



NEWS RELEASE

June 10, 2014

By Gloria Montgomery
Public Affairs Office, Fort Hood, Texas
913-219-3663 (cell)
Gloria.l.montgomery.civ@mail.mil

Adaptive Sports About Attitude Says Wounded Arizona Soldier Participating in U.S. Army Warrior Trials

West Point, NY — Retired Army Sgt. 1st Class Betty Lehman admits her chances of making the 2014 Army Warrior Game team are slim, but that doesn't dampen one bit her determination and effort.

"I might not make the team now, but I might make it later," the 51-year-old Arizona resident said, "but you at least have to try and can never give up."

Lehman is one of approximately 70 Army athletes invited to the 2014 Army Warrior Game Trials being held June 15-19 at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York. When the competition ends next week, the Army will begin fielding its roster of 40 athletes who will next journey to Colorado Springs, Colorado, in late September to compete in the all-service 2014 Warrior Games, which showcases the resiliency and athleticism of America's wounded, ill and injured service members.

More than 100 wounded, ill and injured Army, Marines, Air Force and Veteran athletes from across the United States have joined together at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY, to train and compete in archery, basketball, cycling, track and field, swimming, shooting, sitting volleyball and wheelchair basketball. Participants in the trials include athletes with spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, visual impairment, serious illnesses and amputations.

The former first sergeant with the 492 Civil Affairs Battalion, Fort Lewis, Washington, was first introduced to adaptive sports and reconditioning while assigned to Warrior Transition Unit, Fort Lewis. A decade of deployments--three to Iraq and one to Afghanistan--had taken a toll on her, including a crushed foot and a traumatic brain injury. Adaptive sports and reconditioning, she said, were instrumental in her recovery.

"It helped build my confidence," she said, "and gave me something to focus on instead of focusing on my injuries. I call it post-traumatic growth instead of post-traumatic stress. We have to go outside of our realm do something and focus on our recovery."

Key to Lehman's recovery success she says, has been sleep and nutrition, two of the three components in the Army's Performance Triad.

"If you don't eat right, you don't feel right, and if you're sleep deprived, you can't keep doing things," she said.

This year, Lehman is competing in track, cycling and wheelchair basketball, a sport she was first introduced to while practicing with the Tacoma Parks and Recreation team in Washington.



"Wheelchair basketball is really hard and definitely challenging, but it's all in the attitude," she said.

Although Lehman played able-bodied basketball years ago, she started thinking that competing in a sport confined to a wheelchair would be the ultimate challenge.

"It would be a good thing to learn and something else to do to keep me going," she said, adding that even if she doesn't make the team, she still wants to continue playing. "Even though it's hard, I want to keep on doing this. I may not be good now, but I'll get better."

#



Caption: Retired Sgt. 1st Class Betty Lehman attempts a basketball steal from her opponent, Sgt. Kaduna Baldwin, Warrior Transition Unit, Fort Campbell, Kentucky, during the first evening of wheelchair basketball training at the 2014 Army Warrior Trials, West Point.

##



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>.

200 Stovall Street - #7S05 - Alexandria, VA 22332