



# WTU/AW2 Connection

June 2014

CG Corner

**CG Corner**

CSM Corner

**By: Thomas D. Webb, Deputy to the Commander**

AW2 Update

This summer is an exciting time for the Army Warrior Care and Transition Program (WCTP). We're welcoming new leadership at the Warrior Transition Command, celebrating the Army's 239th Birthday, cheering for the Soldiers competing at the 2014 U.S. Army Warrior Trials and standing up the 13 Community Care Units (CCUs).



*Mr. Thomas D. Webb  
Deputy to the Commander  
Warrior Transition Command*

AW2 Staff Story

Adaptive Reconditioning Update

**New WTC Leadership – COL Christopher R. Toner**

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Later this summer, COL Christopher R. Toner will arrive to lead the Warrior Transition Command and overall WCTP. COL Toner is currently serving as the Chief of Staff, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell, Kentucky. With nearly 27 years of service as an Army officer, this decorated leader is well positioned to come into the Warrior Transition Command and understand the needs of wounded, ill and injured Soldiers representing all ranks and all components of the Army. His leadership will guide us into the next chapter of the Warrior Care and Transition Program, ensuring we meet the needs of each Soldier and Cadre member, and I look forward to welcoming him on board in a few weeks.

WTC Communications Update

**Warrior Trials and Adaptive Reconditioning**

This month, more than 100 wounded, ill and injured athletes representing the Army, Marine Corps, and Air Force will compete at the 2014 U.S. Army Warrior Trials at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. For the Army, this new competition will serve as the qualifying round for the Warrior Games team, and athletes will compete in seven sports: archery, cycling, shooting, sitting volleyball, swimming, track and field and wheelchair basketball. Like Warrior Games, athletes at the Warrior Trials must each compete in at least two sports.

Adaptive reconditioning is about much more than just Warrior Trials and Warrior Games. Adaptive reconditioning includes the physical activities that wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Veterans

participate in regularly to support their recovery. Benefits of these activities and exercises include increasing muscle strength, but also directly correlate to a healthier emotional outlook. Adaptive sports and reconditioning are linked to:

- Less stress
- Reduced dependency on pain and depression medication
- Fewer secondary medical conditions (i.e., diabetes, hypertension)
- Higher achievement in education and employment
- Increased lean muscle
- Increased self-confidence
- Increased mobility
- Decreased body weight and fat
- Building relationships with others
- Learning new life skills to assist with transition

Adaptive reconditioning begins in the Warrior Transition Unit (WTU). The Soldier's entire interdisciplinary team collaborates and integrates these activities into all six domains of the individual's Comprehensive Transition Plan (CTP): social, physical, emotional, spiritual, Family and career. Adaptive reconditioning also naturally ties back into the Performance Triad by benefiting sleep, activity and nutrition. I encourage all WTU Soldiers to participate in an adaptive reconditioning activity and all WTU Cadre to encourage their Soldiers in this endeavor.

Join me in a "HOOAH" for participating Army athletes, and check in with WTC throughout this month for updates from the 2014 U.S. Army Warrior Trials. Go Army!

## CSM Corner

### CSM Corner

**By: Matthew T. Brady, Command Sergeant Major**

I traded Washington State for Washington D.C., and joined the dynamic team at the Warrior Transition Command (WTC) as Command Sergeant Major at the end of March, just as the U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2) kicked off its 10th Anniversary commemoration. I was impressed before I came on board, but even more so after I saw firsthand the accomplishments that AW2 made in just 10 years. WTC's and AW2's dedicated staff members truly are making great strides in improving the lives of our nation's wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Veterans, and I am excited to be counted among them.



*CSM Matthew T. Brady,  
Warrior Transition Command*

As the AW2 10th Anniversary comes to a close, I know that I will remain inspired by this program's decade of impact. There is still work to be done, and despite Washington D.C.'s much muggier climate, I look forward to a busy summer. We at WTC are gearing up

to host the U.S. Army Warrior Trials—the first competition of its kind in Warrior Games’ four-year history—to determine who will participate in the fall Games. About 70 Army athletes will join Marine Corps and Air Force service members at the historic West Point campus to compete in archery, cycling, shooting, sitting volleyball, track and field and wheelchair basketball games. Forty Army athletes will move on to the September Warrior Games.

Of course when we talk about the Army Warrior Trials and Warrior Games, we must also talk about adaptive reconditioning—the physical activities that wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Veterans participate in regularly to support their recovery. Benefits of these activities and exercises include increasing muscle strength, but also directly correlate to a healthier emotional outlook. The Soldier’s entire Interdisciplinary Team collaborates and integrates these activities into all six domains of the individual’s Comprehensive Transition Plan (CTP): social, physical, spiritual, Family, career and emotional. Adaptive reconditioning also naturally ties back into the Performance Triad by emphasizing sleep, activity and nutrition.

I am thrilled to be a part of WTC at this exciting time for the command. I look forward to continuing to work with this fantastic team of Soldiers, civilians and contractors, and to continue working on ways to improve the lives of our nation’s wounded, ill and injured service members.

## AW2 Update

### AW2 Update

**By: Johnny K. Davis, Director, AW2**

During my time here as AW2 Director, I have had the privilege of working with a dedicated team who continue to serve the mission of providing the best possible care to our nation’s most severely wounded, ill and injured Soldiers, Veterans, their Caregivers and Families. The staff and the program itself draw off the strength and resiliency of these Soldiers, and I am extremely proud to have gotten to know and work with this incredible team.



*COL Johnny K. Davis,  
Director of the U.S. Army  
Wounded Warrior Program*

As I reflect on my time at AW2, I am amazed at all we have accomplished:

- Provided personalized support to more than 20,000 severely wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Veterans
- Maintained a team of 205 AW2 Advocates who help AW2 Soldiers, Veterans, Families and Caregivers navigate complex government systems and educate them on available benefits and resources
- Raising awareness of AW2 through media and social media, and sharing Soldier stories with the public, including our 10th Anniversary Commemoration
- Including 15 SMEs in the Advocate Support Branch to help support AW2

- Planned regional trainings to ensure our staff have the updated skills and knowledge to provide the best support to every Soldier and Veteran enrolled in our program for later this year

As we prepare for the Army Warrior Trials this month, we take note of adaptive reconditioning—the physical activities that wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Veterans participate in regularly to support their recovery. Benefits of these activities and exercises include increasing muscle strength, but also directly correlate to a healthier emotional outlook. I wish the best of luck to every athlete competing at the U.S. Army Warrior Trials this month and at the Warrior Games this fall.

AW2 continues to gain momentum,. I know that it will continue to positively impact the lives of service members who inspire us with their strength and resilience. I am confident that AW2 will continue to fulfill the Army's sacred obligation of caring for the most severely wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Veterans. I am honored to have served this important post and am humbled to have worked with such a dedicated team of professionals.

As I depart AW2, I charge the AW2 Advocates and ASB SMEs to continue doing the great work they have been doing since this program started in 2004. Their tireless efforts help our wounded, ill and injured Soldiers, Veterans and their Caregivers and Families navigate complicated government systems and get the guidance they need to recover and rehabilitate.

Finally, I would like to thank each and every Soldier, Veteran and their Families and Caregivers. I will continue to draw on your strength, resilience and positivity, and will take the inspiration you gave me as I move on from AW2.

## AW2 Staff Story

### **Career Coordinator, U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2)**

By Caitlin Morrison, WTC Communications Division

Roberta Berry began her career with the [U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program \(AW2\)](#) in August 2005 as a Soldier Family Management Specialist (today called an [AW2 Advocate](#)). During this time, there were only 16 Advocates, each handling 50-75 Soldiers. Berry's Soldiers were located in Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, Colorado, and North and South Dakota. She remembers how Soldiers had to travel to the major Army hospitals in San Antonio and Washington, D.C. for treatment because [Warrior Transition Units \(WTUs\)](#) were not yet created.

"AW2 Advocates today have the Advocate Support Branch, which is a team of subject matter experts who specialize in finance, VA resources, education and more. Back then, though, we were all learning together how to support the wounded, ill and injured," Berry explained. "We were the trailblazers, building lasting relationships with organizations that Advocates can use now."

In 2006, the Army added 30 AW2 Advocates to the team to provide more individualized and local support to AW2 Soldiers, Veterans and

Families. Today there are more than 200 AW2 Advocates across the country at WTUs, Army facilities and VA locations.

In May 2008, Berry transitioned to the AW2 Career and Education Section at AW2, part of the Advocate Support Branch, where she ensures AW2 Soldiers, Veterans, Families and Caregivers have the resources they need to set and pursue career and education goals. Berry works directly with employers implementing the AW2 expedited application process for federal positions. She and her colleagues created the job readiness assessment, which AW2 Advocates administer to their Soldiers upon entry to the program. Recently, Berry worked with AW2 Advocates to ensure that Soldiers and Veterans can have face to face or virtual interviews with participating employers at the [Department of the Navy Fourth Annual Wounded Warrior Hiring and Support Conference](#).

Involved in AW2 from almost the very beginning, Berry has seen many of the Soldiers and Veterans on her caseload transition out of the medical treatment phase and become self-sufficient over the years. Many current policies for wounded warriors also reflect the practices Berry and the early AW2 Advocates utilized before policies were created, such as the expedited referral packet.

The driving force behind Berry's decision to work with AW2 is Family. Her father retired from the Army after serving in Vietnam, so she can relate to the younger kids in AW2 Families whose parents are fighting overseas today. Berry promised her father that she would do the best she could to take care of other Soldiers just like him.

"We were kids during Vietnam and now we're adults and taking care of the next generation," said Berry. Her husband also served in the Navy and is retired."

## Adaptive Reconditioning Update

### Adaptive Reconditioning Efforts

Originally called "adaptive sports," adaptive reconditioning has evolved to encompass much more than competitive activities. Wounded, ill or injured Soldiers recovering at Warrior Transition Units (WTUs) may have a lot of different questions on their mind. Adaptive reconditioning serves as a way for these transitioning Soldiers to remain physically fit, and helps the individual heal by connecting physical activity back to the six domains of a Soldier's Comprehensive Transition Plan (CTP): physical, emotional, social, spiritual, Family and career. Adaptive reconditioning activities support the Army's Performance Triad by encouraging wounded, ill and injured Soldiers to get the right sleep, eat the right food and have the right physical fitness program.

The competitive spirit of a Soldier lends itself naturally to sports; however, being medically cleared to participate is different than being medically cleared to compete. While competitive swimming requires different skills, anyone can get out and swim. This concept can have negative physical and emotional effects on recovering Soldiers, and is part of why adaptive reconditioning is so important. The Soldier adapts to the sport, and can then use those new skills

as a motivator. As Warrior Trials and Warrior Games approach, we remember that while priorities can change for athletes, these events motivate Soldiers and they prove to themselves that they can do things they thought they could never do.

Non-traditional adaptive reconditioning activities also have beneficial elements. Therapeutic riding has no competitive aspect, but many find it therapeutic from a behavioral therapy standpoint. Cycling is another example. It is not a race—anyone can do it. Cooking, gardening and music are other examples of the various non-traditional adaptive reconditioning activities that many recovering Soldiers enjoy.

WTC's Adaptive Reconditioning Branch wishes good luck to all athletes competing in this month's Warrior Trials and September's Warrior Games.

## CSN Update

### Community Support Network Update

By: LuAnn Georgia, Program Manager, CSN

The Warrior Transition Command (WTC) Community Support Network (CSN) is an easy access, on-line tool that provides a way for wounded, ill, and injured (WII) Soldiers, Veterans, their Families, and Caregivers, and those who assist them to find and connect with organizations local to their area. These organizations offer products and services that are *free, deeply discounted, or covered by insurance.*

The following CSN member organizations support [adaptive reconditioning](#) activities:

- AccesSportAmerica
- Adopt a Soldier Platoon, Inc
- Air Warrior Courage Foundation
- The American Legion
- Boulder Crest Retreat for Military and Veteran Wellness
- Brain Injury Association of Washington
- Camp Hope
- Capital Region Nordic Alliance
- Challenged Athletes Foundation-Operation Rebound Program
- Champions Made From Adversity
- Children of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund, Inc.
- disAbility Resource Center
- Dive Pirates Foundation
- Dream Foundation
- Freedom Alliance
- Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors
- Heroes on the Water
- Hope for the Warriors®
- Lakeshore Foundation
- Lone Survivor Foundation
- Meet Yourself Yoga Therapy
- Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) International
- Rainier Therapeutic Riding
- The Silver Star Families of America

- Ski Apache Disabled Skiers Program
- Spaulding Adaptive Sport Centers
- Two Top Mountain Adaptive Sports Foundation - A Chapter of Disabled Sports USA
- VETMotorsports
- Warfighter Sports - a Subsidiary of Disabled Sports USA
- Wintergreen Adaptive Sports-A chapter of Disabled Sports USA
- World T.E.A.M. Sports

For a full list of all the organizations involved in the CSN, please visit:  
[www.WTC.army.mil/modules/support%20network/c1\\_completelist.html](http://www.WTC.army.mil/modules/support%20network/c1_completelist.html)

If you know of someone who is in search of or could benefit from any of these products or services; or if you are aware of any organizations that may be a good fit for the CSN, please refer them to:

[www.WTC.army.mil/modules/support%20network/index.html](http://www.WTC.army.mil/modules/support%20network/index.html)

## Policy Update

### Policy Update

The Warrior Transition Command continues to advance the progress of AR 40-xx, Warrior Care and Transition Policy (WCTP), which will consolidate many aspects of the WCTP. It continues in Office of the Judge Advocate General legal (OTJAG) review. Submission to OTJAG for legal review was ahead of schedule. G3 Policy, Plans and Procedures (PPP) will complete the adjudication and incorporate comments from the field for the Soldiers and Leaders Guide in June with the goal of publishing the Guide electronically by the end of that month. The department scrubbed the Cadre Collaboration portal for out of date MEDCOM policies and replaced them, and will continue to scrub portals for out of date documents. All WTC personnel are encouraged to report any out of date documents on any of our portals so we can ensure WCTP personnel have access to the most up to date information.

## WTC Communications Update

### WTC Communications Update

By Anna Eisenberg, WTC Communications Division

The U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2) commemorated its 10th Anniversary this spring. To highlight AW2's decade of impact and educate people on the value of this unique program, AW2 and WTC Communications launched a communications campaign.



#### Website

WTC communications created a special AW2 10th Anniversary URL to host all of the content related to the commemoration. This included nine stories featuring AW2 Soldiers, and four featuring AW2 staff members. Read how AW2 impacted their lives and learn more about the program's growth:

[www.WTC.army.mil/announcements/AW2\\_10th\\_Anniversary.html](http://www.WTC.army.mil/announcements/AW2_10th_Anniversary.html)

### *Public Engagement Day*

AW2 headed to the Pentagon on April 22 to host a Public Engagement Day. WTC Deputy to the Commander Mr. Webb and AW2 Director Col. Davis joined three AW2 Soldiers who traveled from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center to Boston just days after last year's tragic bombing to mentor victims. The group answered questions from the media, engaged with the public in a Facebook townhall and participated in a call with the Community Support Network.

Metrics from the Facebook Townhall include:

- Total reach during event: 1,000 people
- Comments/replies: 61
- Townhall "likes": 57
- WTC "likes" on the day of the event: 58
- WTC "likes" during that week: +289, +2100 percent above average

Coverage resulting from the event includes:

- More than 20 distinct news articles
- Total media circulation for articles: over 79,885,152
- Wrap-up blog post with all the details:  
<http://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil/2014/05/aw2-10th-anniversary-public-engagement-day/>

### *Social Media*

Soldiers, Veterans, and their Families and Caregivers showed WTC what resilience looks like by submitting photos to the "My Resilient Selfie" campaign on Facebook. WTC spotlighted these 49 self-portraits on the WTC Facebook page, giving the public an opportunity to comment, "like," and otherwise engage through social media. WTC also promoted the Soldier and staff stories on Facebook and Twitter. Check out all the photos, activities and posts on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ArmyWTC](http://www.facebook.com/ArmyWTC) or on Twitter at [@ArmyWTC](https://twitter.com/ArmyWTC).

To sum up the AW2 10th Anniversary commemoration, WTC highlighted AW2's long-serving staff members in a blog post. Get to know HR Specialist Charles Williams, AW2's first Advocate William Years, and hear from AW2 Career Coordinator Roberta Berry on how the program has evolved and reached nearly 20,000 Soldiers and Veterans worldwide. Read the post here: <http://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil/2014/05/a-warrior-spirit-looking-back-on-aw2s-decade-of-impact/>

### *Did You Know?*

We created five new "Did You Know" factsheets specifically related to AW2 to educate people on the program and how it supports severely wounded, ill and injured Soldiers, Veterans and their Families and Caregivers:

- AW2 Overview
- AW2 Advocates
- AW2 Career and Education
- AW2 Assistance with Pay and Financial Benefits

- AW2 Veterans Affairs (VA) Liaison and Resources

You can get to know AW2, and learn more about how in just one decade, the program impacted nearly 20,000 severely wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Veterans over the last decade:

[www.WTC.army.mil/announcements/AW2\\_10th\\_Anniversary.html](http://www.WTC.army.mil/announcements/AW2_10th_Anniversary.html)

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US Army Warrior Transition Command  
Wounded Soldier Family Hotline: 1-800-984-8523  
Online [www.WTC.army.mil](http://www.WTC.army.mil) Blog <https://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil>