

WARRIOR GAMES BIOGRAPHIES

Team Navy



Jonathan Adviento

Navy Electrician's Mate 2nd Class

Age: 29

Current Command/Position: Transient Personnel Unit, Puget Sound

Current Hometown: Silverdale, Wash.

Disability: Left arm injuries from accidental gunshot wound in 2013

Warrior Games Sports: Archery (recurve), Shooting (pistol), and Sitting Volleyball

Adviento enlisted in the Navy on April 6, 2010. After boot camp, he completed naval nuclear power training, and he was subsequently assigned to USS Henry M. Jackson (Gold) (SSBN 730). He was very active, enjoying "wallyball" (volleyball in a racquetball court), ultimate Frisbee, and rifle and pistol shooting. Last March, while cleaning his gun after shooting practice, Adviento's left hand was severely injured when the gun accidentally discharged. Since his injury, Adviento has undergone multiple surgeries and taken part in occupational therapy to regain use of his hand and arm. His current prognosis indicates that, at best, he will recover only 70 percent functionality. He currently is pursuing an internship through Operation Warfighter, and staying active through adaptive athletics. His wife, Kaitlyn, currently is enrolled at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill and works for Autism Speaks, a national nonprofit organization. Adviento is extremely excited about participating in his first Warrior Games and representing Team Navy.



Angelo Anderson

Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class

Age: 25

Current Command/Position: Camp Lejeune

Current Hometown: Jacksonville, N.C.

Disability: Upper and lower extremity injuries sustained in combat in 2010

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (upright), Track, and Wheelchair Basketball

Anderson joined the Navy in 2007. He always had been interested in a medical profession, but achieving the necessary educational degrees would be time-consuming and expensive. Becoming a Navy hospital corpsman seemed like an ideal course of action. Anderson was injured during his first deployment; he was on patrol with Marines in Afghanistan when he sustained gunshot wounds to his right arm and thigh. He talked his comrades through his care while waiting to be evacuated by a helicopter. He considers himself fortunate to have survived the incident and credits it for changing his outlook on life. Anderson said: "I live life for what it is and to the fullest." Anderson has since returned to full duty and is working at the Marine Special Operations School at Camp Lejeune.



Shahnaz Askins

Retired Navy Legalman 1st Class

Age: 37

Current Command/Position: Student

Current Hometown: Suffolk, Va.

Disability: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) sustained in combat in 2004; Chronic Myofascial Pain Syndrome and other conditions

Warrior Games Sports: Swimming and Track & Field

Askins joined the Navy in December 1995, and, while her family has an extensive military history, she was only the second woman in her family to serve. She also was eager to enhance her education to prepare for a new chapter in her life at the conclusion of her military career. During her naval career, she enjoyed traveling the world and experiencing how other cultures live and the food they eat. She was deployed to Iraq from April to October 2004, and her experiences in combat led to PTSD and other disabilities. Her condition was further aggravated during a subsequent deployment to Kuwait. Unfortunately, she did not receive treatment for her condition until 2009, when she was transferred off a ship and began the medical evaluation process. Askins officially retired in 2012, and she currently is pursuing an undergraduate degree in psychology at Regent University. After she obtains her degree, she plans to pursue a doctorate degree in physical therapy. She is the proud mother of three children, Tristan, Dereck and Savannah. An accomplished athlete who has participated in weightlifting and Crossfit competitions, Askins is extremely excited to be part of Team Navy and compete at her first Warrior Games.



Patrick Blair

Retired Navy Logistics Specialist 2nd Class

Age: 34

Current Command/Position: Student

Current Hometown: Killeen, Texas

Disability: Left arm injuries after a shipboard accident in 2011

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (upright) and Swimming

Blair joined the Navy in 2007 in Texas. During his naval career, he enjoyed addressing daily challenges to help the Navy operate more effectively and meeting new people. In November 2011, he was attached to the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), serving as a safety observer, when his left forearm was crushed between an aircraft and forklift. He underwent several reconstructive surgeries and extensive rehabilitation, and still has not regained full use of his arm. He retired from the Navy in 2013, and he currently is a student at Central Texas College. He always has been athletic – enjoying swimming and working out at the gym – and he is glad to be involved in adaptive sports and Team Navy.



Brian Canich

Retired Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class

Age: 26

Current Command/Position: Working for his family business

Current Hometown: Richlands, N.C.

Disability: PTSD sustained in combat in 2011 and right shoulder injury

Warrior Games Sports: Shooting (rifle) and Wheelchair Basketball

Canich enlisted in the Navy as a corpsman in February 2007 to further his education in the medical field, and “to be part of the strongest corps in the military,” he says. He particularly enjoyed working alongside his

Marine brothers and providing hands-on training to younger corpsmen. After he deployed to Afghanistan with the 3rd Battalion 2nd Marines in 2011 – where he was exposed to several improvised explosive devices and combat fire – he was diagnosed with PTSD. He also sustained a right shoulder injury that resulted in four shoulder surgeries and two back procedures. Canich retired from the Navy in October 2013. He currently works for Canich Farms, a family business, and he enjoys the flexibility it provides him as he pursues his athletic ambitions. He calls his wife his hero: “She has been my biggest support through my injuries ... without it, I wouldn’t be here.”



Jim Castaneda

Retired Navy Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class

Age: 48

Current Command/Position: Retired

Current Hometown: San Antonio, Texas

Disability: Stroke diagnosed in 2007

Warrior Games Sports: Field and Shooting (rifle)

Castaneda joined the Navy in 1990 to see the world. Having grown up in El Paso, Texas, a very arid desert climate, he was drawn to the cool blue waters of the ocean and the promise of where they would take him. He did not join the Navy with the intention of making it his career, but stayed in the Navy because he enjoyed the tempo of military service, changing jobs every three years, meeting new people, and the challenges and rewards that come with a new position and new duty station. Early one morning in October 2007, Castaneda suffered a stroke during muster aboard USS Tortuga (LSD 46), while the ship was underway near the Philippines. Castaneda retired from the Navy after 20 years of service in September 2010. Castaneda continues to suffer seizures and uses a wheelchair; however, he remains very active in adaptive athletics. Castaneda said: “Everyone [competing in adaptive athletics] seems 7 feet tall – larger than life. I feel like Superman. I can do anything now.” Castaneda has a wife, Alona, who serves as his primary caregiver. Together, they have three children, Mariaa, Jim, and Jef.



Daniel Crossley

Navy Aviation Electrician's Mate 2nd Class

Age: 24

Current Command/Position: Tinker Air Force Base

Current Hometown: Midwest City, Okla.

Disability: Spinal cord injury, sustained in a motorcycle accident in 2013

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (handcycle) and Wheelchair Basketball

In May 2013, Crossley was involved in a traffic accident while riding his motorcycle near his command in Oklahoma City, which resulted in multiple fractures to his spine and several internal injuries. Now a paraplegic, Crossley is confined to a wheelchair; however, he has not let it slow him down. While he works through the medical evaluation process, he is actively pursuing adaptive athletic opportunities. He is excited to be part of Team Navy and compete in his first Warrior Games.



Michael Dacanay

Navy Culinary Specialist 2nd Class

Age: 43

Current Command/Position: Commander, Navy Region Northwest, Seattle

Current Hometown: Kent, Wash.

Disability: Cholangiocarcinoma cancer diagnosed in 2012

Warrior Games Sports: Archery (compound)

Dacanay joined the Navy in April 2002 at Navy Recruiting Command in Seattle, and, since then, he has enjoyed a wonderful career. In December 2011, Dacanay visited his local naval clinic and the emergency room multiple times with serious stomach pains. At Valley Medical Center in Renton, Wash., he received an MRI that ultimately identified a tumor on his liver. In January 2012, he underwent surgery to remove the tumor, and, in April 2012, he was told he was cancer-free. Three months later, Dacanay experienced a setback and was diagnosed with Cholangiocarcinoma cancer in his lungs and liver. His aggressive form of cancer is responding well to chemotherapy, and he is aided by tremendous support from his wife Noribelle and his family. Dacanay is excited about the connections he has made and the opportunities available through adaptive sports, and is looking forward to the Warrior Games.



Steven Davis

Retired Navy Aviation Electrician's Mate Apprentice

Age: 26

Current Command/Profession: Retired

Current Hometown: Salida, Calif.

Physical Disability: Lower-body injury sustained in a 2008 motorcycle accident

Warrior Games Sports: Sitting Volleyball and Wheelchair Basketball

Davis joined the Navy shortly after high school; he wanted to travel and see the world. His father was a sonar technician, and Davis chose to join the aviation community as an electrician. Always athletic growing up, baseball was his favorite sport, but he also enjoyed basketball, football, and wrestling; his sports hero is basketball great Kobe Bryant. Once in his helicopter sea combat squadron (HSC 8), Davis tried out for All-Navy baseball, and he had made it through the second round when he had to withdraw due to deployment work-ups. When Davis' subsequent motorcycle accident in 2008 claimed the use of his right leg, he was told he would never walk again. Today, he walks with the aid of an ankle-foot orthosis and hardly has to use his wheelchair. He currently is practicing wheelchair basketball with the Sacramento Royals, a National Wheelchair Basketball Association team. Additionally, he recently became engaged to his girlfriend, Marcia Rodriguez.



Michael Dayton

Navy Machinist's Mate 1st Class

Age: 34

Current Command/Position: USS Ohio (SSGN 726), ALPO Auxiliary Division

Current Hometown: Bremerton, Wash.

Disability: Burns sustained in a 2007 shipboard accident

Warrior Games Sports: Archery (recurve), Shooting (pistol and rifle) and Sitting Volleyball

Dayton joined the Navy in 1999 to continue a family tradition of military service dating back to the Civil War. Inspired by the movie, "The Hunt for Red October," he chose the submarine service, earning him the nickname "Bubblehead." He served aboard USS Topeka (SSN 754) before transferring to USS Emory S. Land (AS 39), where his accident occurred. Sports have played a large part of Dayton's life; he has been active in track and field, wrestling, and soccer. He was invited to be a part of the U.S. Navy Marksmanship Team on the .45 pistol. He also was awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for his time and efforts with Habitat for Humanity and Washington Explorer Search and Rescue. Dayton is married to Aleah and is the proud father of Anthony.

**TEAM CAPTAIN****Ching Dressel**
Navy Chief Career Counselor**Age:** 35**Current Command/Profession:** Commander, SUBPAC, Force Career Counselor**Current Hometown:** Pearl City, Hawaii**Disability:** Myelodysplastic Syndrome, diagnosed in 2009**Warrior Games Sports:** Cycling (upright) and Track

Raised in Sacramento, Calif., Dressel enlisted in the Navy in 1998. She wanted to see the world and, along the way, receive an education. Dressel's duty stations include USS Tarawa (LHA 1), San Diego, Calif.; Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS), Sacramento, Calif.; an Individual Augmentee deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2005 to 2006; Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Mobile Unit Six, Charleston, S.C.; Helicopter Anti-Submarine Light (HSL) 37, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii; PCU Michael Murphy; Commander, US PACFLT; and Commander, SUBPAC. She was diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Syndrome in June 2009; in February 2012, she received a bone marrow transplant. During her treatment, she was promoted to chief petty officer, and, since then, she has worked hard to remain on active duty. She currently is in remission. She is maintaining good health through athletics, and she credits sports for helping her reach this point in her recovery. Dressel participated in the 2013 Warrior Games, and while she did not take home a medal, she called it an amazing experience. She is married to Billy Dressel, who has been her rock throughout her recovery.

**John Dusseau****Navy Aviation Structural Mechanic 1st Class****Age:** 38**Current Command/Profession:** Navy Recruiting District Michigan**Current Hometown:** Holland, Mich.**Physical Disability:** Cancer diagnosed in 2011**Warrior Games Sports:** Archery (compound)

Dusseau has been athletic his whole life. He grew up playing football, wrestling and boxing, and he had great success with karate. He joined the Navy in 1998 because he wanted to serve his country and do something special. He loved the aviation community, and he served in a strike fighter squadron (VFA 146 Blue Diamonds) and patrol squadron (VP 26 Tridents). From the sleepy family town of Brunswick, Maine, he enjoyed traveling around the world as well as training future Sailors. It was on Dusseau's shore tour at Navy Recruiting District Michigan that he was diagnosed with cancer. After a vigorous chemotherapy regimen, his cancer went into remission. He has a wife and four beautiful daughters. Last year, he achieved his goal to remain on active duty. "Through the long battle with cancer," he says, "doing adaptive athletics has given me a bright spot to look forward to."



John Edmonston

Retired Navy Lieutenant

Age: 35

Current Command/Position: Mechanical Engineer with the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard

Current Hometown: Bremerton, Wash.

Disability: Traumatic brain injury (TBI) sustained in a 2009 motorcycle accident

Warrior Games Sports: Sitting Volleyball, Swimming and Track

Edmonston joined the Navy while attending California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, Calif. He always had been interested in a military career, and when he heard about the Navy's nuclear engineering program, he was hooked. Edmonston said completing Navy Nuclear Power Training was one of the most challenging experiences of his life; he also found his subsequent work on USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) one of the most rewarding. He enjoyed hockey, dirt biking, and volleyball, and his sports hero is Joe Montana – a great athlete and a good person. In 2009, while he was exiting the ferry from Seattle to Bremerton, Wash., he lost control of his motorcycle. He suffered a TBI; broke his arm, face and back; and sustained multiple other injuries. Edmonston medically retired from the Navy in 2011, and since then he has worked as a civilian employee for the Navy. "I have always been proud to serve my country, but because of all that I have been through and how the Navy has helped, I am even more proud to put on that red, white, and 'Navy' blue," said Edmonston.



Jacob Emmott

Retired Navy Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class

Age: 25

Current Command/Profession: Retired

Current Hometown: Wakefield, R.I.

Disability: Gunshot wound to the head sustained in combat in 2010

Warrior Games Sports: Shooting (rifle), Sitting Volleyball and Swimming

Emmott – "Doc Emmott" to his Marines – joined the Navy looking for some direction after high school. A year later, he was on deployment with the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment in Afghanistan when he sustained a gunshot wound to the head while providing medical assistance to two of his Marines. The bullet pierced his Kevlar helmet and, thankfully, just missed his carotid artery. He blacked out briefly, came to and continued to direct the treatment of the two men and himself. He was awarded the Silver Star in July 2011. Emmott retired from the Navy in January 2013, and he hopes to go back to school and perhaps pursue a career in the medical field. His recovery has been slow; in addition to suffering from migraines and chronic pain, he was hospitalized for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in 2012. "The biggest thing these athletic events give me is a reason to do better. I can sit at home right now, hopped up on painkillers or just all around feeling sorry for myself. Instead, I am going after an obtainable challenge," said Emmott.



Roel Espino
Navy Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class
Age: 26
Current Command/Profession: Naval Health Clinic, Hawaii
Current Hometown: Pasadena, Calif.
Disability: TBI
Warrior Games Sports: Archery (compound) and Shooting (rifle)

Espino enlisted in the Navy in September 2008 because of the unexpected adventure a military career promised. When he finished training, he hoped his first duty station would be Naples, Italy. However, he was assigned to the 1st Marines – an assignment that ultimately had a tremendous impact on his life. After a deployment to Afghanistan – where he provided medical care to injured Marines – Espino began experiencing PTSD symptoms. Then, in March 2014, while stationed at Navy Health Clinic, Kaneohe, Espino was riding his motorcycle when he was struck by a car and thrown from his bike. He suffered a TBI, as well as injuries to his right leg. He now suffers amnesia that plagues him daily. He is enrolled in Kaplan University, and he expects to medically retire from the Navy in 2015. He has long been active – playing football and baseball in high school – but he had never tried archery until he got involved in adaptive athletics. He is grateful for the positive influence sports has had on his life, and he is excited about competing at the Warrior Games for the first time.



Isaac Francois
Retired Navy Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class
Age: 31
Current Command/Profession: Retired
Current Hometown: Kensington, Md.
Disability: PTSD and compartment syndrome in his legs sustained in 2008
Warrior Games Sports: Ultimate Champion

Before his injury, Francois was an avid soccer player who enjoyed the sport whenever he could. He coached soccer for kids in Panama City Beach, Fla., and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. After a difficult combat deployment in Afghanistan in 2008 – where he carried heavy gear and equipment daily – Francois returned home with compartment syndrome in his legs, a painful condition that occurs when pressure in the muscles builds to dangerous levels. Though it went undiagnosed for years, he also had PTSD from his experiences in theater, where he was exposed to the injuries and deaths of some of his teammates. He underwent several surgeries on his legs during his subsequent deployment to Guantanamo Bay, but his condition continued to plague him. He was formally diagnosed with PTSD at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in 2012, and he medically retired from the Navy at the end of last year. He currently is applying for jobs, and he has some very promising leads. He is married to Wisline, and together they have a son, Jaden, and they recently welcomed another baby boy.



TEAM CAPTAIN

Jaime Garza

Retired Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class

Age: 27

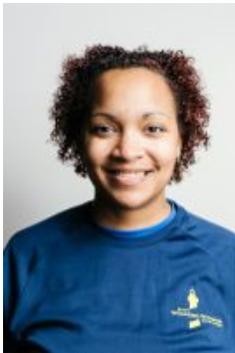
Current Command/Profession: Student

Current Hometown: The Colony, Texas

Disability: TBI from a fast-roping accident in 2010

Warrior Games Sports: Field

In July 2010, while he was deployed to the Philippines, Garza was participating in a mission that involved fast-roping when he fell from a helicopter. He plummeted 60 feet and sustained multiple injuries, but he continued on. He had suffered a TBI from the accident, but he was not medically evacuated; he was diagnosed when he returned home and was treated for vestibular, memory, cognitive, and mental health. Garza was medically retired from the Navy earlier this year, and he currently is enrolled at the University of Northern Texas. He is interested in pursuing a career in the medical and intelligence field, and he has a wife, Brittney, and a son, Braedyn. He is new to adaptive athletics, and he is excited to participate in his first Warrior Games.



Shericka Goza

Retired Sonar Technician (Surface) 2nd Class

Age: 30

Current Command/Profession: Retired

Current Hometown: Hampton, Va.

Disability: Colon cancer, diagnosed March 2011

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (recumbent) and Field

Goza joined the Navy in March 2003 to serve her country and, eventually, pursue a college degree. Among her favorite tours was her assignment to USS Oscar Austin (DDG 79), which was deployed to aid in the negotiation process for two vessels captured by pirates off the coast of Somalia. Later, she served a tour at Training Support Center Great Lakes, where she was a military training instructor and mentored students. During that tour, in March 2011, Goza was diagnosed with Stage 4 metastatic colon cancer. Her recovery process has been slow, and, after multiple surgeries, she recently began her fifth round of chemotherapy treatment. Participating in adaptive sports has changed Goza's life, giving her a focus that does not include doctors or hospitals. Training and competing with Team Navy also connected her to new friends who can relate to her struggles and provide a special kind of support.



Nathaniel Hamilton

Retired Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class

Age: 29

Current Command/Position: Retired

Current Hometown: Sneads Ferry, N.C.

Disability: TBI and other injuries sustained in combat in 2010

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (recumbent) and Shooting (pistol and rifle)

Hamilton joined the Navy to train as a corpsman, eager to serve alongside his Marine “brothers.” On Nov. 17, 2010, while he was deployed to Afghanistan, he was on foot patrol when a massive improvised explosive device (IED) detonated beneath a vehicle 10 meters from him. He woke up moments later on the ground and began treating the occupants of the downed vehicle. He was medevaced to Camp Bastion in Afghanistan. He was diagnosed with a severe concussion, a ruptured tympanic membrane and loss of hearing. He medically retired from the Navy three years later in November 2013. He is grateful for the positive influence of adaptive athletics and is excited to participate in the Warrior Games for the first time.



Donald Jackson

Navy Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Aircraft Handler) 3rd Class

Age: 22

Current Command: USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74)

Current Hometown: Kent, Wash.

Disability: Epiglottal cancer

Warrior Games Sports: Track and Field and Wheelchair Basketball

Jackson has long been a sports fan, and when he was assigned to the USS John C. Stennis, he was thrilled to make the cut for the command’s flag football team. He also really enjoyed playing basketball, and his sports hero is Magic Johnson. Last fall, a biopsy confirmed that Jackson had epiglottal (throat) cancer. After completing intense medical treatments – during which he was grateful for support from his mother and brother – Jackson anticipates that he will be medically separated from the Navy. He landed an internship at the U.S. Coast Guard Base Seattle clinic, and he ultimately hopes to move to New Orleans. He is planning to pursue a career in law enforcement. He is new to adaptive athletics, but he recently won two gold medals at the Invictus Games in London in September.



John Kremer

Retired Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician 1st Class

Age: 31

Current Command/Position: Retired

Current Hometown: Buford, Ga.

Disability: Below-the-knee amputee (left and right legs), wounded in combat in 2010

Warrior Games Sports: Shooting (rifle), Sitting Volleyball and Wheelchair Basketball

Kremer grew up on Whidbey Island – which is home to a large naval air station – and sometimes would hop on his bike with friends to watch Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician (EOD) Sailors train. He would hear explosions and see the service members parachute into the water, and he was hooked; he knew he wanted to join the Navy one day. Kremer enlisted in 2003, about a year after he graduated high school. After multiple tours, he was injured while deployed with EOD Mobile Unit 1 in September 2010, after stepping on a land mine. He lost his right foot and part of his left foot, and he suffered additional shrapnel injuries. Kremer always has been active in sports – before his injury, he enjoyed wrestling – and adaptive athletics has been critical to his recovery. He currently is trying to earn a spot on the U.S. Paralympic Biathlon team. He is married to Gabrielle, and they have a daughter, Adalyn.



Sonny Lemerande

Retired Navy Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class

Age: 30

Current Command/Position: Student

Current Hometown: Twentynine Palms, Calif.

Disability: Lower-body injury and PTSD sustained in combat in 2009

Warrior Games Sports: Field, Sitting Volleyball and Wheelchair Basketball

Lemerande grew up in Michigan, and he joined the Navy after high school. Because of his interest in the medical field, as well as the influence of a family member serving as a medic in the Air Force, he decided to enlist as a Navy corpsman. Before his injury, he enjoyed basketball, football, volleyball, and baseball; his sports hero is football great Emmitt Smith. Lemerande went on two deployments during his more than nine-year naval career; it was during his second deployment that his Humvee was struck by a pressure plate anti-tank mine. Lemerande's injuries haven't slowed him down. He finished his military career in Twentynine Palms, where he worked as assistant leading petty officer and mentored junior Sailors. Now retired, he is attending school to become a social worker. He is the proud father of two daughters, McKenna and Jacqueline.



La'Mar Linton

Retired Navy Seaman

Age: 27

Current Command/Position: Retired

Current Hometown: Portsmouth, Va.

Disability: PTSD sustained in combat in 2006 and 2008

Warrior Games Sports: Track and Field

When he was growing up, Linton wanted to be a professional football player, or a track star like Michael Johnson. In 2007, he left the Army and joined the Navy with the goal of becoming a warrant officer. During the previous year, he deployed to a combat zone in Iraq with the Army, and he soon began experiencing PTSD symptoms and other conditions. He returned to Iraq with the Navy in 2008, and that tour aggravated his PTSD and other conditions. His recovery has been a long and difficult journey, and he credits his girlfriend, Tiffany, with helping him turn his life around. He also is very grateful for the positive impact that adaptive athletics has had on him; he realizes now that, even though he is injured, he can still pursue his passions. He is looking forward to his first Warrior Games, and he says it has given him a second chance at a childhood dream.



Averill Malone

Navy Chief Logistics Specialist

Age: 41

Current Command/Position: Military Postal Service Agency

Current Hometown: Upper Malboro, Md.

Disability: PTSD sustained in combat in 2007 and 2008

Warrior Games Sports: Archery (recurve)

Malone joined the Navy in 1993 – after he graduated from high school – in large part because of the education benefits it offered. His favorite memory from his career was when he got his first glimpse of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69), his first duty station. “I had never seen anything so huge,” he said. In 2007 and 2008 – when he was deployed to Iraq to conduct dining facilities inspections throughout the provinces – he was exposed to rocket attacks and death. When he returned home, he suffered from PTSD in silence. He was twice admitted for inpatient treatment, but his symptoms continue to plague him. His involvement in adaptive athletics has dramatically improved his disposition, and he is eager to compete at his first Warrior Games. He is the proud father of Dominique, Aprielle, Joshua, Alonzo, and Iyanna, and he recently became a grandfather to Kylah. He calls his grandmother, Grace Richardson, his personal hero.



Stephan Miller
Retired Navy Aviation Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class
Age: 33
Current Command/Position: Retired
Current Hometown: Cleveland, Ohio
Disability: Invisible wounds
Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (upright) and Track

From Lakewood, Ohio, Miller grew up running and competed in high school track and cross-country. He joined the Navy as an aviation boatswain's mate, serving tours on USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), USS Tarawa (LHA 1), and USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75). During his second enlistment, he became seriously ill with various cognitive disorders. He is now medically retired and training his heart out for the 2014 Invictus Games and Warrior Games, hoping to "glorify the Lord in all that I do."



Kenyactha Myers
Navy Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class
Age: 26
Current Command/Position: Naval Air Station Whidbey Island
Current Hometown: Oak Harbor, Wash.
Disability: PTSD sustained in combat in 2011 and 2013
Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (upright) and Track and Field

Myers joined the Navy in January 2009, and during her career, she has most enjoyed all of the travel opportunities the Navy has provided. In 2011, she deployed to Iraq for six months, and shortly after returning home, she began receiving treatment for anxiety, depression and nightmare disorder. Less than two years later, she deployed again to Afghanistan with the Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 138 for three months, and, afterward, she was formally diagnosed with PTSD. She had a wonderful experience at the Team Navy Trials, as well as at the subsequent training camps, and she is looking forward to competing alongside her new friends at the Warrior Games. She has always been active in athletics, and her sports heroes are Allen Iverson and Dominique Dawes.



Brett Parks

Retired Naval Aircrewman

Age: 35

Current Command/Position: National motivational speaker

Current Hometown: Jacksonville, Fla.

Disability: Lower-leg amputee (right leg) and other injuries sustained after a gunshot wound in 2012

Warrior Games Sports: Field, Sitting Volleyball, Swimming

While training to become an aviation flight engineer, Parks was wounded in 2012 in Jacksonville, Fla., when he came to the aid of a man being robbed at gunpoint. Parks – a husband and father with a second child on the way -- was waiting to conduct a training session at his gym when he heard a man scream behind the fitness center and decided to intervene. Two gunshots were fired at Parks; the first shot hit his abdomen, but the second shot missed. The bullet shredded his kidney, severely damaged a third of his colon and severed a major artery, disrupting blood flow to his right leg. While in a coma for 20 days, his lower right leg was amputated, and Parks spent four months recovering from his wounds and learning how to use a prosthetic limb. In addition to his athletic ambitions, Parks has written a yet-unpublished book about his experiences titled "Miracle Man: A Bullet That Ignited a Purpose Driven Life." Parks also has established an organization called Second Shot Ministry, which enables him to share his faith and journey to recovery. He serves as a motivational speaker and travels the nation, speaking at schools, churches, and companies.



Redmond Ramos

Retired Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class

Age: 25

Current Command/Position: The Elizabeth Hospice

Current Hometown: Murrieta, Calif.

Disability: Below-the-knee amputee (left leg), wounded in combat in 2011

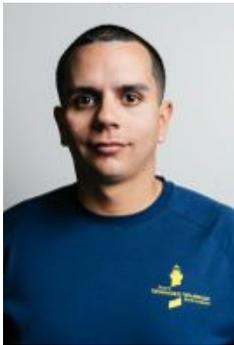
Warrior Games Sports:

In 2007, ten days after graduating high school, Ramos decided to follow in his older brothers' footsteps and join the Navy to serve as a corpsman. In March 2011, Ramos was wounded in Helmand Province in Afghanistan while serving with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment. His left leg was badly injured by an improvised explosive device while he was running to render care to an injured Marine. He was sent to Naval Medical Center San Diego, and – despite efforts during the following months to salvage the limb – it ultimately was amputated below the knee. Ramos was medically separated from the Navy in April 2013, but he remains very active in adaptive athletics events. He currently works in military combat training.



Kathleen Ray
Retired Navy Aviation Technician 3rd Class
Age: 28
Current Command/Position: Student
Current Hometown: Palmdale, Calif.
Disability: TBI sustained in a 2010 traffic accident
Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (recumbent) and Swimming

Ray joined the Navy in September 2005, because, as she says, the Navy involves work on the ground, at sea, and in the air – you never know what you’re going to get. While growing up in Palmdale, Calif., Ray enjoyed recreational sports, especially dancing, and she participated in her high school marching band’s color guard. In 2010, she was injured in a traffic accident that left her with a TBI. She is medically retired from the Navy now, and she is pursuing an associate degree from the University of Phoenix.



TEAM CAPTAIN
Javier D. Rodriguez Santiago
Navy Chief Yeoman
Age: 33
Current Command/Position: Naval Medical Center San Diego/retirement process
Current Hometown: San Diego, Calif.
Disability: Above-the-knee amputee (left leg), injured in a 2011 motorcycle accident
Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (hand cycle), Sitting Volleyball, Track and Field, Wheelchair Basketball

Born and raised in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, Rodriguez Santiago enlisted in the Navy in 2002 wanting to serve his country while exploring the world. His duty stations included USS Montpelier (SSN 765) in Norfolk, Va.; the Navy Officer Recruiting Station in San Juan, Puerto Rico; an Individual Augmentee deployment to Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; USS North Carolina (SSN 777) in Groton, Conn., and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam; and Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCS D). Prior to his injury, Rodriguez Santiago enjoyed basketball and, when he had the time to play, beach volleyball. A victim of a hit-and-run accident while riding his motorcycle in January 2011, he sustained severe trauma to his lower extremities. Since then, he has battled through extensive surgeries and physical therapy, and, ultimately, he had his left leg amputated above the knee. After the surgery, Rodriguez Santiago has been more mobile, and he currently plays wheelchair basketball with the NMCS D team, the Wolfpack. He is married to Edna, and he has a son, Eddier, and a daughter, Aulani.



Michael Roggio

Retired AWR-Naval Aircrewmen Tactical-Helicopter (Search & Rescue)

Age: 29

Current Command/Position: Retired

Current Hometown: Orlando, Fla.

Disability: TBI and spinal cord injury sustained in an accident in 2009

Warrior Games Sports: Ultimate Champion

Roggio joined the Navy in 2006, in part because he hoped to take advantage of the generous education benefits offered through the military. During his naval career, he particularly enjoyed working on drug and human trafficking enforcement issues, as well as executing rescues. In 2009, two months after he was transferred to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light (HSL) 46, he was injured at an air hangar. He fell down a ladderwell and hit his head, losing consciousness for a few moments. When he first woke up, he could not stand or move his legs. He was later diagnosed with spinal cord swelling and a TBI. He retired from the Navy four years later, in 2013. He currently is focused on his mental and physical rehabilitation, and spending time with his daughter.



Laura Root

Retired Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade

Age: 35

Current Command/Position: Retired

Current Hometown: Cleveland, Ohio

Disability: Muscular Dystrophy diagnosed in 2011

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (upright) Shooting (rifle) and Sitting Volleyball

After several years of international experiences, Root joined the Navy because she had a passion for intelligence and languages. She was commissioned in February 2011 through Officer Candidate School in Newport, R.I., and has served in both the Office of Naval Intelligence and Defense Intelligence Agency. She earned her master's degree in International Relations from the American University of Paris, speaks both French and Turkish, and hopes to expand her portfolio. Despite being diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy in 2011, she has enjoyed adaptive sports and is working hard to advance to both national and international competitions. At the 2013 Warrior Games, Root became the first female ever to earn a gold medal in a shooting event (she took top honors in the air rifle prone competition). Now retired, Root is pursuing a civilian career and planning to start a blog and author a book about the network of wounded warriors in the U.S. and their experiences.



Henry Sawyer

Retired Navy Electrician's Mate 3rd Class

Age: 31

Current Command/Position: Retired

Current Hometown: Jacksonville, Fla.

Disability: Spinal cord injury and lower-body paralysis sustained in a football game in 2010

Warrior Games Sports: Field and Shooting (rifle)

Born and raised in Jacksonville, Fla., Sawyer grew up playing football and always has loved sports. Through the Jacksonville Job Corps, he earned his high school diploma and learned to be an electrician. Always looking for an adventure, he joined the Navy and soon became an electrician's mate. He served two tours aboard USS Boone (FFG 28) and USS Farragut (DDG 99), conducting counter narcotic operations and theater security cooperation exercises in the Caribbean and South America. He loved the travel, especially the opportunity to visit countries such as Brazil, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Panama, and Costa Rica. Once back on shore, he was stationed at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, where he sustained a spinal cord injury while playing in a football game. Sawyer since has been medically retired, and he is deciding on a career path and what to study in college. He is married to Lusanda, and they have four sons.



Angel Segarra

Retired Navy Aviation Technician 3rd Class

Age: 25

Current Command/Position: Student

Current Hometown: Sierra Vista, Ariz.

Disability: Spinal cord injury sustained in a traffic accident in 2010

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (hand cycle), Swimming and Wheelchair Basketball

In September 2010, Segarra was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident, and he suffered a broken spine, three broken ribs, a ruptured spleen and damage to other internal organs. It was soon determined that he was paralyzed from the waist down, and he is now confined to a wheelchair. Segarra retired from the Navy in February 2012, and he has since enrolled in school. He is refining his resume and preparing to look for a job.



Sadie Strong

Navy Airman

Age: 21

Current Command/Position: Naval Air Station Whidbey Island

Current Hometown: Oak Harbor, Wash.

Disability: Invisible wounds

Warrior Games Sports: Archery (compound) and Shooting (rifle)

Strong joined the Navy in January 2012, because she wanted to make a difference, and to be part of something bigger than herself. For her first assignment, she was stationed with Patrol Squadron 46. In October 2012, Strong was assaulted; she was later diagnosed with PTSD because of the experience. She recently completed the medical evaluation process, and she will retire from the Navy next month. She is grateful for the support of her new friends on Team Navy, and is eager to compete in her first Warrior Games. In the future, she is looking forward to moving back to Maryland, and she is planning to enroll in art school. She also plans to continue her archery and shooting training.



Misty Taylor

Navy Counselor 1st Class (Surface Warfare/Aviation Warfare)

Age: 37

Current Command/Position: Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, Calif.

Current Hometown: San Diego, Calif.

Disability: PTSD sustained in combat-related operations in 2005, as well as a TBI and other injuries

Warrior Games Sports: Archery (recurve) and Swimming

In 1990, Taylor decided to join the Navy because it offered a stable career, and she knew it would afford her an opportunity to pursue higher education. Currently, Taylor has a bachelor's degree in organizational management and is working toward another degree in recreational therapy. She spent 12 years of her naval career as a hospital corpsman, and she enjoyed many aspects of her work, especially serving on the commissioning crew for the USS San Diego (LPD 22). However, during that time, she also was deployed to Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay, Cuba as a psychiatric technician providing mental health care for detainees. She soon began suffering from PTSD because of her experiences. In 2007, she converted from a corpsman to a Navy counselor, because working within the medical community aggravated her symptoms. Taylor hopes to complete 20 years in the Navy, and she is enjoying taking part in adaptive athletics events. She is thrilled to be part of Team Navy – the first sports team in which she has been a participant – and she is training hard for the Warrior Games. She is married to David, and they have two sons, Daniel and Lucas.



Hector Varela

Retired Navy Chief Gunner's Mate

Age: 45

Current Command/Position: Retired

Current Hometown: San Diego, Calif.

Disability: Above-the-knee amputee (left leg), injured in a 2012 motorcycle accident

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (hand cycle), Field, Sitting Volleyball and Wheelchair Basketball

Varela joined the Navy in April 1988; he wanted to leave the small farm town where he grew up and see the world. He is very proud of his many career achievements – particularly being promoted to chief petty officer – as a result of all his hard work. He has long been active in sports, and he especially enjoyed soccer, softball and basketball when he was younger. His sports hero is Muhammad Ali. He was injured in February 2012 in a motorcycle accident, which resulted in the amputation of his left leg above the knee. Since his injury, he has enjoyed playing wheelchair basketball and participating in adaptive surfing. Now retired, he hopes to pursue a position within preventive medicine to aid others in recovering from physical injuries. He has a wife, Anna, and two daughters, Ashley and Amanda.



Sharona Young

Retired Navy Chief Yeoman

Age: 33

Current Command/Position: Program Support Assistant at the VA Clinic in Orlando, Fla.

Current Hometown: Orlando, Fla.

Disability: Multiple Sclerosis diagnosed in 2013

Warrior Games Sports: Cycling (recumbent) and Swimming

Young has been a Navy Reservist for more than 14 years, and she has spent half of that time on active duty. She joined the military because of its many benefits, and because it offered her an opportunity to explore the world. Throughout her career, she has met many wonderful people and enjoyed experiences she never would have had otherwise. In March 2013, she visited her doctor because she was experiencing pain and numbness in her arms and hands, as well as persistent fatigue. After months of tests, she was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. She has not let her diagnosis slow her down; she continues to enjoy walking, cooking and scrapbooking. She retired from the Navy in June. She is very excited to be part of Team Navy, and she calls her fellow teammates her heroes. She is the proud mother of a 9-year-old daughter.