

# Wounded Warrior Program

Contributed by RANGITSCH Joseph Francis  
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Following is an e-mail from the Class of 58 regarding their Wounded Warrior Program at Walter Reed:

Class Leaders,

We have an urgent need for more volunteers in our Wounded Warrior Program. Despite what you've heard about the Army responding to criticism of its handling of these heroic young soldiers, much more is still needed. That's where we come in. Please read the information below.

Palmer McGrew, Ex Com Chairman, '58

The West Point Wounded Warriors Program was founded at Walter Reed approximately three years ago by the CI of 58 with the purpose of mentoring Wounded Warriors to achieve a successful meaningful and professional life within three to five year timeframe after being wounded. This includes a Follow-On Mentor Program for the Wounded Warriors after leaving Walter Reed and going home with support and benefits coming from the VA. and Montgomery GI Bill. Because of the need, the Program has grown and taken on a life of its' own as the Classes of 56, 59, 60, 61, 63, 80 and 84 as well as the USAFA Academy CI of 64 have joined ranks with 58 in providing approximately 70 one on one mentors in the Washington Area.

The one-on-one mentors, normally combat veterans, bond with the Wounded Warrior in a surrogate father relationship and assist the wounded soldier and marine, both male and female, to set and achieve objectives related to an academic or professional education, internships, jobs and the VA and social security disability benefits. The mentors operate as a team as the need arises. An educational counselor, a professional aptitude assessor and counselor, a psychologist consultant, an orthopedic surgeon consultant, a lawyer and a combat surgeon are readily available and can be called upon for assistance.

Most all of those mentoring are West Point graduates who have volunteered their services. The Program is fully supported by the Walter Reed Staff, the Wounded Warrior Brigade at Walter Reed, units from which the Warriors came such as the 101st and 82nd Abn and the 10th Mtn Divs, reserves and National Guard as well as several higher level staff elements in the Army and DoD.

Since there are approximately 350 Wounded Warriors in outpatient status at Walter Reed and the Program has only approximately 110 of these under one-on-one mentorship at the present time, the Program has need of other classes to join the effort to furnish mentors for those Wounded Warriors at Walter Reed and for volunteers around the country to be follow-on mentors, when a Wounded Warrior returns home. Normally WP classes join as a cell with a class leader being identified. The class then asks for volunteers and the volunteers are trained and oriented by the Program Leadership Team. For the DC volunteer, this consists of a two hour session held in the Washington area. Mentors then select Wounded Warriors from interview information furnished by the Program. Whenever possible mentors are selected and matched based on mutual interests with the Warrior such as professional or academic interest, units served in religion, athletic interests, hobbies or such varied interests a car racing or fly fishing.

What are the rewards for you as a mentor? Ask any mentor and he or she will tell you that it is the overwhelming self-satisfaction and gratification that comes from helping a Wounded Warrior back to a meaning successful productive life. You will find that the Wounded Warriors have very positive attitudes and are very motivated to help themselves. "Cannot do" is not in their vocabulary and if told to them, it incites them only more to "I can and will do it". This Program is about bonding, being a coach and surrogate father, mentoring the Wounded Warrior to reinforce the "I can do it" by assisting in planning the goals and achieving them as a partner.

For classes interesting in volunteering for the Walter Reed DC area Program, please contact Lee Miller at [mlmiller58@comcast.net](mailto:mlmiller58@comcast.net) ., Phone 301-601-2733 H or W 301-295-7159. For Classes interested in volunteering for the Follow-On Mentor Program and assisting in building a database of volunteer mentors for Wounded Warriors once they go home, please contact Bob Tredway at [bobtredway@aol.com](mailto:bobtredway@aol.com) < <<mailto:bobtredway@aol.com>>

PH: 202-484-2981.