



WOUNDED WARRIOR

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Air Force selects athletes for 2011 Warrior Games team

By Tammy Cournoyer
Air Force Wounded Warrior Program

SAN ANTONIO – Twenty-five Air Force athletes are one step closer to gold after being chosen to represent the service at the 2011 Warrior Games.

Warrior Games is an Olympic-style event open to all wounded, ill and injured military members and veterans. This year's event takes place May 16 through 21 in Colorado Springs, Colo.

In February, Air Force Services Agency officials invited 32 athletes to a weeklong training camp here to compete for a shot at becoming part of the Air Force team. Throughout the week, Air Force and volunteer coaches with U.S. Paralympics experience, trained new and returning athletes in archery, cycling, wheelchair basketball, shooting, swimming, track and field and sitting volleyball.

Cami Stock, the Air Force team head coach, said that



Air Force Warrior Team training camp attendees practice volleyball Feb. 9 at the Blossom Athletic Center in San Antonio. Officials have selected the team for this year's Warrior Games. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Desiree N. Palacios)

while athleticism and ability are factors when choosing an athlete for the team, there are two other components she examines.

"We are also looking for a positive attitude and teamwork," she said. "We are the smallest team so everyone has to do multiple events and it's a really tiring, grueling time."

Coach Stock said it is important that the athletes be able to mesh with the

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See Page 3 for 2011 Warrior Games roster

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Major explains journey from brink of suicide

by Maj. Karry Gladden
AF Network Integration Center

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. -- I recently celebrated two important anniversaries. On Jan. 30, 2010, I decided when and how I was going to end my life. The night before, I went to bed and slept for two hours, as I had for the previous nine or so months. Once I was sure my wife was asleep, I got out my laptop and researched how long it would take to bleed out from a femoral artery injury. This bit of information helped me narrow down the when and how. It also took away the last stumbling block. It had to look like an accident, primarily to ensure my sweetheart didn't spend the rest of her life wondering why I committed suicide or blame herself.

It is important to know that I got to the brink of suicide the same way most people do -- a series of stressors in my life built up until they simply got the better of me. To make matters worse I had chronic back pain, which had been increasing since an injury a year ago, resulted in less and less exercise -- an



Here are signs I ignored:
-- On the way home from work one day, a truck veered into my lane. I made no effort to move and was disappointed when it didn't hit me.

-- I was sleeping less and less, lying awake with racing thoughts, only falling asleep when exhausted.

-- I wasn't eating. Ironically though, I gained a lot of weight.

-- I went through the motions of life; I went to work because I had a responsibility to my family and the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Jan. 31, 2010, is the other anniversary, the day I decided

health first thing in the morning. Just telling that one person -- the most important person in my life -- paid big dividends. She didn't look at me like I'd sprouted another head; she was upset that she hadn't noticed and that I couldn't tell her. It wasn't that I couldn't tell her, I didn't want to add to her stress.

I felt better. I got up Monday morning and decided that just telling my wife was enough. I put my blues on and told her everything was going to be okay. I didn't need to go see anyone. She gave me the option of going willingly or in the back of an ambulance.

We went to mental health and I chose to admit myself. I would have been admitted either way, but believe me, self-admission is the way to go. The mental health staff was very professional and sympathetic. A very knowledgeable senior airman spoke with my wife and me and started the admission process. A civilian provider made arrangements with a local hospital for care.

Once at the hospital I realized that I had never been so

“ During church I realized that normal people do not stay awake at night researching how to die. At home, I took my wife aside and told her everything. ”

important way to relieve stress. And although I made sure members of my family received counseling for the major life events we were all facing, I just "manned up." Through it all, I continued my duties as a flight commander at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, and later, as an executive officer at Scott Air Force Base.

to live. It was a Sunday morning. During church I realized that normal people do not stay awake at night researching how to die. At home, I took my wife aside and told her everything. I also asked her to remove our firearms from the house, not to leave me alone and take me to the emergency room or mental

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Pat Tillman Foundation offers scholarships

The Pat Tillman Foundation has added five new university partners in support of its Tillman Military Scholars program which provides educational scholarships for wounded warriors and their family members.

Columbia University, San Diego State University, University of Michigan–Flint, University of South Florida, and University of Wyoming have been selected as Tillman Military Scholar university partners for the 2011/2012 academic year.

These five universities join returning university partners Cleveland State University, Mississippi State University, Texas A&M University, University of Arizona, University of Arkansas, University of Maryland, and University of Oregon.

In 2008, understanding the challenges experienced by military families and the increased need for resources, the board of directors led by Marie Tillman, Pat's widow, refocused its mission to invest in veterans and their families through education and community. Tillman Military Scholarships cover not only direct study-related expenses such as tuition and fees, but also other needs including housing and child care.

To date, 111 Tillman Military Scholars representing 28 states and attending 46 academic institutions nationwide have been awarded more than \$1.3 million.

Applications for becoming a Tillman Military Scholar are available March 7. Click [here](#) to learn more.

2011 Air Force Warrior Games team

Retired Staff Sgt. Timothy Anderson, Warner Robins, Ga.
 Senior Airman Matthew Bilancia, Fairfax, Va.
 Retired Master Sgt. Kimberly K. Bradshaw, Yorktown, Va.
 Staff Sgt. Christopher E. D'Angelo, Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont.
 Tech. Sgt. Israel Del Toro, Lackland AFB, Texas
 Staff Sgt. Marc Esposito, Pope AFB, N.C.
 Retired Staff Sgt. Jeanne A. Goldy-Sanitate, Rehoboth Beach, Del.
 Retired Airman First Class Chatriex Goodson, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
 Retired Senior Airman Eric M. Grubbs, Roseville, Calif.
 Retired Airman 1st Class Delvin McMillian, Maylene, Ala.
 Retired Staff Sgt. Gregory J. Miller, Wentzville, Mo.
 Retired Staff Sgt. Jason M. Morgan, McKinney, Texas
 Retired Chief Master Sgt. Damian Orslene, Ocean Springs, Miss.
 Claude E. Owens, Beaver Creek, Ohio
 Retired Staff Sgt. Stacey L. Pearsall, Goose Creek, S.C.
 Cadet Matthew L. Pirrello, Dayton, Ohio
 Tech. Sgt. Francis X. Reilly, Hurlburt Field, Fla.
 Michael P. Rushton, Cameron, N.C.
 Matt Sanders, California City, Calif.
 Retired Senior Master Sgt. Noel Sepulveda, Severn, Md.
 Retired Staff Sgt. Jack L. Shaw, Marine on the Croix, Minn.
 Retired Maj. Gwen M. Sheppard, Brown Deer, Wis.
 Retired Tech. Sgt. Christopher M. Slaydon, Avondale, Ariz.
 Retired Senior Airman Jennifer M. Stone, Denver, Co.
 Retired Staff Sgt. Ricky M. Tackett, Tucson, Ariz.

Alternates

Staff Sgt. Jason T. Butterfield, South Jordan, Utah
 Retired Capt. Anthony A. Pantlitz, Navarre, Fla.
 Retired Master Sgt. Thomas E. Sansone, Randolph AFB, Texas
 Master Sgt. Simon J. Wess, Malmstrom AFB

Services and Resources

HOME

The Department of Defense Transition Assistance Program now hosts Virtual Learning Opportunities for wounded warriors and their families. These online learning events allow facilitators to teach people how to translate military experience into civilian terms, how to network and discover employment opportunities, create a new financial plan or even understand the federal employment system. Sessions are designed to provide practical information which can be put to immediate use. For a complete listing of seminar topics and dates, see visit www.TurboTAP.org.



Air Force Wounded Warriors can receive expedited processing of disability claims from Social Security. Benefits available through Social Security are different than those from the Department of Veterans Affairs and require a separate application. The expedited process is used for military service members who become disabled while on active military service on or after Oct. 1, 2001, regardless of where the disability occurs. Visit the [Social Security Administration's website](http://www.ssa.gov) for more information.



Anger is one of the main concerns of Airmen returning from deployment. Problems can range from irritability to rage. Most of the time things calm down by themselves, but if you are finding that some level of anger is interfering with your successful adjustment to work or with your relationships, [help](#) is available. Take an assessment to get feedback on how you are doing or jump into the workshops to learn about how to manage anger. Check out videos of others who are dealing with anger. Explore the e-library for in-depth information.

MilitaryConnection.com is a portal of all things military with thousands of pages of resources and information provided free to users. MilitaryConnection.com is often referred to as the "Go To Site." Website averages 40,000 daily page views and has a page rank of "6" by Google.

The [Stanford School of Medicine's Vets Connect](#) program provides free individual psychological therapy to Post 9/11, Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom veterans and their family members, including free couples therapy and family therapy in an outpatient setting. Your first point of contact will be with a clinical coordinator who will assist you with the enrollment process, which consists of: a 10- to 15-minute phone assessment; a personal interview; and a case review.



The [Trauma Survivors Network](#) is a community of patients and families who are looking to connect with one another and rebuild their lives after a serious injury. The American Trauma Society, a leading organization advocating for the injured and their families, in partnership with hospitals around the country, is committed to growing the TSN by providing the programs and resources patients and families tell us they need to manage their recovery and improve their lives. The underlying goal in all of these programs and resources is helping trauma patients and their families connect and rebuild their lives following a serious injury.

Free tax service available for filing state, federal returns



Military OneSource brings you [H&R Block At Home Basic](#) electronic tax filing through the Military OneSource website and telephonic tax consultations. Prepare your 2010 state and federal taxes with this program. Provided by the Department of Defense, H&R Block At Home Basic is available free to active-duty, National Guard, and Reserve Airmen and their families. Tax consultants are available daily, including weekends, 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Eastern time, by calling 800-730-3802

Upcoming events

[Paralympic Military Sports Camps](#) are multiday events for veterans and military personnel with physical injuries that aim to introduce individuals to a variety of summer and winter sport opportunities. During each camp, participants attend sports clinics conducted by Paralympic athletes and coaches. All wounded warriors attend the camp at no cost. Expenses related to travel, lodging and meals are covered by the U.S. Olympic Committee. See the website for a listing of open events, dates and locations.

The [U.S. Military Paralympic Fencing Championships](#) take place at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., May 8. This championship is open to all wounded warriors. There will be an event in senior wheelchair mixed epee, senior wheelchair mixed foil and senior wheelchair mixed sabre. For more information and to register, visit the website. Registration closes May 2.

Air Force Wounded Warriors are invited to the 2011 National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic set for Sept 18 to 23. If interested, contact Tristan Heaton at 858-642-6426 or send e-mail to Tristan.heaton2@va.gov.

The Wounded Women Warrior Ride is set for March 31 through April 2. This event takes place in Southport-Park Island, N.C. Activities include an adaptive bicycle event, kayaking, boating, golf and more. For more information, visit www.warriorride.com, call 910-278-4612, or send e-mail to teamracine@ec.rr.com.

The [National Veterans Wheelchair Games](#) -- Aug. 1 to 6 -- is an annual wheelchair sports competition offering 17 different sports to veterans who use wheelchairs. The games promote rehabilitation through rigorous competition in such events as basketball, rugby, softball, hand-cycling and others. A special "Kids Day" program allows children with disabilities to meet the athletes and be introduced to wheelchair sports. While past games have produced national and world-class champions, the games also provide opportunities for newly disabled veterans to gain sports skills and be exposed to other wheelchair athletes. For more information and to request an application, contact Andy Krieger at 202-416-7757 or send e-mail to andyk@pva.org. Application deadline is April 15.

[Retreat weekends](#) for caregivers are filled with exciting opportunities for new friendships to grow. Participants frequently share that the weekend provided them with the opportunity to create support bonds that continue long after the conclusion of the retreat itself. All travel expenses to and from the retreat are paid by the Wounded Warrior Project; however, a credit card is needed when checking in for personal incidentals. The Friday and Monday surrounding the retreat weekend are primarily used for travel, and departure and arrival times are flexible. If you are interested in participating in a future retreat, please download and fill out an application and e-mail to caregivers@woundedwarriorproject.org (this e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it) or fax to 904-296-7347 Attention: Caregiver Retreat. Contact Anna Frese at 904-296-7350 for more information.

For more information or to receive additional details on any of these events, contact your AFW2 care manager at 800-581-9437 or send an e-mail to wounded.warrior@us.af.mil.

Do you need to update your contact information?

NOTE - Updates should be provided to: AFW2 Program Office, AFPC/Disabilities Branch, DEERS, DFAS, and the VA.

AFW2 Program Office – Call **800-581-9437** or via e-mail: wounded.warrior@us.af.mil

AFPC Disabilities Branch – Call **210-565-5653**, or e-mail disability@randolph.af.mil

DEERS – Updating info in DEERS is accomplished in one of three ways:

Call **800-538-9552**

Visit a military base ID card issuance facility

Visit the website at: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/address/indexAction.do>

DFAS – Online at "myPay" website: <https://mypay.dfas.mil>

VA – Call **800-827-1000** or visit their website at www.va.gov for the nearest VA office

