

Wounded Warrior

FAMILY QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



July 2016



MID-ATLANTIC HOSTS INAUGURAL FAMILY SYMPOSIUM

The inaugural Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Navy Wounded Warrior (NWW) – Safe Harbor Family Symposium was held on June 3 in conjunction with USO Warrior Week in Virginia Beach, Va. Eight wounded warriors and caregivers shared their experiences and challenges from their recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration processes.

Guest speaker James Rodriguez, deputy assistant secretary of Defense for the Office of Warrior Care Policy, listened to the panelists as they shared testimonials about their wounds, illnesses and injuries; how NWW played a role in their care; and their determined outlooks for the future.

Michelle Taylor, mother and caregiver for Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class Alicia Thompson, said she is pleased that NWW wants feedback from the enrollees regarding how the program worked. Taylor, who is retired Army Sergeant 1st Class, worked with wounded warriors both at a field hospital in Iraq and at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and offered a unique perspective. Although she was trained to help wounded service members and provide them with information, she was now faced with her own child needing help. “It was more emotional and you forget things like paying bills and a power of attorney; those are things you don’t think of when you spend 2-3 weeks in the ICU and what NWW helped us work through,” she said. “My advice to others is: Ask questions!”

Another panelist, Senior Chief Religious Program Specialist Shari Chisolm, championed awareness for invisible wounds. “Strongly encourage senior leadership within each command to creatively spread awareness about the importance of NWW resources and the enrollment process for service members and their families,” she said. “It is vital to promote a positive environment to enable opportunities for service members to take the initial brave step to ask and to receive care from a profound program. In doing so, this may save a life, because not all seriously wounded, ill or injured battle scars of a service member are visible to the naked eye.”

NWW Program Director Captain Brent Breining closed the symposium and summed up the focus of the program. “Giving back to Sailors and Coast Guardsman in their time of need as they’re going through something that’s life changing is what this program is all about,” he said.

Mark your calendars for these upcoming NWW Family Symposiums:

Commander, Navy Region Southwest on Aug. 18, 2016
Anchors Catering
2375 Recreation Way, Bldg. 3210
San Diego, CA 92136
619-532-8577

Commander Navy Region Southeast on Sept. 8, 2016
Jacksonville Officers Club
Mustin Road, Bldg. 10
NAS Jacksonville, FL 32212
904-542-5810

Commander, Navy Region Northwest on Sept. 20, 2016
Bangor Plaza
2720 Ohio St.
Naval Base Kitsap - Bangor
Silverdale, WA 98315
360-315-2645



Eight wounded warriors and caregivers shared testimonials at the inaugural Navy Region Mid-Atlantic NWW Family Symposium, June 3, at the Holiday Inn Oceanside in Virginia Beach, Va.

A LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP



In June, 38 athletes who are enrolled in our Adaptive Sports Program participated in the 2016 DoD Warrior Games at the U.S. Military Academy in

West Point, N.Y., where Team Navy took home a total of 65 medals, surpassing last year’s record-breaking 43 medals. As impressive as this is, the Warrior Games are about more than medals. The Games also honor the roles of our families and caregivers in their wounded warrior’s recovery. Throughout the competition, I witnessed countless moments where our caregivers and families selflessly supported our athletes, cheering them on through long days and sleepless nights.

During the closing ceremony of the DoD Warrior Games on June 21, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Franklin Parker announced that the Navy will host the 2017 DoD Warrior Games in Chicago next June. This will be the first time in its eight-year history that the Games will be hosted outside a military installation or U.S. Olympic training facility, and we are excited to be partnering with the City of Chicago. To learn more about the DoD Warrior Games, visit <http://warriorgames.dodlive.mil/>.

Also, as we recognize National Suicide Prevention Month in September, please take a moment to view this important [video](#) introducing the “Every Sailor, Every Day” message. This call to action implores Sailors, leaders and families to strengthen their connections with one another and “break the code of silence” when it comes to discussions and actions that may prevent suicide.

Sincerely,
Capt. Brent Breining
NWW Director

CAREGIVER HIGHLIGHTS - HEAR DIRECTLY FROM OUR NON-MEDICAL ATTENDANTS



Retired Navy Fire Controlman 3rd Class Jason Reyes poses with his gold medal at the 2016 Invictus wheelchair basketball games along side his family and NWW Charitable Resource Coordinator Dario Santana at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney Resort, Orlando, Fla.

2016 Invictus Games

The following thoughts were shared by Janet Reyes, NWW caregiver at the 2016 Invictus Games in Orlando: *“Adaptive sports brought our family closer. When our children see their father in a wheelchair, being active and still competing, they know they can do anything. As a military caregiver, you need to know that things are different now, but you will find your new normal. Always be there, give love and be supportive. You are not in front, never behind, always beside.”*

2016 DoD Warrior Games

The 2016 Warrior Games, held at the United States Military Academy June 15-21, was an opportunity for Russel Field to spend Father’s Day with his son, Chance, who competed in the Games: *“Thanks to adaptive sports for giving me my son back, and the reason that is, is that they gave him Team Navy. There was a void in his life. He is such a family man, it is not even funny. There was a void because he wanted to finish his Navy career, and now he gets to enjoy camaraderie with the Navy again. That means so much to him, and seeing him happy means the world to me.”*

Russel Field and his son Navy wounded warrior Chance Field attended the 2016 Warrior Games Family Program Celebration Dinner at Hilton Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey, June 14.



Lynette Johnson, mother of Team Navy participant Abbie Johnson, summed up the accomplishments of the athletes: *“Some people (like me) say, ‘I can’t do that.’ These athletes say, ‘Just watch me. I can!’ I am so humbled to be in their presence! I am so proud of my daughter and consider these people to be a greater part of our family. Thank you for allowing me to participate in this wonderful event. Everyone did an outstanding job.”*

NAVY GOLD STAR

The mission of NWW is to coordinate the non-medical care of seriously wounded, ill and injured Sailors and Coast Guardsmen, their families and caregivers. Through proactive leadership, the program provides individually-tailored assistance designed to optimize the success of shipmates’ recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration activities. Sadly, not every active-duty service member recovers; however, surviving family members are not forgotten. The Navy Gold Star Program’s primary focus and mission is to provide an unprecedented level of service and commitment to

those surviving family members. Each survivor is assigned an installation Navy Gold Star coordinator (INGSC) who serves as long-term support and is responsible for service delivery. INGSCs provide, either directly or through appropriate professional resources, support groups, life skills education, assistance in managing applicable life-long benefits, transition milestones, and referrals to counseling resources. The Navy Gold Star Program continues to educate both military members and communities on what it means to be a Gold Star family, honors Gold Star families by hosting events that pay tribute to the fallen, and provides surviving family members with opportunities to connect with one another.

For more information on events in your area or to find the nearest Navy Gold Star coordinator, please visit www.facebook.com/navygoldstar or www.navygoldstar.com or call 1-888-509-8759.



MONTHLY AWARENESS

August is Immunization Awareness Month.

It’s important to get your children up to date with their immunizations before school starts, but don’t forget that people of all ages can get shots to protect them from serious diseases. Check out these sites and talk to your physician:

Children 6 and under: http://www2a.cdc.gov/nip/kidstuff/newscheduler_le/

Teenagers and adults: <http://www2.cdc.gov/nip/adultImmSched/>

Adults: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/adult/adult-schedule-easy-read.pdf>

Immunizations and pregnancy: http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/downloads/f_preg_chart.pdf

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.

For more information and resources regarding this important subject, please visit www.suicide.navy.mil. The Life is Worth Living Lifeline is 1-800-273-TALK (8255, option1). Remember that the Navy’s call to action is Ask, Care, Treat (ACT), to keep the door open for lifesaving intervention. Review the facts and warning signs, build resilience with the protective factors listed on the website, and seek help – it is available 24/7.

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, suicide most often occurs when stressors exceed current coping abilities and it is the leading cause of death, yet it is preventable. Look for the warning signs and listen to what the person says or observe what they do. Certain risk factors can also increase the chance that a person may try to take their life. For additional information, visit: <http://afsp.org/about-suicide/>.