

2014 ARMY WARRIOR GAMES ATHLETE

NAME

Michael Phillips

RANK

Captain

STATUS

Veteran

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Training in adaptive sports

FORMER WARRIOR TRANSITION UNIT

Warrior Transition Battalion,
Fort Benning, Georgia

HOMETOWN

Cullowhee, North Carolina

CURRENT LOCATION

Hamilton, Georgia

SCHOOL(S)

Cullowhee High School, North Carolina

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD),
Traumatic brain injury (TBI),
Spinal cord injury (SCI) with implant

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injuries sustained over multiple
deployments, 2009

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Shooting



Hanging on the wall next to the front door of retired Cpt. **Michael Phillips's** house are index cards that read, "Hang keys up" and "Empty pockets in the bowl." Another that says, "Feed Tiger," is taped by the coffee pot in the kitchen, a reminder to give his dog breakfast and dinner. Phillips has had trouble keeping track of things like that since sustaining multiple injuries on different deployments, ultimately culminating in a diagnosis of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and severe damage to his spinal cord and nerves.

"I knew I needed to find a way to get better so I could be an example for others," said Phillips. "I survived the war physically, but I have a responsibility to those who gave their lives in these conflicts to continue carrying on."

Phillips used this motivation at the Fort Benning Warrior Transition Battalion to adapt to what he calls his "new normal." Adaptive equipment alleviated the pain he felt while exercising, and he realized he could still be active and athletic. He continues to cycle and practices yoga in order to stay in tune with what his body needs. He engages in other adaptive reconditioning activities, as well, like gardening and hunting.

Crediting these activities and sports with helping him become an athlete again after being injured, Phillips' long-term plan is to develop an adaptive reconditioning program to work with local wounded warriors as they recover.

For now, Phillips is focusing on representing the Army team at the 2014 Warrior Games. "I thought that I would never be able to serve our great country again," said Phillips. "Words can't begin to explain how honored I feel to be able to represent the Army."



***"I WILL NOT BE DEFINED BY LIMITATIONS
THAT ARE PUT ON ME BY OTHER PEOPLE.
I AM DEFINED BY WHAT I CAN DO."***

