



MEDIA ADVISORY

May 10, 2011

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Army Utilizes Adaptive Sports in Wounded Warriors' Recovery, Including Annual Warrior Games Competition at the Olympic Training Center

Alexandria, VA – From May 16-21, 2011, more than 200 wounded, ill and injured athletes from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force and Special Operations Command will compete for gold in seven sports. The competition is hosted by the U.S. Olympic Committee's Paralympic Military Program in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Warrior Games is a joint endeavor between the U.S. Olympic Committee and the U.S. Department of Defense that was created to elevate and emphasize the role of athletics in the recovery of wounded, ill and injured service members.

"Adaptive sports play a critical role in allowing our wounded, ill and injured soldiers to achieve their physical goals and build the confidence essential for success in the next phase of their lives, whether they return to the force or move on to civilian life," stated Brig. Gen. Darryl Williams, commander of the Warrior Transition Command. "Warrior Games is an important element of the Army's Warrior Care and Transition Program. We want to make sure soldiers heal in all dimensions of life—we focus on physical fitness just as much as career, emotional, social, spiritual and family goals."

Warrior Games athletes will compete for gold in shooting, swimming, archery, sitting volleyball, cycling, track and field and wheelchair basketball. In addition to winners in each event, there will be an "Ultimate Warrior" competition in a pentathlon format. The services will also compete for the Chairman's Cup, which will be awarded through a point system based on medals won and number of competitors. Each athlete will participate in one of the following injury categories: amputations, spinal cord injuries, visual impairment, traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder (including cerebral palsy and stroke).

Most of the Army athletes will represent the 29 Warrior Transition Units (WTU) around the country where wounded, ill, and injured soldiers requiring at least six months of complex medical care are assigned for treatment and recovery. At these units, Soldiers have one mission: to heal and prepare for transition. Each soldier develops a personalized comprehensive transition plan with short- and long-term goals in six domains: physical, social, spiritual, emotional, family, and career. In coordination with the Paralympic Military Program, physical therapists and medical providers actively look for ways to incorporate adaptive sports into soldiers' treatment and recovery plans. Currently, 9.7% of Soldiers assigned to WTUs were wounded in combat; however, 87% previously served in combat at some point in their Army careers.

WHO:

- Brig. Gen. Daryl Williams, Assistant Surgeon General and Warrior Transition Command
- Capt. Elizabeth Merwin, breast cancer patient; cyclist (Ft. Campbell, KY)
- Sgt. 1st Class Landon Ranker, sustained TBI in combat; Ultimate Champion candidate (Ft. Campbell, KY)
- Sgt. (ret.) Robbie Gaupp, shattered shoulder on border patrol; track; second Warrior Games (Ft. Hood, TX)

WHAT: Warrior Games; Interview opportunities; Broadcast quality B-roll footage and public service announcement

WHEN: Monday, May 16, 10:30am

WHERE: U.S. Olympic Training Center, Dirks Conference Room
Check in at Visitors' Center, One East Boulder Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80909

RSVP: Emily Oehler (oehler_emily@bah.com, 703-801-7790). All media must register for media credentials.

Warrior Transition Command (WTC) is a major subordinate command under the U.S. Army Medical Command that provides oversight for the Army's Warrior Care and Transition Program. To learn more, visit www.WTC.army.mil or follow the event on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/armyWTC> and #warriorgames.

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