



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wounded warriors go for the gold

West Point, New York —U.S. Army athletes came out strong and took eighteen gold, twelve silver, and eight bronze medals at the men's and women's 2014 U.S. Army Warrior Trials track event at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School track in West Point, New York, .

The competitive wounded warriors are either wounded, ill, injured, competed in events ranging from the 100 meter sprint to the 1500 meter relay and wheelchair race. "Today's event for me was to come out and see who the competition was and how to better myself." said, Spc. Almon Quintarious, U.S. Army Reservist from Anniston, Alabama.

Quintarious sustained a head injury when he was involved in a vehicle accident. "All I remember was waking up in the hospital, since then it has been an uphill battle." he said.

His injury affects his ability to play football but by involving himself in adaptive sports such as track "It gives me a way to use my talents on the track and seeing other athletes with severe injuries competing, gives me the motivation I need to overcome my injury." he said.

Through hard work and determination, Quintarious takes home a silver medal in the 100 meter open men's sprint race and a bronze medal in the 200 meter sprint open's men's race today. Taking his title and the gold was Spc. James Taylor, Warrior Transition Unit (WTU), Fort Sam Houston, Texas. "It felt good to beat Quintarious because he held the record for the 100 meter sprint race but I do look forward to running against him again in the future." said Taylor.

Taking home three gold medals in the 100 meter, 200 meter, and 1500 meter sprint wheelchair men's event race was Army Veteran Matt Spang, Colorado Springs, Colorado. "This was my first time competing in wheelchair racing and I only trained for five days which amazes me." said Spang.

Army Veteran Anne Oravec, Denver, Colorado takes home two gold medals in the women's open 100 meter and 200 meter sprint race while 1st Lt Kelly Elminger, WTU, Fort Sam Houston, takes two gold medals in the 100 meter and 200 meter sprint women's wheelchair race.

Today's track event included active duty and retired service members that have serious illnesses, traumatic brain injuries, visual impairment, upper and lower body injuries, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Through adaptive reconditioning, the wounded warriors can focus on the Army's holistic approach to recovery and transition out of military service. "My approach to recovery begins with me staying motivated. I'm wounded, not dead." said Taylor.

Adaptive reconditioning and adaptive athletics "improves self-esteem and fosters self-improvements." said Army Veteran Michael Kacer, Yonkers, New York. Kacer originally joined the Pennsylvania Army National Guard and remained in the military until his retirement in 2010.

While deployed to Afghanistan, Kacer lost his left arm to a rocket propelled grenade in battle. Today's event in the open men's 100 meter sprint race for upper body amputees, earned Kacer a gold medal.



These wounded warriors are no strangers to the Army's Warrior Trials. All men have competed for more than two years in these events and use it as a stepping stone to qualify for a spot in the 2014 Warrior Games being held in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

"I will use adaptive sports to break my own personal running record and being here at the Warrior Trials motivates me to push myself even further." said Quintarious.

The Army Warrior Trials represents the resilience of wounded, ill, and injured service members and veterans from all branches of the military. The Army encourages all wounded warriors to recondition and focus on the ability to recover and focus on self-improvement through adaptive sports and reconditioning.

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CUTLINE: From left: Gold medal winner Spc. James Taylor, Warrior Transition Unit, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and Bronze medal winner Spc. Almon Quintarious, Army Reservist, Anniston, AL, proudly display the Army flag and accept their medals during the 2014 U.S. Army Warrior Trials 100 meter open men's sprint medal ceremony at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School at West Point, N.Y., on June 18, 2014. The U.S. Army Warrior Trials are sponsored by the Army Warrior Transition Command and results help determine the athletes who will make up team Army for the 2014 Warrior Games Sep 28 – Oct 4. (U.S. Army photo by Benny Ontiveros)



CUTLINE: From left: Gold medal winner U.S. Army Veteran Anne Oravec, Denver, Colo., silver medal winner, Army Reservist Chief Warrant Officer 2, Kimberly Hendrix, Warrior Transition Unit, Fort Bliss, Texas, and bronze medal winner Reservist Sgt. First Class, Samantha Goldenstein, 325th Combat Support Hospital, Independence, Mo., accept their medals and proudly display the Army flag during the 2014 U.S. Army Warrior Trials medal ceremony at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School at West Point, N.Y., on June 18, 2014. All three wounded warriors placed in the same order for the 100 and 200 meter sprint open women's race events. The U.S. Army Warrior Trials are sponsored by the Army Warrior Transition Command and results help determine the athletes who will make up team Army for the 2014 Warrior Games Sep 28 – Oct 4. (U.S. Army photo by Benny Ontiveros)

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Warrior Transition Command (WTC) is a major subordinate command under the U.S. Army Medical Command (MEDCOM). WTC's mission is to develop, coordinate and integrate the Army's Warrior Care and Transition Program (WCTP) for wounded, ill and injured soldiers, veterans and their families. For more information on WTC, visit the new WTC website, www.WTC.army.mil, follow on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/armyWTC> or join Facebook at <http://facebook.com/armyWTC>.