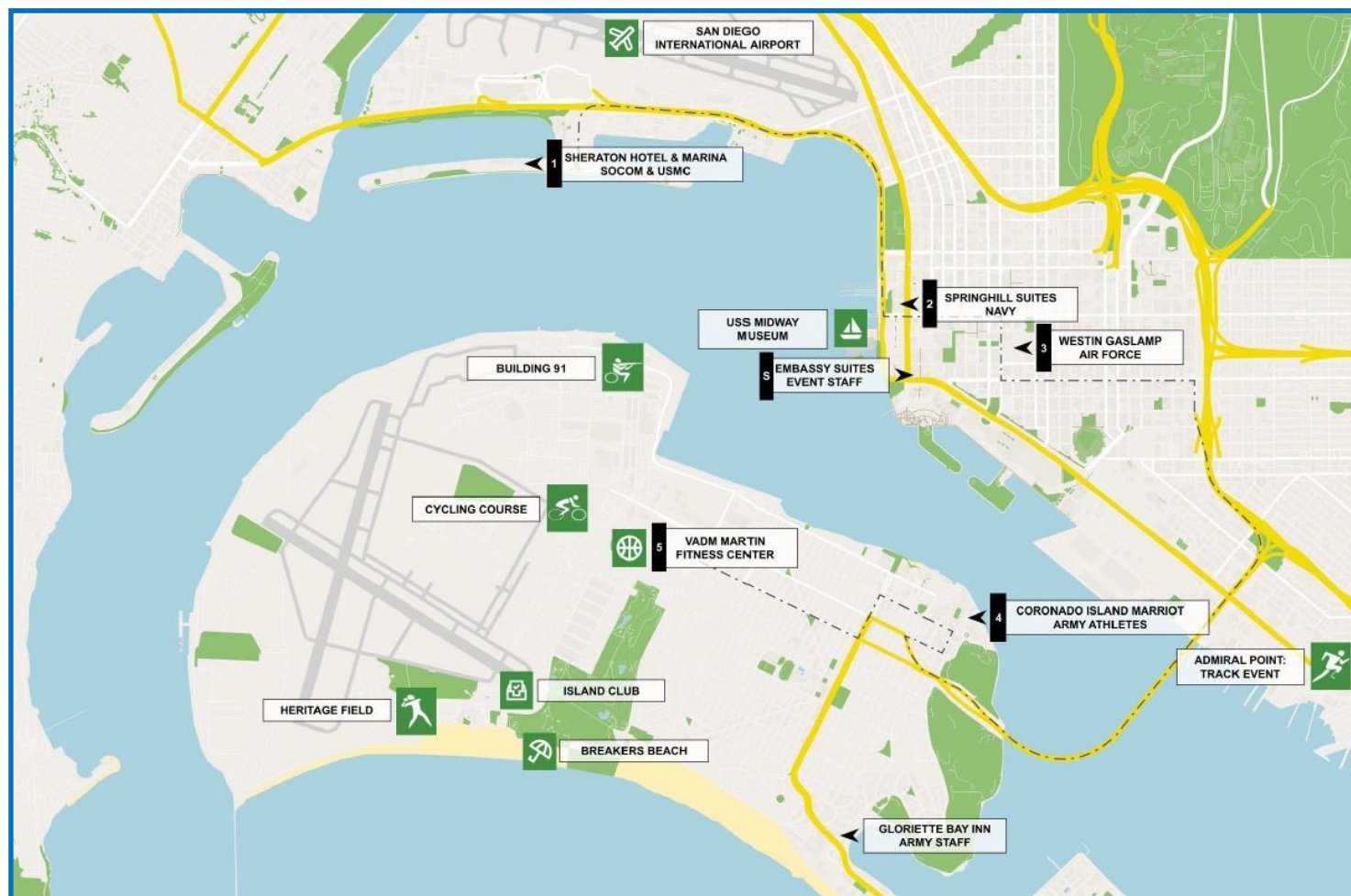
2023 WARRIOR GAMES CHALLENGE

TEAM AIR FORCE GUIDE

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
WARRIOR
GA**IES**

Army • Marine Corps • Navy • Air Force • Space Force • SOCOM

VENUES MAP



ABOUT NAS NORTH ISLAND

North Island was commissioned a naval air station in 1917. The station, which was originally called the Naval Air Station, San Diego until 1955; was granted official recognition as the "Birthplace of Naval Aviation" by a resolution of the House Armed Services Committee on August 15, 1963.

The Navy's first aviator, Lieutenant Ellyson, and many of his colleagues were trained at North Island starting in 1911. In 1917, Congress appropriated the land and two airfields were commissioned on its sandy flats. One of history's most famous aviation feats was the flight of Charles A. Lindbergh from New York to Paris in May 1927. His aircraft, The Spirit of St. Louis, was built in San Diego, and his flight originated at North Island on May 9, 1927, when he began the first leg of his transatlantic journey.

Forefathers of today's "Blue Angels", the three-plane "Sea Hawks" of VF-6B, the "Felix the Cat" squadron, were thrilling audiences with flight demonstrations as early as 1928. They demonstrated the training skills of Navy fighter and bomber pilots and on many occasions, and even flew their aircraft in formation with the wings tethered together.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

VISIT WWW.DODWARRIORGAMES.COM TO WATCH ALL EVENTS AND STAY UP TO DATE.

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SPORTING EVENTS

The **Archery** Competition is composed of two major events; the Individual and Team competitions. Athletes compete using either a compound or recurve bow across five classification categories. Male and female athletes compete against each other in all competitions and shoot at a distance of 18 meters from the shooting line the target face. An athlete's bow type is determined by their personal preference.

The **Cycling** Competition is composed of two major events; the Road Race and the Time Trial competitions. Athletes may compete in one or both competitions riding one of five different cycle types across 16 classification categories. Apart from the two tandem cycle events, male and female athletes compete separately in all competitions racing different distances based upon cycle type, gender, and classification category. An athlete's cycle type is determined by their classification category.

The **Field** Competition is composed of two major events; the Discus and Shot Put/Club competitions. Athletes may compete in one or both competitions either standing or seated across 17 classification categories. Male and female athletes compete separately in all competitions and throw different implements by weight based upon gender and classification category.

The **Indoor Rowing** Competition is composed of two major events; the 1-Minute Sprint and 4-MIN Race competitions. Athletes may compete in one or both competitions across eight classification categories. Male and female athletes compete separately in both competitions based upon their gender and classification category.

The **Powerlifting** Competition is a single event; the Bench Press competition. Powerlifting is an Open Classification sport regardless of impairment. Male and female athletes compete separately across seven bodyweight categories. Athletes will be given three attempts to achieve their best lift.

The **Precision Air Sports** Competition (formerly known as Shooting) is composed of three major events; Air Rifle-Prone, Air Rifle-Standing, and Air Pistol competitions. Athletes may compete in no more than two of the three competitions across four classification categories for the air rifle and two classification categories for the air pistol. Male and female athletes compete against each other in all competitions and shoot at a distance of 10 meters from the firing line the electronic target.

The **Sitting Volleyball** Tournament is one of three Team Sports Events at the DOD Warrior Games. Sitting Volleyball Teams consist of a maximum of 12 athletes of either the same or combined genders across three classification categories; Minimum, Moderate, and Maximum. Service Teams can field no more than six athletes, and no more than five of any one classification category, on the court at the same. The tournament consists of pool and bracket play to determine which teams contest for the Bronze and Gold Medals.

The **Swimming** Competition is composed of five major events; the 50M Freestyle, 100M Freestyle, 50M Backstroke, 50 Breaststroke, and 200M Relay Race competitions. Athletes may compete in all four individual competitions across thirteen classification categories. Relay Teams are comprised of four athletes with team composition determined by a classification number/point-based total. Athletes may compete as a member of only one relay team. Apart from the Combined Gender Relay Team, male and female athletes compete separately in all competitions.

The **Track** Competition is composed of six major events; the 100M Sprint, 200M Sprint, 400M Sprint, 800M Race, 1500M Race, and 4x100M Relay Race competitions. Athletes may compete in all five individual sprint and race competitions across twelve classification categories. Relay Teams are comprised of four athletes with a maximum of three athletes from the 6.0 classification category. Athletes may compete as a member of only one relay team. Apart from the Combined Gender Relay Team race, male and female athletes compete separately in all competitions and will race in either ambulatory or racing wheelchair events based upon their classification category.

The **Wheelchair Basketball** Tournament is one of three Team Sports Events at the DOD Warrior Games. Wheelchair Basketball Teams consist of a maximum of 10 athletes of either the same or combined genders across three classification categories; Minimum, Moderate, and Maximum. Service Teams can field no more than five athletes, and no more than four of any one classification category, on the court at the same. The tournament consists of pool and bracket play to determine which teams contest for the Bronze and Gold Medals.

The **Wheelchair Rugby** Tournament is one of three Team Sports Events at the DOD Warrior Games. Wheelchair Rugby Teams consist of a maximum of 10 athletes of either the same or combined genders across three classification categories; Minimum, Moderate, and Maximum. Service Teams can field no more than four athletes, and no more than three of any one classification category, on the court at the same. The tournament consists of pool and bracket play to determine which teams contest for the Bronze and Gold Medals.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the DoD Warrior Games Challenge?

The Department of Defense (DoD) holds an annual adaptive-sports competition, the Warrior Games. This year is the 13th Anniversary highlighting the exceptional physical skills and mental toughness of wounded, ill and injured active-duty and veteran service members. Men and women representing the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, and U.S. Special Operations Command will compete in a variety of adaptive sports.

Is the Warrior Games Challenge different from the Warrior Games?

While the structure of the event may be slightly different, athletes will still participate in a premier and elite-level adaptive sporting event. Additionally, spectators and guests are still invited to see the action first-hand at Naval Air Station North Island.

What are adaptive sports?

The adaptive sports featured in the DoD Warrior Games Challenge are a part of the larger DoD Warrior Care program. Within this program, adaptive sports provide reconditioning activities and competitive athletic opportunities to all wounded, ill and injured service members to improve their physical and mental wellness throughout the continuum of recovery and transition. Modified equipment and additional classification systems allow each athlete to compete, regardless of their injury or illness.

Which sports have been adapted?

Adaptive sports featured at the 2023 DoD Warrior Games Challenge have not been finalized, but in the past they have included archery, cycling, sitting volleyball, swimming, golf, track, field, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, shooting, indoor rowing, and powerlifting.

Who can attend the Warrior Games?

We are excited to host the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge at Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego, Calif. Information on competition and attendance will be provided closer to the event.

How can I volunteer for the Warrior Games?

The DoD Warrior Games would not be possible without the support of the community, including the amazing volunteers that come out to support these warrior athletes. General and sport-specific volunteer opportunities are available throughout the event. Click here to register or learn more about volunteer opportunities for the 2023 DoD Warrior Games.

Why are the DoD Warrior Games important?

First and foremost, the Warrior Games are designed to enhance recovery by engaging wounded, ill, and injured service members outside of traditional therapy settings. The program hopes to inspire recovery and physical fitness and encourage new opportunities for growth and achievement. Second, the games raise awareness about the resources available through the DoD Warrior Care programs. The adaptive sports program is just one facet of the continuum of recovery and care our active-duty and veteran warriors receive.

How can my business support the Warrior Games?

The Warrior Games appreciates the support of all its sponsors and supporters. Information about how your organization can support the Department of Defense Warrior Games will be available closer to the event. For immediate questions, please email DoDWarriorGames@Gmail.com.

Additional information can be found at <https://www.dodwarriorgames.com>

JOANNA ANTONIUK



Rank: SrA

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Cadet

Current Location: Los Angeles, California

Joanna Antoniuk entered the U.S. Air Force Academy in 2013, and was later enrolled in AFW2 in 2017. Despite her career setback, she began using adaptive sports as part of her recovery during the 2021 Virtual Air Force Trials. This one-of-a-kind competition, held over Zoom, allowed her to compete from the comfort of her own home, while still giving her the opportunity to showcase her athletic abilities. She won a coveted slot on Team Air Force for the 2021 Department of Defense Warrior Games. Unfortunately, the continuing impact of the global pandemic led to cancellation of Warrior Games. Joanna did not let that dissuade her as she competed, and won, a slot on Team Air Force again, this time for the 2023 Warrior Games Challenges. She is competing for Ultimate Champion this year and hopes to gain a personal best and represent her Air Force. She said, “Every day is a struggle but AFW2 has helped me learn to calm myself down and really focus and perform my best in adaptive sports.”



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JOCELYN AREVALO



Rank: SrA

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Services Journeyman

Current Location: Colorado Springs, Colorado

SrA Jocelyn Arevalo joined the Air Force in 2019 as a Services Journeyman stationed at Dover AFB, Delaware. During her brief career, she managed sporting events at Dover, facilitating over 120 games and authoring by-laws for flag football, boosting morale for 340+ players. She currently lives in Colorado Springs where she says, “I want people to know just because I’m a wounded warrior it doesn’t mean I’m broken.” Jocelyn prides herself in being strong enough to stand up for herself and leave her abusive relationship and doesn’t allow her past to dictate her future. This will be her first time competing at Warrior Games. “The people I have met at AFW2, and the things I have learned brought me far in my recovery journey. It’s such a positive environment with people who truly care for you.”



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RHODA BARGAS



Rank: MSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Command Support Staff Superintendent

Current Location: Navarre, Florida

Rhoda Bargas served on active-duty Air Force, Reserves and Air National Guard throughout her 24-year career. She grew up in the Philippines, living in a “stilt hut made of wood, bamboo and palm leaves.” She emigrated to the U.S. at 7-years old and knew that she wanted to serve in the Armed Forces. “I was most proud just to serve this great nation like my stepdad,” she said. “I wanted to be just like him and be able to see myself the way I saw him; as a Patriot and a hero!” She has played for the San Diego Sunfire in the Women’s Professional Football League and later ran in the USAF Marathon in 2019. “Being a part of Team Air Force has given me a new outlook on life, a purpose driven for something I didn’t know I wanted before.”



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JETT BLACKWELL



Rank: TSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Fuels Craftsman

Current Location: Newalla, Oklahoma

Jett Blackwell joined the Air Force in November 2005 as a Fuels Craftsman where he was considered mission oriented and meticulous. He was an essential part of Hurricane Sandy relief efforts, helping to move over 1,300 tons of cargo to those in need following the devastating event. His personal goals are to travel more, get promoted and develop support groups so he can live a healthier lifestyle, gaining more physical and spiritual strength. He says, "The Air Force Wounded Warrior Program (AFW2) gave me endless resources, stood by my side when I felt alone and lost, made me believe in myself again, and followed through on all promised tasks. To any warrior out there who will be attending an AFW2 sports event I say, 'Have fun!' Take the time to get to know other athletes, try a new sport or activity, and stay focused. When you work hard you will see results and who knows, maybe you will be a sports star!"



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ROSCHELL BROWN



Rank: SSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Personnel

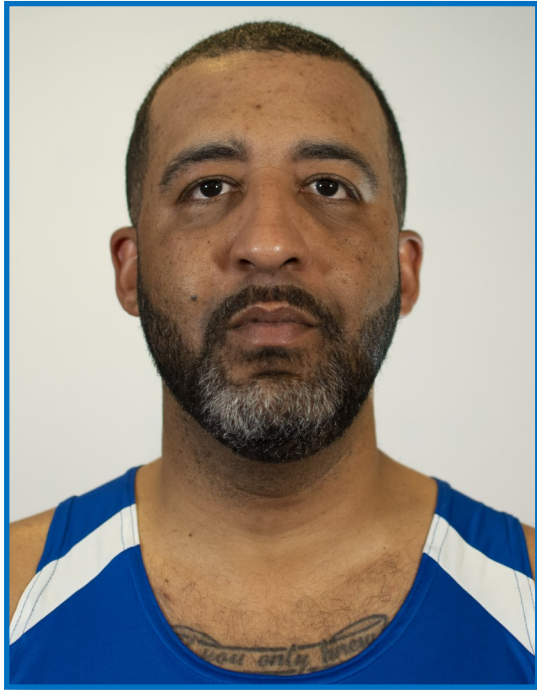
Current Location: Charleston AFB, South Carolina

Roschell Brown joined the military in 2010 and has been very successful in her career and in her life. She earned the John Levitow Award during Airman Leadership School, which is no small feat since only person from each class earns the coveted award. When discussing what makes her proud in her life she said, "I am the only grandchild with a graduate degree and the only child to have owned a home in my family." Since her enrollment in AFW2, she has continue to give back, become an AFW2 Ambassador and mentor and has taken the next step to using adaptive sports as part of her recovery. "AFW2 consists of advocates who have a passion to create consistent positive change within the disabled military community. I would not be where I am in my journey, had it not been for them."



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JASON BROWN



Rank: TSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: NCOIC Security Forces Investigation

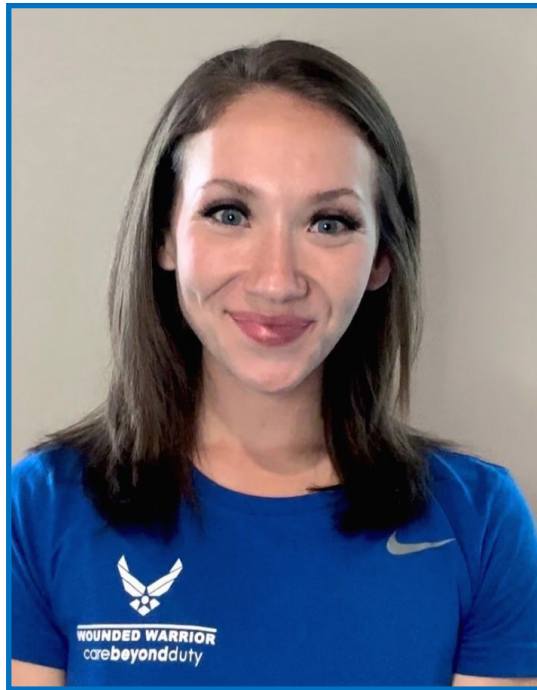
Current Location: Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

Jason Brown served 20 years in the Air Force serving as the Non-Commissioned Officer In-Charge of Investigations. In 2019 he was involved in a motorcycle accident that left him with significant brain injuries, with medical officials placing him in a medically induced coma. The injury left him in inpatient care for 230 days, but he says he still feels proud of the way he bounced back from his injury. "My recovery must come first," he said. "That way, everything in life I love does not come last." He still suffers from significant short-term memory loss but says that even though he's injured, he's still a Warrior who uses adaptive sports as part of his recovery. "It gives me an outlet to release my stress in a healthy manner while connecting with like-minded individuals."



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SHARLIETT CARDENAS



Rank: SrA

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Cryptologic Language Analyst

Current Location: San Antonio , TX

Sharliett Cardenas joined the Air Force in 2019, where she learned Hebrew at the Presidio in Monterey, California becoming a Cryptologic Language Analyst. She counts her newly acquired skill as one of her most proud moments in the Air Force. "I actually learned a second language," she said. "Learning Hebrew was difficult with the verb conjugations and nuances to the language. It made me proud, and is something I still stay fluent in." In 2020, she developed an infection that led to the removal of her entire large intestine, leaving her with scars that left her in pain most days. Despite the pain and the scars, she maintains a positive attitude that can be contagious. "People may look at my scars and see a body that is wounded," she said. "But, when I look in the mirror, I see a body that has overcome such adversity. I may be wounded, but trust me, I'm inside the body of a warrior."



SCOTT CAROON



Rank: MSgt

Status: Active Guard

Military Occupational Specialty: Flight Engineer

Current Location: San Antonio , TX

Scott Caroan joined the Air National Guard in 1990, during the transitional period of the Cold War Era where the still looming threat of the Soviet Union dictated training and operations. During his career, Scott would travel to many locations as an aerial flight engineer with the Air National Guard. "I was a member of some amazing flight crews during my career," he said. "I participated in humanitarian missions and life-saving Aeromedical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) missions. It has been an honor for me to serve with so many selfless men and women and my wife for so many years." Scott is a member of Team U.S. for the 2023 Invictus Games in Dusseldorf, Germany in September. His experience with AFW2 and adaptive sports is a vital part of his recovery. "I feel if I can impact or help make a difference in one's life it can be a contagious act that will pass along to others," he said.



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VINCENT CAVAZOS



Rank: SSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: NCOIC Resource Protection

Current Location: Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii

Vince Cavazos joined the Air Force in 2009 as a Security Forces Defender, starting out his career in the Portuguese Azores before heading to Ramstein AB, Germany. Currently he is stationed at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland working as an area supervisor and response force leader. He was enrolled in the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program in November 2015 following an incident where he was thrown from the top of a six-story building, breaking his right femur, left tibia and fibula, patella and three ribs. He said, "The Program and fellow Wounded Warriors helped me understand that there was nothing wrong with me, that I was normal and the way I was responding was normal. It is truly amazing to be able to get back into something that has helped me find that drive in myself and has allowed me to clear my mind and focus."



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TERI CHARLES



Rank: SSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: NCOIC Retirements and Separations

Current Location: Niceville, Florida

Teri Charles joined the Air Force in 2010 working in the Personnel career field. She says, "Helping my team members grow beyond me makes me proudest about my time in the Air Force." Following her injuries in 2021, she has taken full advantage of the AFW2 Program to help benefit her recovery journey, using adaptive sports as part of that journey. "What I want people to know about me as a wounded warrior is my injury doesn't limit me," she said. "Each passing day I grow and heal from it and I am grateful for each day on God's green earth." Teri uses this positive attitude to be a role model to her daughter. "I am most proud of the woman she will become because of the values I am instilling in her," Teri said. "What I have learned in my recovery is that time heals everything," she said. "It is okay to get down about your healing from time to time but don't stay in a downward mode for too long."



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GARRETT CORBETT



Rank: SSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: EOD

Current Location: Eglin AFB, Florida

As an EOD technician for more than 10 years, Garrett Corbett has been exposed to numerous blasts and detonations causing loss of consciousness and impacting his head. This causes him to struggle every day with cognitive, memory and sensory problems. He has received multiple awards in his career but says that his greatest achievement is being a father. One thing he learned since being a part of AFW2 is that going it alone is not always the best way to recover. He said, "I've learned that sharing and growing with others will return better results than trying to go about things on your own. Life is one big journey and the big picture is what is most important." He uses adaptive sports as part of that journey and says, "It has shown me that even with injuries, we can still learn new things and excel at them. Those lessons carry over to every other aspect of life and provide a positive growth mindset for recovery."



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NAIRI CORNEJO



Rank: SSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Firefighter

Current Location: Homestead AFB, Florida

Nairi Cornejo joined the Air Force Reserves, serving as a Firefighter at Homestead AFB, Florida. She stood out in what has always been a male-dominated career, earning Firefighter of the Month and Warrior of the Year. Nairi also excelled at sports, which may account for her success in adaptive sports with the AFW2 Program. She says, "This program helps you come back stronger than before, physically and mentally. They have the right people and the right tools to heal our wounds." She refers to her positive, infectious attitude as her "Happy Spirit" and says this is what drives her to get better. "Don't be afraid to start over," she said. "This time, you are not starting from scratch, you are starting from experience."



MOSES DEBRASKA



Rank: SrA

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Security Forces

Current Location: Knob Noster, Missouri

Moses Debraska joined the Air Force in 2013 serving as a Security Forces Defender at Whiteman AFB, Missouri. During his brief career he served as an installation entry controller, responsible for safeguarding 14K personnel at Whiteman AFB. As he continues on his road to recovery he says, "Wellness, or the act of being well, is a 'goal,' a state of being and way of living." He uses adaptive sports as part his recovery, seeing it as a way of staying connected with others. "The AFW2 event where I won the 'Spirit Award' has become a catalyst of changes for me," he said. "You never know what you do not know. Allow yourself to be around and with others who care for you and about you. AFW2 has assisted and helped me in many ways to become a better version of myself."



JESSICA DERHAMMER



Rank: TSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Customer Service Section Chief

Current Location: Columbus AFB, Mississippi

Jessica Derhammer joined the Air Force in 2013 starting out her career as a Linguist, with schooling at the Presidio of Monterey. She graduated the Pashto basic course with Honors maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Her first assignment was to Fort Gordon, Georgia where she supported a high-visibility tactical mission translating audio of known enemy combatants, allowing for exact locations to allow for a successful hostage recovery. Jessica is now a Personnel Specialist, which is a huge change from her previous career. But, she says, “I am proud to have served with some extremely phenomenal people through two career fields and different branches of service.” She has taken full advantage of what AFW2 has to offer by becoming a mentor, participating in adaptive sports. “AFW2 and adaptive sports has done so much for my recovery. Not only have I been shown there are so many possibilities, but I now have a network of friends and coaches that understand what I am going through.”



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RUDY ESTRADA



Rank: TSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Chief of Investigations

Current Location: Clarksville, Tennessee

Rudy Estrada joined the Air Force in 2001 as a Security Forces Defender. This standout NCO deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008-09, assisting with the detention of 12K insurgents, with zero security breaches or fatalities. He also oversaw Iraq's 2nd National Democratic Election where 51% of the population voted with no insurgent attacks. Rudy received a diagnosis of PTSD later in his career, suppressing symptoms with alcohol as he continued to navigate the remainder of his life in the Air Force. He sought counseling and began the long road to recovery saying, "You're not alone in this journey. Get involved early; forget the stigma of what people would think. Only you know when you are ready for recovery. When you are ready, go in with an open mind."



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GARY EYSTER



Rank: SMSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Security Forces Superintendent

Current Location: LaVista, Nebraska

In his 23 years of service, Gary Eyster accomplished many things. He was a Phoenix Raven, providing close-in security at airfields where the threat and lack of security warranted additional support. On top of that Gary was also recognized as NCO of the year multiple times, and even attempted to break the Guinness World Record for fastest one mile fireman's carry and most pull-ups in one minute. He suffers with chronic pain throughout his body and received a diagnosis of Rheumatoid Arthritis. Despite medications, therapy and surgery, nothing has worked to limit the pain. He made the Warrior Games team in 2022, but had to drop for personal reasons, so this year he is back and ready to represent Team Air Force. "Adaptive sports keep me engaged and accountable. Having goals I can work towards is exceptional and amazing."



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CHRISTOPHER FERRELL



Rank: TSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: EOD

Current Location: Cannon AFB, New Mexico

Tech. Sgt. Chris Ferrell joined the Air Force in 2003 as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Airman. He deployed five different times to Iraq and Afghanistan, executing more than 64 combat missions on just one single deployment. Chris also earned the Bronze Star for his judgment under fire during combat operations and a Purple Heart for wounds received in combat. Since his retirement he has taken on the job of Combat Training Specialist at Cannon AFB, New Mexico. He has come a long way since his first Warrior Games in 2016 at West Point and says every wounded warrior should understand the challenges of recovery. "Recovery is not a sprint, it's a marathon," he said. "You are going to have setbacks and may have more bad days than good. The key is to keep one foot moving in front of the other and to remember why you are doing this and who you are doing it for."



JESSICA GARCIA



Rank: TSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Paralegal

Current Location: Joint Base Andrews, Maryland

Jessica Garcia joined the Air Force in 2008 as a Security Forces Defender, and currently serves as a Paralegal at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. Jessica is seen as a “Stellar troop” performing well beyond her peers. She was even recognized as the first female in the Security Forces to earn the “Top Physically Fit” award at an Advanced Combat Skills Competition. Her tenacity led to her being the first member of her family to graduate high school and get accepted into college for a soccer scholarship. She said, “I felt that I led by example in demonstrating to my siblings and family that there is no limit to what they can do.” Jessica does not let her illness define her, and says, “They remind me that if I am capable of giving more that I should give it my all and not cheat myself out of my purpose and gift in life.”



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COLTEN GRIMM



Rank: SSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: MWD Trainer

Current Location: Colorado Springs, Colorado

Colten Grimm joined the Air Force in 2012 serving as a Military Working Dog handler starting at Incirlik AB, Turkey. His supervisor noted his drive for success during his initial on-the-job training when he scored high on his standardization evaluation and upgrade training tests. His proudest moment in the Air Force was when provided protection for the U.S. President on four separate security details. Since his medical retirement he began a K-9 business with a friend in Colorado Springs, giving back some of the training he received while on Active Duty. He says his enrollment in the AFW2 Program has really given him focus and drive in adaptive sports. "I've found amazing connections the program," he said. "I've met really amazing people with amazing stories. I feel the program has given me a purpose in life and gave me something that I really wish I could go back and do which is playing sports at a competitive level."



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SHANE HINSHAW



Rank: A1C

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: F-15 Avionics

Current Location: Weeki Wachi, Florida

Shane Hinshaw joined the Air National Guard in 2017 but an injury to his hand received during basic training eventually led to his medical retirement. He said that while he didn't get to serve the way he anticipated, he did get to help out in many ways. "I assisted trainees at Lackland AFB, Texas," he said. "I helped some get Thanksgiving dinners and others prepare for basic training. I did whatever my injury would allow me to do to help my country." Shane does not let his injury keep him from getting the most out of life. "I find the boundaries and limitations of my disability and do the best I can to improve," he said. "I strive to be the best me I can be tomorrow. If I can be the person someone needs at that time, I will be there."



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DARRYL HOLLEY



Rank: SrA

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Security Forces

Current Location: San Antonio, Texas

As a young A1C, with no more than 2 years in the Air Force, Darryl Holley was involved in a horrific car accident. The accident left him with multiple injuries requiring extensive surgeries to fix with complications that led medical officials to keep him sedated. Despite his injuries, he competed in Air Force Trials just 2 years after the accident and is back to riding his motorcycle. He uses adaptive sports as part of his recovery and says he owes it to the AFW2 Program who gives him a sense of camaraderie. "They have given me the opportunity to participate in the sports I love, while building new friendships," he said. "It's important to surround yourself with like-minded people. Becoming depressed or feeling lonely can hinder recovery so AFW2 encouraged me to join the basketball team. Playing basketball gave me the opportunity to participate in a sport I love and helped build new relationships and friendships."



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CARLY JAMES



Rank: SSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Aircraft Armament Systems

Current Location: Eglin AFB, Florida

Staff Sgt. Carly James enlisted in the Air Force in 2018 and serves as a Weapons Load Crew Member while stationed at Eglin AFB, Florida. Carly is career-minded, earning Staff Sgt. her first time testing while also garnering 80 credit hours towards a Business Law degree. It is the promotion she is most proud of saying, “making Staff Sergeant first time testing showed me I am resilient. I am proud of that resiliency honestly. Despite my struggles I am pushing through the bad days, trying to make a positive difference for others.” She said that getting involved with AF W2 saved her life and given her a new sense of purpose. “AF W2 is a family that understands and cares for you,” she said. “AFW2 adaptive sports program helped me feel comfortable to be in a competitive sport environment again. It has given me hope and a chance to recover.”



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JUSTIN JAMES



Rank: MSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Superintendent, Special Warfare Standardization/Evaluations

Current Location: JBSA Lackland, TX

About: MSgt. Justin James joined the Air Force in 1999 and started out as a special purpose maintenance journeyman. He later retrained to serve as a Combat Controller and is currently stationed at JBSA Lackland, Texas. Justin excelled as a maintenance journeyman, maintaining \$7M worth of vehicles during his deployment. His leadership determined he was a "Cut above the rest of his peers!" MSgt. James went on to continue that level of excellence as a Combat Controller, providing tactical Air Traffic Control during multiple deployments. He was on alert for 400+ combat search and rescue missions, with 445 detainees captured and 24 enemy killed in action. Justin is a devoted family man with 7 children and 2 grandchildren and uses their presence to focus his energy on his recovery. He maintains a positive attitude in his recovery saying, "There's always someone who has got it worse. I'm still the same person I was before my injury. I'm still the same value even though I look different."



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GARY KELLER



Rank: SMSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Security Forces

Current Location: Anchorage, Alaska

Gary Keller served 28 years in the Air National Guard as a Security Forces Defender and later as a First Sergeant. During a deployment to Kandahar, Afghanistan, his quick thinking saved the life of an “Afghan Hand,” a U.S. Air Force Major, who had a gun pointed at her by a local national. Gary suffered two TBI’s, the last occurring in 2020 when he got hurt during an indirect fire attack. Upon his return home, he suffered a stroke while driving and says he doesn’t remember a thing about the incident. “If it wasn’t for my wife’s quick action and understanding of the situation the outcome could have been much worse,” he said. “I am so proud of what she did to get the vehicle stopped and getting me to the hospital.” He says that before getting involved with AFW2 he was living in a “fish bowl.” Gary said, “I would just to my rehab and doctor’s appointments and back to my house for the rest of the day. Since joining AFW2, I venture out of my house to go to the gym every day which has changed my life.”



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JANELLE LYKON



Rank: SrA

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Air Transportation Craftsman

Current Location: Millville, Pennsylvania

Janelle Lykon joined the Air Force Reserves in 2004, serving at Westover ARB, Massachusetts. Her first exposure to adaptive sports happened in January 2017 in San Antonio. She was originally slated to attend an employment seminar with AFW2, but found she preferred the sports activities as she already ran her own cleaning business. Since then, she has continued to work hard at progressing in her recovery. Her primary motivators for recovery have been her son and daughter. She says, “I want them to grow up knowing they can accomplish anything they put their minds to. I want them to see me never giving up no matter how much I may struggle & know it’s ‘ok’ to have bad days. My husband, Donnie, also plays a huge part in my recovery. We met after I was diagnosed, and he has never given up cheering me on.”



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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JACQUELYN

MARTY



Rank: Col.

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Vice Wing Commander

Current Location: Louisville, Kentucky

Jacquelyn Marty commissioned in the Air Force in 1990 following graduation from the U.S. Air Force Academy. She spent her first 9 1/2 years on active duty then transitioned to the Reserves where she has served since 2000. In 2015, Marty was involved in a motor vehicle accident that left her with a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Since then though she has continued to maintain a healthy lifestyle, competing in multiple triathlons. She was able to return to duty with the support of her leadership, including the commander of Air Force Global Strike Command. Since joining AFW2, it was not just the personal successes that motivated her, it was the success of those around her that really got to her. She said, "While competing at the AF Trials I noticed there are an abundance of phenomenal Airmen who've overcome far greater obstacles than I have; they are my inspiration. My pity party ended when I was selected for the Warrior Games team."



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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JAMES PHELPS



Rank: TSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Integrated Avionics Technician

Current Location: Anchorage, Alaska

James Phelps joined the Air National Guard in 2001 and was just finishing up Tech School when the attacks in New York City and the Pentagon happened on September 11th. He deployed multiple times, including one deployment as part of a Search and Rescue Squadron that was credited with saving 500 lives. James started seeking treatment for some of the things he saw and went through while deployed and received a diagnosis of PTSD. "I have been hospitalized twice with PTSD," he said. "I'm proud of this because I got help before it was too late. I'm still here and stronger for my family and friends." He finds that being a part of AFW2 and being involved with adaptive sports can have an impact on your overall recovery. "There are so many parallels that you can take away from adaptive sports and apply to your personal life. Being a part of AFW2 has meant everything to me."



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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JOSIAH POWELL



Rank: SrA

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Security Forces

Current Location: Minot AFB, North Dakota

Josiah Powell joined the Air Force in 2019 as a Security Forces Defender stationed at Minot AFB, North Dakota. In his short career he was responsible for safeguarding over \$6.3B in high priority resources and was lauded as a "Superior Performer" by the Major Command leadership following an inspection to gauge the unit's ability to perform the mission. His referral to AFW2 came about due to a diagnosis for PTSD, where the program introduced him to adaptive sports as part of recovery and long-term resiliency. As a member of Team Air Force, he gets to use adaptive sports to further his recovery and sees it as a great opportunity for growth. "I'm proud to be a part of a team of amazing individuals that will always support one another no matter how big the battle is."



NALANI QUINTELLO



Rank: MSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Premier Vocalist, Air Force Band

Current Location: Charleston, South Carolina

Nalani Quintello joined the Air Force in 2015, pursuing her passion for music as a vocalist for the Air Force Band. While there were many notable moments in her career there were also moments that impacted her ability to stay on Active Duty. Following her medical retirement she lost her desire to sing until she finally had a chance to come to an AFW2 event. That event in 2021 opened up her eyes to the myriad tools she can use for her recovery, one of which to finally start singing again. She says her greatest accomplishment was finding the courage to share her own testimony of resiliency and recovery in hopes of helping others struggling with PTSD in the same way she did. After the first AFW2 event she has gone on to become a mentor, and Ambassador and is now a member of Team Air Force. She credits some of her success to adaptive sports. "It enabled me to train with a purpose much bigger than myself," she said. "I draw inspiration from my teammates, who have overcome so much adversity."



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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JEROD SCHLEY



Rank: TSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Airfield Construction Escort, NCOIC

Current Location: Waldorf, Maryland

Jerod Schley joined the Air Force in 2002 serving as a Security Forces Defender, providing security of "America's airfield" at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. He supported three different Presidents as a detail for Air Force One and secured the Vice President on 25 separate occasions with his Military Working Dog "Baddie." During a deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he and his team came under small arms and mortar fire, pinned down for three hours on the side of a mountain. Jerod says of his status as a Wounded Warrior, "I am not broken, I am just bent in a different shape." His positive attitude and humorous approach to life and his family gives him tools that will further strengthen his recovery and resiliency in the long-term. He says, "Every day is a new opportunity to discover more about what you can do, instead of what you cannot. I have learned that every day is a gift."



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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HEATHER SEALOVER



Rank: Maj

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Branch Chief, Sentinel Weapons System

Current Location: Barksdale AFB, Louisiana

Major Heather Sealover commissioned in the Air Force in 2009 and works as the Branch Chief for the Sentinel Weapon System Team at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. One of her greatest achievements was serving on all of the major disciplines of the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) weapon systems including operations, maintenance and munitions maintenance. Her efforts helped shape the future of the Sentinel program, the replacement for the aging ICBM fleet. For more than half her life she competed in long distance races including half-marathons, marathons and 50-milers. Following a series of injuries her doctor told her she may never be able to race again but she beat the odds, qualifying for the Boston Marathon in a racing wheelchair. She feels pride in her ability to adapt to new ways of participating in the sports she loves saying, "Focus on what you can do and work hard at it."



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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BRETT SEILING



Rank: Col.

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Career Field Manager for Foreign Area Officers

Current Location: Fairfax, Virginia

Brett Seiling served his country for nearly 30 years, before he was medically-retired due to sarcoma, a rare form of cancer. He underwent numerous chemotherapy sessions, but always remained positive. Eventually he had to have his leg amputated below the knee, but just two months later he attended an AFW2 event to become an Ambassador and share his story. Since that first event he has gone on to become an AFW2 mentor and is now representing the Air Force at the Warrior Games Challenge. He said, "Adaptive sports has been a huge part of my recovery and has shown me a pathway to being active and even able to compete again."



OLAJIDE SHASANYA



Rank: SSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Contract Specialist

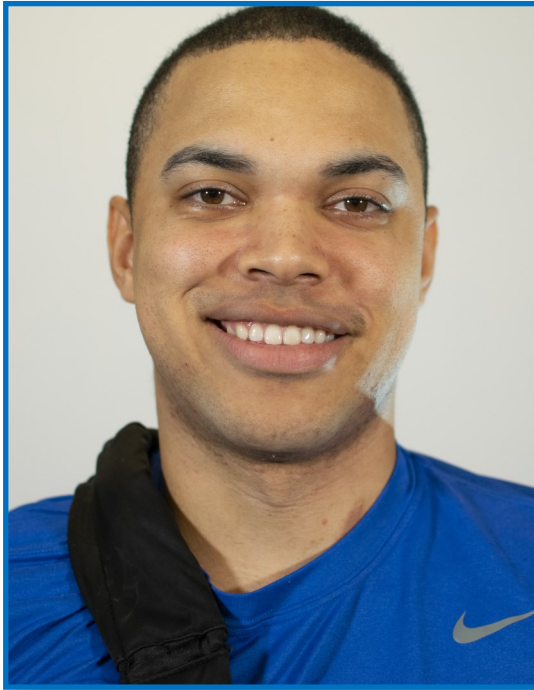
Current Location: Conroe, Texas

Olajide Shasanya was born and raised in the West African country of Nigeria, later working as a real estate agent in Abu Dhabi before joining the Air Force in 2016. He served as a Contract Specialist where he delivered critical budget oversight review evaluating 5 fiscal year overdue invoices worth \$6M. His busy schedule also included school where he was able to finish his Community College of the Air Force Degree in Contract Management. Olajide maintains a positive mental attitude while still in recovery saying, "Your past does not define who you are, you can start from where you are and overcome any obstacles." As he continues on his recovery journey he has found that AFW2 helps him in remarkable ways. "AFW2 does not focus on what brought you here," he said. "They focus on how to rediscover yourself through activities that build self-confidence. The team is filled with positive energy and genuinely care about us."



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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ADRIAN SPAULDING



Rank: SSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Personnel

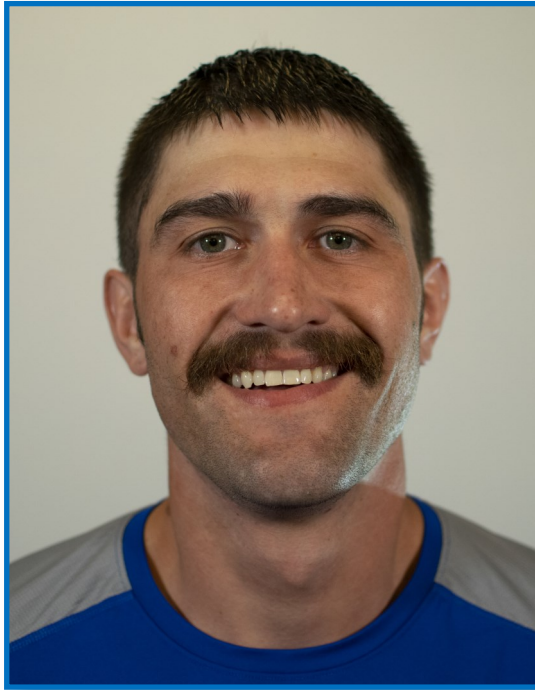
Current Location: Joint Base Andrews, Maryland

Adrian Spaulding joined the Air Force in 2017 working as a Personnel Specialist stationed at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. Adrian's most humble experience in the Air Force was his time working on the base Honor Guard. "From working missions every day with families to coordinating with airports for dignified transfers and later to train and motivate other team members was the highlight of my career," he said. Adrian was injured during a motorcycle accident resulting in "lots of trauma" and a lengthy stay in the hospital. He stayed positive throughout his recovery process and was returned to duty. He had attended previous AFW2 events as a volunteer, then he was a DJ for one and then moved on to competing in adaptive sports. "Adaptive sports helped me focus on getting fit and learning how to work out with my condition. I know that I am not alone, and the challenges are only temporary."



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BRANDON SULLIVAN



Rank: SrA

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Security Forces

Current Location: Pierz, Montana

Brandon Sullivan joined the Air Force in 2015 as a Security Forces Defender at Peterson AFB, Colorado. He was part of a Presidential visit to the US Air Force Academy, providing security for an event lauded as flawless by the US Secret Service. His military career came to a screeching halt when he fell 50 feet leading to a TBI, multiple broken bones and an amputation of his right leg. While this would impact his career, it did not impact his desire to get back to doing what he enjoys. He completed the Army Ten Miler, just 6 months after his leg amputation and then completed the Batton Death March one year later. "Participating in adaptive sports has made me realize that I am not limited in what I can do. I know now that everything is adaptable to my injuries, and it has brought me closer to other peers going through the same journey."



PAUL VERMAIRE



Rank: TSgt

Status: Active Duty

Military Occupational Specialty: Air Traffic Controller

Current Location: Ramstein AB, Germany

Paul Vermaire joined the Air Force in 2014 serving as an Air Traffic Controller at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio as well as a deployment to Kuwait. He would later go on to attend the Presidio at Monterey to learn Spanish to aid with missions in the Southern Command area of operations. He said he was most proud of the fact he earned his Air Traffic Controller ratings at every installation he was assigned as each have their own unique challenges and obstacles. Two years ago, he suffered medical complications from an abscess on his brain leading to significant speech impairment requiring extensive speech therapy. He credits AFW2 as being instrumental in his recovery. "Being with people who understand what you went through, understand what you are currently going through, and believe in you is life changing," he said. "The athletics allows you to be part of a time, something bigger than yourself."



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JI-MI WAKARIA



Rank: SSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Purchase Controller

Current Location: Washington, D.C.

Ji-Mi Wakaria joined the Air Force in 2015 and her career immediately took off. She received Honor Grad in basic training, became an NCO within 3 years, received NCO of the year, NATO Medal Workhorse of the Month and earned 13 other medals throughout her career. In June of 2022, that all changed when she was involved in a motorcycle accident that resulted in numerous polytrauma injuries. Despite her injuries she managed to earn a bachelor's degree in psychology while in-patient at Walter Reed and the Polytrauma Center. She persevered despite the cognitive impact her accident had, graduating Magna Cum Laude and making it on the Dean's list. This incredible show of strength truly highlights the resilience of wounded warriors. "I've come to realize that everything is possible for me," she said. "I used to be terrified to engage in any physical activity outside of physical therapy until I started adaptive sports at Walter Reed. It helped me discover I am capable of more than I think."



WOUNDED WARRIOR
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GREGORY WALKER



Rank: SSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Security Forces

Current Location: San Antonio , TX

Gregory Walker joined the Air Force in 2008, serving as a Security Forces Defender. He worked as an armorer responsible for over 500 weapons and 202K rounds of ammunition and later, as an Airman Dorm Leader at Aviano AB, Italy, managing housing and Quality of Life for 740 Airmen. Greg developed a Synovial Sarcoma that led to the amputation of his left leg below-the-knee and maintains that he is most proud that, despite the amputation, he beat cancer. Greg said AFW2 helped him out in many ways following his diagnosis, from adaptive sports to the connection with other warriors. He said, "Words cannot express the importance of AFW2. This program benefits you in so many ways and it saved my life. AFW2 opens so many doors when it comes to the people that are in recovery with their experiences, knowledge, and support."



JUSTIN WOLFE



Rank: TSgt

Status: Retired

Military Occupational Specialty: Air Transportation Craftsman

Current Location: Dawson, Iowa

Justin Wolfe joined the Air Force Reserves in 2003 serving as an Air Transportation Craftsman. In 2008 his vital leadership led to his unit winning the Air Reserve Component Air Transportation Activity and he was nominated for 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year due to his exemplary leadership and professional. In 2012, he was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) but was still able to return to duty. Over time, his symptoms worsened, and he was forced to separate. His first event was the 2023 Air Force Trials where he exemplified the power of adaptive sports in pushing past what a wounded warrior is told they "can't" do. His selection as a member of Team Air Force solidified that. He said, "Competing in adaptive sports has reinvigorated a fire in my stomach that makes me want to do better."



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WOUNDED.WARRIOR@US.AF.MIL PHONE: (800) 581-9437

