

## Warrior Care Month highlights 'A Show of Strength'

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Story by Shawn Miller, NDW Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – November marks Warrior Care Month, an annual initiative to raise awareness and recognize wounded, injured and ill service members, as well as their families and caregivers, for their service and sacrifice.

"This year's theme, 'A Show of Strength,' recognizes the fortitude and resiliency that seriously ill and injured service members exhibit during their journey toward recovery," said Cmdr. Dante Terronez, Naval District Washington (NDW) regional director for Navy Wounded Warrior-Safe Harbor (NWW).

Throughout the month, NWW is hosting a series of events across the region. Organizers kicked off Warrior Care Month with an observance event Nov. 3 at Washington Navy Yard, featuring a keynote address by Chief Logistics Specialist Averill Malone about his struggles with post traumatic stress.

Malone, from Upper Marlboro, Maryland, recently returned from the fifth annual Wounded Warrior Games in Colorado, where he represented Team Navy in archery. For Malone, art and adaptive athletics through NWW have become his therapy.

"Our Sailors and Coast Guardsmen came into the service looking to serve our country and be part of something bigger than them," said Terronez. "Pausing in the year to highlight the efforts, struggles and triumphs that our service members deal with everyday helps people to know we have not forgotten, and that our wounded, ill and injured are important to the military."

NWW also hosted their first Wounded Warrior Family Symposium Nov. 6 at the USO aboard Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bethesda, where service members and clinical experts spoke on the challenges of overcoming wounds, illnesses and injuries.

Additionally, there are several seated volleyball tournaments scheduled later this month, as well as a Wounded Warrior Rehabilitation Expo slated for Nov. 20 at the Pentagon, featuring artwork, music and other forms of therapy.

The events throughout the month offers NWW opportunities for further outreach and education efforts, Terronez said.

"For NWW, every month is Warrior Care Month," he said. "NWW deals with our wounded warriors every day, so we are aware of the dynamic situation that our Sailors and Coast Guardsmen live with all the time."

Terronez added that becoming involved with NWW helped him better understand the nuances and complications of administrative and medical issues that program participants deal with on a regular basis, and encouraged leadership on all levels to familiarize themselves with the Sailors and Coast Guardsmen and their challenges.



Navy Chief Logistics Specialist Averill Malone shares a personal story of recovery from post traumatic stress with military and civilian members of Navy Installations Command at Washington Navy Yard, Nov. 3. November marks Warrior Care Month, which aims to increase awareness of resources available to wounded, ill and injured service members. (U.S. Navy photo by Sandra Niedzwiecki)

To get involved in Warrior Care Month and beyond, NWW encourages commands to spread stories and awareness of the program through social media channels, engage in conversations with leadership and shipmates, and visit recovering service members at local medical treatment facilities. They also recommend learning more about the Anchor Program, which pairs recovering Sailors and Coast Guardsmen with volunteer mentors to help with transition and reintegration into communities.

"This is an opportunity to highlight these people who now need the help from the organizations they wanted to dedicate part of their lives to," Terronez said.

For more information on Warrior Care Month and to see a calendar of events in the region, visit [www.safeharbor.navylive.dodlive.mil](http://www.safeharbor.navylive.dodlive.mil).