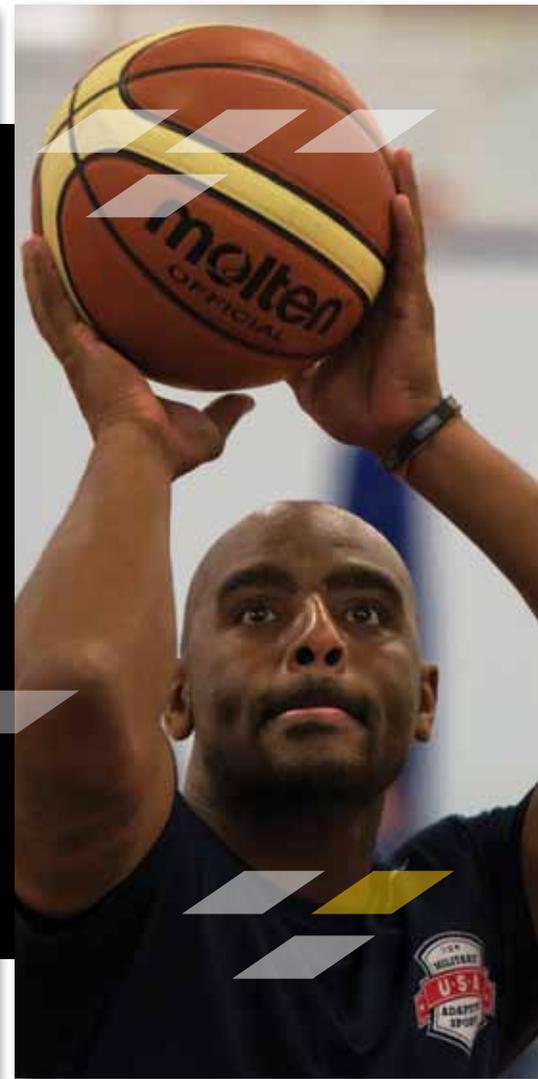


# 2016 INVICTUS GAMES

## ARMY ATHLETES



Prepared by:

**WARRIOR TRANSITION COMMAND**  
SOLDIER SUCCESS THROUGH FOCUSED COMMITMENT



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>THE INVICTUS STORY .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>SCHEDULE OF EVENTS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INVICTUS POEM .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>INVICTUS PLEDGE .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>INVICTUS GAMES ARMY ATHLETES .....</b>	<b>7</b>

# THE INVICTUS STORY

**M**ost of us will never know the full horrors of combat. Many Service men and women suffer life-changing injuries, both visible and invisible, while serving their countries. How do these men and women find the motivation to move on and not be defined by their injuries?



How can they be recognized for their achievements and not given sympathy? Prince Harry asked these questions. On a trip to the Warrior Games in the USA in 2013, he saw how the power of sport could help physically, psychologically, and socially. His mind was made up. London would host the inaugural Invictus Games, an international sporting event for wounded, ill, and injured Service men and women – both active duty and veteran.

The word “Invictus” means “unconquered.” It embodies the fighting spirit of the wounded, ill, and injured Service members and what these tenacious men and women can achieve, post injury. The Games harness the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and generate a wider understanding and respect for those whom serve their countries.

Invictus Games competitors are the men and women who have come face-to-face with the reality of making a sacrifice for their countries. They are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, sons, daughters, husbands and wives, who put their lives on the line and suffered life-changing injuries. These people are the embodiment of everything for which the Invictus Games stand. They have been tested and challenged, but they have not been overcome. They have proven they cannot be defeated. They have the willpower to persevere and conquer new heights. The 2014 Games shone a spotlight on the sacrifices these men and women made serving their country, and their unfailing drive to overcome. The Invictus Games London 2014 was about much more than just four days of sport; it captured hearts, challenged minds and changed lives.

## Invictus Games Orlando 2016

Fifteen nations are invited to participate in the 2016 Games, which will be held from May 8 – 12, 2016 at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. During that week, over 500 military competitors will take part in 10 sporting events as they are cheered on by thousands of family members, friends and spectators. They will compete not only in the spirit of cordial competition, but also in camaraderie among the competitors and nations.



President George W. Bush will serve as Honorary Chairman of Invictus Games 2016. Ken Fisher is Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the Games.

The George W. Bush Institute will conduct an international symposium at the Invictus Games Orlando 2016 on May 8, to discuss solutions aimed at helping returning servicemen and women improve outcomes for their transition back to civilian life.

The Invictus Games Orlando 2016 will shine a light on the holistic recovery and rehabilitation that occurs through sport for the wounded, ill, and injured Service men and women who participate in them. Though only 500, these men and women represent the tens of thousands of Service members around the globe who face the daily challenges from their wounds, illnesses, and injuries, both visible and invisible.

“The 2014 Games were just the beginning of the Invictus story. The competitors showed grit, determination and humor: an absolute refusal to be beaten or be defined by their injuries—the Invictus spirit was born. I can’t wait to see the American public supporting these inspirational men and women at the next games.”

~ Prince Harry

# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

## 8 MAY – 12 MAY, 2016

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### SUNDAY, MAY 8..... OPENING CEREMONY

### MONDAY, MAY 9

0800 – 1100 ..... POWERLIFTING FINALS

0830 – 1230 ..... CYCLING FINALS

1330 – 1630 ..... ROWING FINALS

1900 – 2200 ..... ARCHERY FINALS

### TUESDAY, MAY 10

0800 – 1300 ..... TRACK & FIELD FINALS

1400 – 1630 ..... SITTING VOLLEYBALL SEMI FINALS

1900 – 2130 ..... SITTING VOLLEYBALL GOLD & BRONZE MEDAL MATCHES

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 11

0800 – 1300 ..... SWIMMING FINALS

1400 – 1630 ..... WHEELCHAIR RUGBY SEMI FINALS

1630 – 1830 ..... WHEELCHAIR TENNIS FINALS

1930 – 2300 ..... WHEELCHAIR RUGBY GOLD & BRONZE MEDAL MATCHES

### THURSDAY, MAY 12

0800 – 1000 ..... WHEELCHAIR TENNIS FINALS

1030 – 1230 ..... WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL SEMI FINALS

1400 – 1600 ..... WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL GOLD & BRONZE MEDAL MATCHES  
EVENING CLOSING CEREMONY

**G**enerations have drawn on the words of William Ernest Henley's poem for strength during times of adversity. Henley was himself an amputee and the poem

reflects his long battle with illness. The title means "unconquered" and the 16 short lines of the poem encapsulate the unfailing human spirit, which is at the heart of the Invictus Games.

# "INVICTUS"

A Poem by William Ernest Henley

**Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.**

**In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.**

**Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.**

**It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.**

# INVICTUS PLEDGE

Your service sets an example  
Your bravery inspires me  
It is my honor now  
To support and give you courage  
To fight for you as you fought for us  
To keep your family close beside  
To take the steps you need to take



# I AM here for you

# **INVICTUS GAMES**

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## **ARMY ATHLETES**

## CPT William Reynolds (Veteran)



*"Invictus Games is a chance to represent my country proudly."*

**Current Location:**

*Bethesda, Maryland*



**MOS/Current Occupation:**

*Senior Consultant, Deloitte*

**Warrior Transition Unit:**

*Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Maryland*

**Hometown:**

*Rochester, New York*

**School(s):**

*United States Military Academy (BS); University of Rochester, New York (MPH, MBA)*

**Events training for:**

*Track, and Cycling*

**Injury or Illness:**

*Left leg amputation*

Retired U.S. Army Captain William Reynolds is no stranger to challenges. Reynolds lost his left leg due to an improvised explosive device during combat operations in Baghdad. He turned to adaptive reconditioning as a way to cope.

"Adaptive sports, especially cycling, played a prominent role in my recovery and rehabilitation process," he said. "Adaptive activities help to keep me mentally and physically fit so that I can focus on the more challenging aspects of life."

Following his two years of rehabilitation at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and medical retirement from the Army in 2007, Reynolds went back to school. In 2010, he earned a Masters of Business Administration and a Master's in Public Health from the University of Rochester, New York.

Reynolds, an collegiate gymnast at West Point from 1998 to 2002, ran competitively prior to sustaining his injury and would come to rely on adaptive sports during his recovery.

In 2011, Reynolds began racing as the captain of a four-cyclist (two para-cyclist) Race Across America team, which completed the race penalty free in seven days. He continued to race and train regionally in 2012 as a lower leg amputee cyclist before making his debut in the para-cycling realm in 2013 at the Greenville Para-Cycling competition.

Reynolds won two bronze medals in track and two bronze medals in cycling during the 2014 Invictus Games.

"Adaptive reconditioning has allowed me to regain confidence in my physical abilities and stature," he said.

Reynolds will represent Team United States during the 2016 Invictus Games.

He is currently a Senior Consultant with Deloitte.

## Ashley Anderson

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Active

### MOS

31E Internment Resettlement Specialist

### WTU

WTB Fort Riley, Kansas

### HOMETOWN

Winnebago, Minnesota

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Riley, Kansas

### SCHOOL(S)

Minnesota State University –  
Rasmussen College

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Herniated disc -  
Neurocardiogenic Syncope

### EVENT(S)

Swimming



Staff Sgt. Ashley Anderson has made it her mission to overcome whatever challenges life throws at her.

Her first challenge came after joining the Army Reserves in 2008 as a 31E Internment Resettlement Specialist. She deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in 2012 with

the 348th Military Police Company. A second deployment to Guantanamo occurred with the 339th Military Police Company.

The Winnebago, Minnesota native suffered a herniated disc while deployed and suffers from Neurocardiogenic Syncope, defined as a temporary loss of consciousness associated with a drop in arterial blood pressure, quickly followed by a slowed heart rate.

These conditions have not stopped Anderson's love of sports. During high school she excelled in multiple sports including basketball, track and field, volleyball and softball. She taught swimming and life guard skills during the summer months. Anderson competed as member of the Army's 2015 Warrior Games team and will compete in swimming during the 2016 Invictus Games.

"I love the water and its therapeutic value to me," said Anderson

But Anderson says participating in the Invictus Games is a personal challenge she yearns to achieve. "I look forward to meeting inspirational people, representing USA athletes, and challenging myself to overcoming all obstacles that help shape who I am," she said.

Anderson is currently assigned to B Company, Warrior Transition Battalion, Fort Riley, Kansas.

Her future plans include coaching and helping individuals overcome their physical challenges.



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**"I LOVE THE WATER AND ITS  
THERAPEUTIC VALUE TO ME."**

## Charles Armstead

### RANK

Sgt. 1st Class

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

19k Armor Crewman

### WTU

WTB Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Needville, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

Killeen, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

Needville High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Spinal cord injury from a gunshot wound

Right leg amputation

### EVENT(S)

Wheelchair basketball



Retired Sgt. 1st Class Charles Armstead describes himself as fiercely competitive.

“Without question, the thing that motivates me is competition. I don’t care what it is, where it is or who it’s against,” he said.

The Needville, Texas native has a long history of competing that began during

his high school days at Needville high school where Armstead played football, basketball, baseball and track.

The Army Veteran suffered a gunshot wound in Iraq which resulted in a spinal cord injury and the amputation of his right leg. These injuries would “temporarily sideline” Armstead.

During his recovery at Walter Reed National Medical Center, his competitive spirit emerged and he turned to adaptive sports to lift his spirits both mentally and physically.

“Participating in adaptive sports helped me take the focus off what you can’t do and direct it towards what you can do. It also builds confidence. I have witnessed firsthand the power that sports can have on people,” he said.

Armstead is currently focused on participating in the 2016 Invictus Games on the wheelchair basketball team.

“What I’m hoping to achieve this year is to just compete to the best of my ability for my country and make some lifelong friends through the art of competition,” Armstead said.

Armstead says the games are about so much more than sport.

“To think that I can be an inspiration to someone that may have just been injured and feels that there isn’t anything they can do anymore with their disability motivates me,” Armstead said. “I was once in those shoes and I might encourage someone else to work hard and be the next Invictus Games Athlete.”

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**“WHAT I’M HOPING TO ACHIEVE THIS YEAR IS TO JUST COMPETE TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY.”**

## Allan Armstrong

*(2015 Valor Games and the 2015 Paratriathlon National and World Championships)*

### RANK

Sgt. 1st Class

### STATUS

Active Duty

### MOS

25E Electromagnetic Spectrum Manager

### WTU

WTB Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Killeen, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Hood, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

Killeen Texas High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right leg amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

South Carolina, 2013

### EVENT(S)

Cycling/Swimming/Track



Sgt. 1st Class Allan Armstrong has a passion for adaptive sports.

He turned to several sporting events including swimming and track following a September 2013 vehicle collision while riding his motorcycle in South Carolina. A driver lost control of his vehicle, instantly

pinning Armstrong's leg between it and the motorcycle. He lost his right leg due to the injuries sustained.

"I knew my life would never be the same again," he said.

Armstrong recovered at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

His challenge became learning how to walk again.



The Killeen, Texas native says his intense therapy through adaptive sports and the love of his family gave him the emotional support he needed to reach this goal.

"Adaptive sports gave me the confidence to recover. It takes time to go through this process," he said. "Participating in sports like running pushes me to be the best. If I can run faster then I can walk faster," Armstrong added.

Armstrong participated in the 2014 Department of Defense Warrior Games competing in track, swimming and sitting volleyball. He has also competed in the 2015 Valor Games and the 2015 Paratriathlon National and World Championships.

"I am an athlete who proudly competes for my country and hopes to inspire my fellow wounded servicemen and women to get active and embrace the healing power of sport," Armstrong concluded.

The Electromagnetic Spectrum Manager hopes to medal at the Invictus Games in cycling, swimming and track.

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**"ADAPTIVE SPORTS GAVE ME THE CONFIDENCE TO RECOVER."**

## Robert Brown

*(Army World Class Athlete Program and U.S. Paralympic Team Member)*

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Active

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### WTU

WTB Walter Reed Military Medical Center, Maryland

### HOME STATE

Oklahoma

### CURRENT LOCATION

Moncks, South Carolina

### SCHOOL(S)

Virginia Military Institute

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Left leg above the knee amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq, 2006

### EVENT(S)

Track



Staff Sgt. Robert Brown treats running like a mission off the battlefield.

"I have a goal, site and then there's the execution," he said.

Growing up in South Carolina, Brown played many sports and ran track for two and a half years at the collegiate level

before joining the Army as an infantryman.

During a deployment to Iraq in 2006, Brown's life changed. He was wounded and suffered multiple gunshots to the hip. The bullets cut the sciatic nerve rendering the lower half of his leg without sensory or motor function. During his recovery at Walter Reed Army Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, in October of 2008, doctors amputated his leg above the knee.

"I went through a long depression between the injury and the amputation. I was in a dark place and becoming more and more frustrated," Brown said. He began participating in adaptive sports to aid in his recovery, calling it an essential part of his healing process.

"It gives you something to strive for and it definitely helps. Now I don't see myself any different than any other soldier," he said.

Brown now runs with a prosthetic leg, often running 10 miles a week as part of his exercise regime. Now a U.S. Paralympic athlete, the infantryman won a gold medal in the 100-meter para dash during the World Games in South Korea. He says participating in the 2016 Invictus Games is a tribute to his fellow soldiers he lost during his deployment.

"I'm doing it for the memory of those that didn't come back. The powers that be granted me another chance at life and I'm not going to waste it."

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**"IT GIVES YOU SOMETHING  
TO STRIVE FOR AND IT  
DEFINITELY HELPS."**

## Kelly Elmlinger

### RANK

Capt.

### STATUS

Active Duty

### MOS

66H Medical-Surgical Nurse

### WTU

WTB Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Attica, Ohio

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Sam Houston,  
San Antonio, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

BSN-UNC Chapel Hill, NC; MSN  
with an Education Certificate-  
University of Texas at Arlington,  
Texas

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Synovial Sarcoma, nerve  
damage, left forearm nerve  
impairment

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

2013

### EVENT(S)

Track/Swimming



For Capt. Kelly Elmlinger, sports has always played a pivotal role in her life. Throughout junior high school, high school and college, Elmlinger participated in several sports including track and basketball.

Diagnosed with Synovial Sarcoma in 2013, a rare form of cancer in her left lower leg

with permanent foot drop and nerve damage. She turned to adaptive reconditioning sports at the Warrior Transition Battalion, Fort Sam Houston to recover.

“Losing the ability to run and not being able to participate in athletics or any sort of physical activity while going through my illness and treatment process was very difficult for me,” Elmlinger said. “Adaptive sports and wheelchair racing have helped fill the void running meant to me. It’s made the greatest impact as it allows me to gain the same benefits running did for me. Without a doubt, adaptive sports has allowed me to physically and mentally overcome the hurdles associated with my illness and injury,” she added.

Elmlinger participated in the 2014 Invictus Games and says she’s looking forward to being back for the 2016 Invictus Games.

“Its supplied a renewed purpose and another goal and participating in this event helps me move forward in life,” she said. “I have lost friends in deployments and lost some to cancer. I keep their memory close to my heart and want to compete and live to my potential as a remembrance of those who are not able to be with us in life. I honor them by living life to the fullest,” she added.

The Attica, Ohio native also hopes to achieve another goal by participating in the Boston Marathon in the wheelchair division.

“It has been a life-long dream for me to run in this prestigious race. Having qualified as wheelchair athlete while overcoming many adversities makes participating in this race even more special.”

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**“ITS SUPPLIED A RENEWED PURPOSE AND ANOTHER GOAL AND PARTICIPATING IN THIS EVENT HELPS ME MOVE FORWARD IN LIFE.”**

## Rhoden Galloway

### RANK

Master Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

68W5F Combat Medic

### WTU

WTB Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

San Antonio, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

Joint Base San Antonio, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

Irving High School, Irving Texas,  
Wayland Baptist University, Texas

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Orthopedic injuries

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Multiple

### EVENT(S)

Swimming



Master Sgt. Rhoden Galloway considers himself one of adaptive sports biggest fans. The avid athlete, Galloway discovered the outlet while recovering at the Warrior Transition Battalion (WTB) at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Galloway sustained several orthopedic injuries incurred during multiple deployments.

He says participating in swimming helped him heal physically and emotionally.

"It kept me focused and engaged, giving me something to strive for while organizing my life," he said. "It curved the negative emotions through vigorous activity, increasing positive hormone levels."

The combat medic says the road to competition is paved with good intentions.

"It's not the gold, silver or bronze medal. It's the story leading up to those moments. It's the people you meet along the way," Galloway explained. "It's the hard work you put in, the blood sweat and tears. It's the life you live when you're getting ready for a one day short event."

The San Antonio native says he wants Soldiers to use adaptive sports as a building block for their own lives.

"Adaptive reconditioning helped me get my life back together and learn to set goals," he said. "I want to help wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Veterans achieve their own personal goals as they recover."

Galloway says adaptive sports and reconditioning activities inspired his commitment to helping others. He will continue to help others get their lives in order, when he returns to Fort Sam Houston following the Invictus Games.

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**"ADAPTIVE RECONDITIONING HELPED  
ME GET MY LIFE BACK TOGETHER."**

## Robbie Anzel-Joseph Gaupp

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

92F Petroleum Supply Specialist

### HOMETOWN

Gatesville, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

Gatesville, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

Gatesville High

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Shattered shoulder and arm

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Texas-Mexico border

### EVENT(S)

Track/Sitting Volleyball



Retired U.S. Army Sgt. Robbie Gaupp is a seasoned competitor. He's won several gold and silver medals in track and field during Warrior Games events, but for Gaupp, each medal was bittersweet.

While on assignment in the U.S. supporting Operation Jumpstart, Gaupp

shattered his right shoulder and arm assisting border patrol units along the Texas–Mexico border. He has since had two surgeries to repair the damage and regain some of his range of motion.

“When I was growing up, it was my dream to be in the Olympics,” said Gaupp, who ran track in high school and played semi-professional football in Brownsville, Texas. “My injury took me to a dark place in life,” he said. “I thought my life in sports was over and it had actually only begun.”

Gaupp says his road to recovery began with adaptive sports. He immersed himself in learning new athletic outlets including archery, sitting volleyball and air rifle.

“Therapists helped encourage and push me through my recovery. Adaptive sports gave me another chance to be an athlete when I thought I couldn't play anymore,” he said. “When I was active I would forget about my injury and worry more about the competition or my competitor. In that moment I would feel pain free,” Gaupp added.

For now, Gaupp is focused on the 2016 Invictus Games and inspiring others to do their very best.

“You don't have to give up just because you're injured,” Gaupp explained. “Everyone has a different injury, and we've learned to adapt. Just going out there and showing how much is possible can really inspire others. It's in our body's DNA to be the very best and fight for success.”

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**“ADAPTIVE SPORTS GAVE ME  
ANOTHER CHANCE TO BE  
AN ATHLETE.”**

# 2016 INVICTUS GAMES ARMY ATHLETES

## Randi Gavell

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

31B Military Police

### HOMETOWN

Grand Junction , Colorado

### CURRENT LOCATION

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

### SCHOOL(S)

Grand Junction High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Nerve damage, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI)

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq, 2006

### EVENT(S)

Swimming/Track



Retired Staff Sgt. Randi Gavell describes swimming as one of the most calming times in her life.

She shares and takes that passion with her as she looks forward to the 2016 Invictus Games. That passion is largely due in part for her love of adaptive sports.

“The water gives me peace and it’s a feeling I want to share with my fellow Soldiers who have been wounded. Some people get tunnel vision after they’ve been hurt,” she said. “Adaptive sports and other activities support emotional and physical health of our Soldiers and Veterans as they transition and adjust,” she added.

The Grand Junction, Colorado native is familiar with adjustment. She battles nerve damage, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injuries sustained while deployed in 2006 to Ramadi, Iraq.

But the Veteran has a message for those dealing with life’s setbacks and finding the path towards success.

“Facing injuries or disabilities will make you focus on what you can’t do, not what you can do,” she stated. Participating in adaptive sports will teach you how to do things a little different. You just have to find ways to do things a little differently. Greatness is within you,” she said.



Gavell has represented Team Army many times including garnering two gold medals in swimming and a silver in sitting volleyball during the 2010 and 2015 Warrior games competition.

She’s currently focused on participating and medaling at the Invictus Games in swimming and track.

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**“FACING INJURIES OR DISABILITIES WILL MAKE YOU FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN’T DO, NOT WHAT YOU CAN DO.”**

# 2016 INVICTUS GAMES ARMY ATHLETES

## Robert Green

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

74D; Chemical Operations  
Specialist

### HOMETOWN

San Antonio, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

San Antonio, Texas

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Spinal cord injury,  
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder  
(PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injuries  
(TBI), shoulders, hips

### EVENT(S)

Archery/Field



Staff Sgt. Robert Green is a seasoned athlete, who's been pushing himself to the limit for as long as he can remember. In high school, Green played basketball, baseball and football. His athletic prowess allowed him to play semi-pro football with several different teams including the San

Antonio Thunder, Texas Mavericks and the South Texas Generals.

Green brought that same determination and commitment to adaptive sports. After suffering multiple injuries during deployment, adaptive sports became the center of his recovery.

"Adaptive sports helped me get my confidence back. It helped me get to a place of new normal, my new 100 and to push forward. I want to reach and accomplish new goals," he said.

The San Antonio native competed in the 2015 Warrior Games, winning gold medals in shot-put, discus and sitting volleyball. During the Invictus Games, the Veteran says he's looking to medal in field and archery, however Green says it will be a team effort when he enters the gates to compete.



"I want to represent the USA in a way that brings great joy, honor, and respect. It's not about just me, it's about my brothers and sisters to my left and to my right; each one fighting a different battle of their own. I want my fellow athletes to get healthy and embrace the power of sport," he said.

Green says he's looking forward to being with his friends whom he considers his "second family" during the games while watching everyone accomplish goals they didn't think were possible.

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**"I WANT TO REPRESENT THE USA IN  
A WAY THAT BRINGS GREAT JOY,  
HONOR, AND RESPECT."**

## Colton Harms

**WITHDREW FROM  
COMPETITION**

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Army Reserves

### MOS

31B Military Police

### WTU

WTB Fort Riley, Kansas

### HOMETOWN

Britt, Iowa

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Riley, Kansas

### SCHOOL(S)

West Hancock High  
Waldorf College

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Left knee injury, torn meniscus

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2014

### EVENT(S)

Field/Archery



A seasoned athlete, Sgt. Colton Harms says it was curiosity that led him to try archery.

"I played football and wrestled and I always wanted to try archery. I picked up the bow in 2015 and the rest is history," he said.

In 2014, Harms served as a team leader while deployed with the 415th Military Police Detachment in Bagram, Afghanistan. A short time later he injured his knee, tearing his meniscus. He recovered at the Warrior Transition Battalion – Fort Riley where, he was introduced to adaptive sports including archery. Beyond the recovery, Harms says his time at the WTB brought about emotional healing as well as physical.

"It's a calming sport. There's such concentration and focus. You meet people that understand what you're going through," Harms said. "If you're having a bad day, they just lift your spirits. We push each other every day to be the very best and that's important."



The Britt, Iowa native will bond with other athletes at the Invictus Games as he hopes to bring home a gold medal in archery and field.

"It's an honor to represent my country and being with such inspiring people that are dealing with their disabilities is awesome," he said. "It teaches you that anything is possible and that's a good feeling."

---

**"IT TEACHES YOU THAT  
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE AND  
THAT'S A GOOD FEELING."**

## Sean Hook

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### WTU

WTU West Point, New York

### HOMETOWN

Tyrone, Pennsylvania

### CURRENT LOCATION

Summerville, South Carolina

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI)  
and Shoulder Injury

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq, 2009

### EVENT(S)

Archery/Field/Rowing



Army Veteran Sgt. Sean Hook says adaptive sports changed his life. During his deployment to Iraq in 2009, Hook was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED) on two different occasions. He sustained substantial injuries to his shoulder and a Traumatic Brain Injury. He said the injuries took their toll on him and his family.

"I would describe that time as though I was living in a shell. My life and my family was falling apart," Hook said.

His introduction to adaptive sports ignited a positive change and a determination to aid in his recovery.

"I truly feel that adaptive sports changed my life for the better and I am eternally grateful. "Sports gave me goals, helped me with my confidence and improved my focus," he said. "My family even saw the progression and the positive change it brought to me. There were also wonderful coaches around to help with my recovery."

That formula for success helped Hook make an impressive showing during Army Trials 2014.

He won four gold medals and participated in the 2014 Invictus games in London.

But bringing home medals is not at the center of Hook's focus, yet a reminder of where he's going.

"The adaptive program introduced me to sports that I never competed in before my injury. To represent my country is a reminder of how far I've come," Hook said.

During Army Trials 2016, the Tyrone, Pennsylvania native served as a coach during the discus event. At the Invictus Games, Hook hopes to medal in archery, field, and rowing.

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**"SPORTS GAVE ME GOALS"**

## Michael Kacer

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### WTU

WTB Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Throop, Pennsylvania

### CURRENT LOCATION

Carry, North Carolina

### SCHOOL(S)

Throop High, Carbondale,  
Area Jr. High

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Left above the elbow  
amputation, Traumatic Brain  
Injuries (TBI)

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2008

### EVENT(S)

Rowing /Swimming/Track/Field



After suffering a Traumatic Brain Injury and losing his left arm in an explosion in Iraq in 2008, Staff Sgt. Michael Kacer says his recovery period at the Warrior Transition Battalion at Walter Reed Army Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland helped him rebuild his life.

"I had lost so much self-esteem and self-confidence," he said. "I needed to heal physically, emotionally and mentally and being around other Soldiers and the staff helped me bond again with people and regain what I and lost. I used my resilience to overcome adversity."

The Throop, Pennsylvania native says sports have always been an essential outlet in his life.

His love for sports began in high school and continued as he participated in Warrior Games through the years. But along the way Kacer says he learned a very important lesson. "Competition means something different now," he explained. "I'm pushing myself and others to help the world not see a disability, but a person, a hope, a dream that anything is possible."

At the Invictus Games, Kacer will participate in swimming, rowing, and track and field.

The Army Veteran says he's looking beyond the Invictus Games toward another big goal.

"I would really like to reach Paralympic status and I'm going to push myself to accomplish this goal," he said. "I'm going to set a high bar, and live the most out of my life. I was given a today, when I didn't have the tomorrow, now I have to make the most of it."

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**"I WOULD REALLY LIKE TO REACH  
PARALYMPIC STATUS AND I'M  
GOING TO PUSH MYSELF TO  
ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL."**

## Chasity Kuczer

### RANK

Spc.

### STATUS

Army Reserves

### MOS

88P Railway  
Equipment Repairer

### WTU

WTB Fort Knox, Kentucky

### HOMETOWN

Pulaski, Wisconsin

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Knox, Kentucky

### SCHOOL(S)

Pulaski High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Bilateral labral tear and  
Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI)

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2008

### EVENT(S)

Archery/Air Rifle



Spc. Chasity Kuczer's love for the Army and participating in adaptive sports runs deep in her family. When she was "knee" deep, her mother introduced her to archery and she's been dedicated to the sport ever since.

"I am third generation Soldier and I've been shooting archery since the age of four. My

mom's love of the sport was passed onto me," Kuczer said.

Growing up in Pulaski, Wisconsin, she started shooting competitively and made an appearance at Nationals for archery, trap, skeet and sporting clays. She would turn to archery to help her heal after suffering a bilateral tear in her hips, resulting in two major surgeries on her left hip, which led to back problems, nerve damage and often debilitating pain.

"It's often a struggle to walk, but participating in less stressful sports at the Warrior Transition Unit, Fort Knox, such as archery, made the difference. I don't focus on pain. I step up to the line, focus and shoot," she said.

"The unit which focuses on adaptive sports opened up doors I can't even explain. People may see you as broken, but that doesn't mean I can't contribute to society. What doesn't kill you, only makes you stronger," she added.



The railway equipment repairer says her injuries have led her down a path to participating in less strenuous sports including swimming and hunting. She says she's proud to represent the U.S. at Invictus and has set participating in the Paralympic Games as one of her future goals.

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**"ADAPTIVE RECONDITIONING ALLOWED ME TO TAP INTO MY COMPETITIVE NATURE WHICH HELPED MY RECOVERY, PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY."**

# 2016 INVICTUS GAMES ARMY ATHLETES

## Katie Kuiper

### RANK

Sgt. 1st Class

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

35F Intelligence Analyst

### WTU

WTB Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

San Antonio, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

Joint Base San Antonio, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

Excelsior College, New York

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Gunshot wound to the head

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Miami, Florida, 2013

### EVENT(S)

Cycling/Track



Retired Sgt. 1st Class Katie Kuiper is a born optimist, who simply had one mission in life; to enlist in the Army. "I knew I wanted to do something for my country and something different," she said. "I really didn't know anyone that was in the Army, but I knew I was going to do this without question."

Kuiper began serving her country in 2003 when she enlisted in the Army. She deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in 2004 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, serving as a Watch Analyst with Joint Task Force-South.

In 2010, Kuiper was assigned to Headquarters, Southern Command in Miami, Florida supporting operations throughout South America, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Her optimism was put to the test in 2013 after sustaining injuries from a gunshot wound to the head.

Kuiper, who competed in the 2015 Warrior Games, credits the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Sam Houston and adaptive sports for keeping her focused and inspired.

"In the beginning it was me and now I see other people attending all those doctor appointments. You need something in between to go to, to aspire to," she said. "It was the reason my healing went so well, it's instrumental to my well-being."



At the Invictus Games Kuiper will focus on bringing home gold in cycling and track.

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**"I KNEW I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING FOR MY COUNTRY AND SOMETHING DIFFERENT."**

## Stefan LeRoy

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

19D Cavalry Scout

### WTU

WTB Walter Reed Military Medical Center, Maryland

### HOMETOWN

Santa Rosa, California

### CURRENT LOCATION

Jupiter, Florida

### SCHOOL(S)

Maria Carrillo High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Double leg amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2012

### EVENT(S)

Cycling/Sitting Volleyball/  
Swimming/Track/Field



As a Boy Scout and elementary school kid growing up in the San Francisco Bay area, Stefan LeRoy watched the attacks upon the Pentagon and World Trade Center unfold on America's East Coast. He knew then that the Army would be a part of his future.

Fast forward to Kandahar, Province, Afghanistan in 2012 when on patrol with his unit from the 82nd

Airborne Division that was subjected to numerous explosions. As he rushed to help carry a wounded Soldier to a medevac helicopter, LeRoy stepped on an improvised explosive device, losing both of his legs.

After being flown to Germany, LeRoy was then assigned to the Warrior Transition Unit at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, where adaptive reconditioning became what he calls his "bread and butter." Eventually, as his strength returned, he began participating in adaptive sports.

"Whenever I talk to an amputee the first thing they try to do is stand up," says LeRoy. "That's built into everyone. You get knocked down. You get back up. It's what you're supposed to do."

LeRoy praises adaptive sports in keeping him positive and in aiding his recovery. Hand cycling was a natural choice for him as his father is an avid cyclist. After his injuries, the two of them cycled together. LeRoy says, "He was able to do it with me, and that made me more dedicated than I would have been otherwise."

In addition to competing at Warrior Games, LeRoy has hand cycled through the Boston Marathon twice and has taken up competing using his running blades.



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**"YOU GET KNOCKED DOWN. YOU GET BACK UP. IT'S WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO."**

# 2016 INVICTUS GAMES ARMY ATHLETES

## Ryan Major

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### HOMETOWN

New Orleans, Louisiana

### CURRENT LOCATION

Towson, Maryland

### SCHOOL(S)

Towson High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Bilateral Amputation

### EVENT(S)

Field/Rowing/Wheelchair Rugby



Veteran Sgt. Ryan Major is very familiar with adversity.

After stepping on an improvised explosive device (IED), Major lost his right leg and right thumb from the explosion and later his left leg, ring and pinkie finger to a fungus. Major found himself in a very dark

place. The adaptive sports program at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center gave him a ray of light to move forward.

“By being around other Soldiers like me, it helped me understand the healing process and that I was not the only one,” Major said.

“Adaptive reconditioning allowed me to build my self-esteem and confidence and helped me be more open to try other adaptive reconditioning activities like cycling and swimming.”

One of those new activities was kayaking. Major spent most of 2014 practicing his love for the sport.

“Being out on the water can be the most freeing experience,” he said. “It helps with your sense of balance and focus. I will make this a lifetime endeavor.”

It’s not a surprise, with this enthusiasm, that rowing has become one of Major’s passions. He will be competing in it, as well as field events and wheelchair rugby, at the Invictus Games.

“It’s allowed me to build my self-esteem and confidence and helped me be more open to trying new activities. It has allowed me to remain active,” he said.

Despite his injuries, the Towson, Maryland native says he has no regrets about serving his country.

“Participating at the games will allow me to show my love for the military. It is such an honor to represent the Army and my country,” he said.

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**“PARTICIPATING AT THE GAMES  
WILL ALLOW ME TO SHOW MY LOVE  
FOR THE MILITARY.”**

## Ana Manciaz

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

98G Cryptologic Linguist

### WTU

Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Los Lunas, New Mexico

### CURRENT LOCATION

San Antonio, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

Los Lunas High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right below-knee amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

New Mexico, 2014

### EVENT(S)

Archery/Cycling/  
Swimming/Track



Veteran Ana Manciaz of Los Lunas, New Mexico lost her right leg during a motorcycle accident in 2014. The former sergeant and military intelligence team leader was assigned to Fort Sam Houston, Texas Warrior Transition Battalion, where she discovered adaptive sports.

"After losing my leg, I drew upon the Resilience that I learned through life and in the Army," said Manciaz. "This Resilience has become a positive force in my life. With the help of the military as well as non-profit rehabilitative sports programs, I have thrived as an amputee and have learned how to slow down, to be more patient with myself, and have become stronger both inside and out."

Manciaz seeks to become a force of positive change. As a competitor in cycling and swimming, in addition to track and archery, Manciaz is determined to lead by example. "Be the change you want to see," says Manciaz.

Growing up along the banks of the Rio Grande, just south of Albuquerque, Manciaz was concerned about the many limitations that she faced.

Though joining the Army was daunting, Manciaz felt it important to move away from her hometown. "Knowing my adventurous nature, I wanted to explore the outside world," Manciaz said. "However, I still wanted my basic needs to be met as well as have a sense of structure to my life. It was a gamble. Yes, I lost my leg, but yet I won!"

Manciaz plans to pursue a degree in recreational therapy to compliment her BA in psychology.

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**"AFTER LOSING MY LEG, I DREW UPON THE RESILIENCE THAT I LEARNED THROUGH LIFE AND IN THE ARMY."**

## Elizabeth Marks

*(Army World Class Athlete Program and U.S. Paralympic Team member)*

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Active Duty

### MOS

68W Combat Medic

### WTU

Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Prescott Valley, Arizona

### CURRENT LOCATION

Colorado Springs, Colorado

### SCHOOL(S)

Kaplan University

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Bilateral hip injuries

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq, 2010

### EVENT(S)

Swimming



Elizabeth (Wasil) Marks confides that she was not particularly athletic as a child. Today, however, she has emerged as a leading adaptive sports athlete.

Deploying to Iraq in 2009, the Army medic followed in the footsteps of her father who served in Vietnam as a Marine forty

years earlier.

In 2010, Marks was injured. She suffered bilateral hip injuries that required three operations to allow her to regain her ability to walk. As part of Mark's therapy at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Warrior Transition Battalion she took up swimming. Like her other athletic undertakings, she was but a novice swimmer.

Exhibiting great determination, however, Marks eventually earned her way into the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program, not only as its first female swimmer, but also as its first Paralympian swimmer.

As with most adaptive sports athletes, Marks is driven to try other activities. She has also taken up competing in track and field, winning a gold medal in shot put at the 2015 Conseil International du Sport Militaire (CISM) World Games in Korea.

"I figure I better push myself as hard as I can, and we'll find out what I can and can't do," says Marks.

Marks continues to defy the odds, participating in the Warrior Games as well as Invictus Games. According to Marks, adaptive sports changed her life. "I would tell wounded, ill or injured athletes to just try it—give adaptive sports a chance and see what it can do for you."

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**"I FIGURE I BETTER PUSH MYSELF AS HARD AS I CAN, AND WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT I CAN AND CAN'T DO."**

## Delvin Maston

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Active

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### WTU

Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Birmingham, Alabama

### CURRENT LOCATION

San Antonio, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

Wenonah High School, Alabama

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right leg amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Alabama, 2009

### EVENT(S)

Rowing/Wheelchair Basketball



If you ask Army Sgt. Delvin Maston what he wanted to be as a child he will tell you unequivocally he was born to be an athlete.

“I have been playing basketball since I was five years old, a few of the guys I played with went on to play professional ball,” he said.

After high school, Maston went on to play basketball as a point guard for Miles College in Birmingham, Alabama. After joining the Army, he spent a few years playing on the All-Army Basketball Team.

In June of 2009, the Birmingham, Alabama native’s life changed unexpectedly when an accident he was involved in claimed his right leg. Although the accident may have claimed his leg, the infantryman says it didn’t claim his athletic spirit.

“My friend pushed my wheelchair onto the basketball court and told me to shoot, I’ve been shooting ever since,” he explained.

Maston took that competitive spirit to Fort Sam Houston’s Warrior Transition Battalion as he recovered from his injuries.

“Adaptive reconditioning allowed me to tap into my competitive nature which helped my recovery, physically and mentally. It’s the best medicine you can get,” he said. “There’s so many people that I need to thank at the WTB, I can’t name them all, but I consider them all my family,” he continued



Maston will compete in rowing and wheelchair basketball during the Invictus Games. His future plans include helping disabled youth by coaching adaptive sports.

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**“ADAPTIVE RECONDITIONING ALLOWED ME TO TAP INTO MY COMPETITIVE NATURE.”**

## Robert Mathews

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### HOMETOWN

Vidor, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

Sahuarita, Arizona

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Non-functioning right arm

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq, 2006

### EVENT(S)

Cycling/Track



Army Veteran Robert Mathews calls his participation in adaptive sports “my new war.” The Vidor, Texas native and former infantryman got into adaptive sports as a result of being wounded, but contends, “After being in war, I think you’re always looking for a battle. Not only is adaptive

sports my new war, but it’s helped me to become a stronger, faster and better warrior.”

Growing up, Mathews played football. After joining the Army he took up participating in triathlons.

Now residing in Sahuarita, Arizona, Mathews considers having broken the sub-one hour barrier in sprint triathlon to be his greatest sporting achievement to date. Proud to once again be serving his country, it’s an accomplishment that will drive him heading into the Invictus Games.

“My biggest goal is to show my heart, my soul, my pride and my honor in representing the US Team,” says Mathews. “I want to win of course, however to step out and compete at an international level is exciting. It’s also all about stepping off the field, knowing I left it all out there.”

Though the Invictus Games are another highlight in his athletic career, Mathews says that deep down, what’s most important is building awareness for wounded Soldiers. “It’s about showing people we’re here broken, but not beaten,” says Mathews. As a cycling and track athlete, Mathews very much enjoys competition, however, it’s the bonding with his fellow athletes that he relishes most.

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**“NOT ONLY IS ADAPTIVE SPORTS MY NEW WAR, BUT IT’S HELPED ME TO BECOME A STRONGER, FASTER AND BETTER WARRIOR.”**

## Ryan McIntosh (Army World Class Athlete Program)

### WITHDREW FROM COMPETITION

#### RANK

Sgt.

#### STATUS

Active Duty

#### MOS

11B Infantryman

#### WTU

Fort Sam Houston, Texas

#### HOMETOWN

Rifle, Colorado

#### CURRENT LOCATION

San Antonio, Texas

#### SCHOOL(S)

Rifle High School

#### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right leg amputation  
below the knee

#### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2010

#### EVENT(S)

Track/Field/Rowing/  
Wheelchair Rugby



Sgt. Ryan McIntosh always wanted to serve his country. Prior to joining the Army, he was an aspiring football and track athlete, attending high school in the small town of Rifle, Colorado, located on a mile-high plateau west of Denver. According to lore, the town got its name from a 19th century trapper who accidentally left his rifle where the town stands today.

In 2010, McIntosh may have thought that he left something behind as well. One day during his first deployment, while on foot patrol in Kandahar, Afghanistan, he stepped atop a pressure-plated landmine that threw him into the air, taking his right leg below the knee.

Within weeks of sustaining the injury, however, and recovering at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Warrior Transition Battalion, McIntosh's competitive nature took hold as he began to walk and soon after resumed running.

Discovering adaptive sports, McIntosh competed with Team Army at the 2013 Warrior Games in Colorado Springs, Colorado, winning medals in seven of his eight events. He later entered the Army World Class Athlete Program and competed in the 2014 Invictus Games. "Sports have always propelled me," says McIntosh.



According to McIntosh, "Some people have told me that I wouldn't be able to do a lot of things, but I don't limit myself. Without adaptive sports, I would not be where I am today."

As to having left something behind in Afghanistan, McIntosh says that through sports, "I realized that I am the same person I was before."

---

**"WITHOUT ADAPTIVE SPORTS, I  
WOULD NOT BE WHERE  
I AM TODAY."**

## Michael McPhall

### RANK

Sgt. 1st Class

### STATUS

Active Duty

### MOS

19K Armor Crewman

### WTU

Fort Benning, Georgia

### HOMETOWN

Dearborn, Michigan

### CURRENT LOCATION

Glennville, Georgia

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Diabetes Type 1,  
Shulman's disease

### EVENT(S)

Swimming/Track



With three tours in Iraq behind him, Sgt. 1st Class Michael McPhall knows something about overcoming adversity. As an armor crewman, the physical demands upon him were among the most strenuous in the military.

What is even more challenging for the Dearborn, Michigan native is contending with the Type 1 Diabetes for which he is currently undergoing treatment. Yet, the affliction has not stopped him from taking on arduous challenges. Having been introduced to adaptive sports at Fort Benning, Georgia Warrior Transition Battalion, McPhall is representing his country once again at the Invictus Games, competing in racing wheelchair and swimming.

According to McPhall, "Before I got sick I really enjoyed running, but I was quite athletic across all types of sports. At Army Trials in March, I broke through my barrier in racing wheelchair, improved upon my time and set a number of personal records."

"What I want to do is to give it my best and to leave it all on the track and in the swimming pool," said McPhall.

What's also important to McPhall is serving as a role model. "I'm excited by the fact that, by participating in Invictus, I might just motivate someone out there who is going through hard times and inspire them to get out there on the road to recovery," said McPhall,

McPhall paraphrases a poem attributed to an unknown author, "Fate whispers to the warrior, 'You cannot withstand the storm.' The warrior whispers back, 'I am the storm. I am Invictus!'"

---

**"WHAT I WANT TO DO IS TO GIVE IT MY BEST."**

## Billy Meeks

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

31B Military Police

### HOMETOWN

Abelene, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

Las Cruces, New Mexico

### SCHOOL(S)

Abilene High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Torn medial collateral ligament (MCL)

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq, 2007

### EVENT(S)

Archery/Rowing



Some people “accidently” walk into their destiny and for Staff Sgt. Billy Meeks it was all about timing.

While on a mission in Iraq in 2009, Meeks was injured when an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded causing severe damage to the front of the vehicle and

knocking him unconscious for 45 minutes. He suffered a torn medial collateral ligament (MCL) and a torn labrum.

Unable to continue serving his unit due to his extensive injuries, Meeks medically retired.

Shortly before his retirement, he developed an interest for archery while volunteering and supporting a senior leaders’ course at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Meeks says he was responsible for setting up the archery equipment and providing support.

“I really didn’t think that much about it. I thought I was just going to retire and move on with my life,” said Meeks. “One day I just picked it up and it took off from there. It’s all about mental focus, the keenness, the sharpness,” Meeks added.

During a trip to Las Vegas, Meeks learned more about adaptive sports and the Warrior Games.

“That trip opened up a whole new world to me. Adaptive sports allowed me to be around people that understood what I was going through. It’s been a big change. I’m thinking of doing it professionally,” he said.

Meeks has several archery medals sitting in his trophy case at home including a gold medal he won as part of the Compound Team Archery Competition at the 2015 Department of Defense Warrior Games.

He will compete in archery and rowing during the 2016 Invictus Games.

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**“ADAPTIVE SPORTS ALLOWED ME TO BE AROUND PEOPLE THAT UNDERSTOOD WHAT I WAS GOING THROUGH. ”**

## Kawaiola Nahale

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Army Reserves

### MOS

36B Financial Management Technician

### HOMETOWN

Honolulu, Hawaii

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Shafter, Hawaii

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Breast Cancer

### EVENT(S)

Swimming/Cycling



U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Kawaiola Nahale will be competing in swimming at the Invictus Games. It should come as no surprise that the Honolulu-born Nahale learned how to swim at a very early age, nor that she began to swim competitively at age six.

In April, 2013 Nahale was diagnosed with breast cancer. She has undergone three surgeries and credits her Warrior Transition Unit (WTU) in allowing her to focus on getting better. At the WTU she was also introduced to adaptive sports, which has furthered her healing.

To find some tranquility amid her turmoil Nahale returned to swimming. "The water is my healing place. After all my surgeries and restrictions, being in the water was my place of peace," says Nahale.

Invictus will hardly be Nahale's first foray into competitive sports as she has twice represented Team Army at Warrior Games. "I enjoy being able to represent Team Army because I am proud to serve my country," says Nahale. "I also enjoy being with the team and listening to everyone's stories and sharing training tips."



Training also figures prominently in Nahale's career goals as she has an interest in one day becoming a drill sergeant in the Army Reserve. Additionally she intends to return to college in order to pursue a degree in accounting in hopes of becoming a certified public accountant.

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**"I ENJOY BEING ABLE TO REPRESENT TEAM ARMY BECAUSE I AM PROUD TO SERVE MY COUNTRY."**

## Christopher Parks

### RANK

1st Lt.

### STATUS

Active Duty

### MOS

65D Physician Assistant

### WTU

WTB Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Lakeside, California

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Hood, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

El Capitan High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right above-knee amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Lakeside, California

### EVENT(S)

Field/Swimming



Adaptive sports have allowed 1st Lt. Christopher Parks to rediscover the athlete within him, as well as the sporting spirit that he briefly lost after a bacterial infection took away his right leg.

Parks, a physician assistant, was born in Bethesda, Maryland but grew up in

Lakeside, California. He acquired the infection while working in the attic of his home, scraping his foot on a metal hinge. Six weeks later he awoke from a coma in the hospital, with an amputated leg.

Though he confronted depression and anger issues upon waking from his coma, Parks says that his adjustment was relatively quick because there had been no buildup in losing his leg. "It was just gone," said Parks. "So hey, you have to deal with it immediately."

Assigned to the Fort Hood, Texas Warrior Transition Brigade, Parks found that adaptive sports allowed him to get back in the game. Competing in swimming, field, cycling, sitting volleyball and wheelchair basketball at the 2015 Warrior Games, Parks epitomizes the get-up-and-go spirit of an Army warrior. "Get out there and do it," says Parks to other aspiring athletes. "Don't be afraid of failure or trying something new. Just get out there and see what you can do!"



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**“ADAPTIVE RECONDITIONING ALLOWED ME TO TAP INTO MY COMPETITIVE NATURE WHICH HELPED MY RECOVERY, PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY.”**

## Timothy Payne

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### WTU

WTB Walter Reed Military Center, Maryland

### HOMETOWN

Amherst, New York

### CURRENT LOCATION

Raleigh, North Carolina

### SCHOOL(S)

Williamsville North High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Double above-knee amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2011

### EVENT(S)

Field/Swimming



After losing his legs to an improvised explosive device (IED) in Afghanistan in July, 2011 retired Staff Sgt. Timothy Payne fell back upon his Army values in shaping his overall attitude. According to Payne, "My appreciation for Army values, the Soldier's creed, as well as the Warrior Ethos

helped me to adapt and overcome adversity and to become the man that I am today."

Payne, who competed in the 2015 Warrior Games, claims that physical fitness has always been central to his recovery. The Amherst, New York native credits adaptive reconditioning with helping him to maintain a healthy lifestyle and attain, what he terms, a sense of "mental clarity."

At the Invictus Games, Payne looks forward to winning medals. More than anything, however, Payne relishes being around his fellow athletes, saying "We are all part of a military family."

Payne is proud to be representing the U.S. Army and his country at the Invictus Games. Of his fellow Army athletes he says, "You get used to being with the team. They feel like family. When we are all together again you feel like you are a part of one big family."

In addition to athletic competition, Payne enjoys sharing his story and telling others of the way in which he overcame his injuries. He recently published his memoir and is looking forward to taking his story on the road.

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**"MY APPRECIATION FOR ARMY VALUES, THE SOLDIER'S CREED, AS WELL AS WARRIOR ETHOS HELPED ME TO ADAPT AND OVERCOME ADVERSITY AND TO BECOME THE MAN THAT I AM TODAY."**

## Zed Pitts

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Army Reserves

### MOS

12N Horizontal Construction Engineer

### WTU

Fort Bliss, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

### CURRENT LOCATION

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

### SCHOOL(S)

University of Alabama

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Graves' Disease, Fascia Hernia

### EVENT(S)

Cycling/Track



Stability is a central principle in maintaining athletic mobility. Likewise, participation in athletics can be an important consideration in terms of maintaining stability in life. A perfect example of this is U.S. Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Zedrik Pitts, who was diagnosed in 2013 with Graves' Disease, an autoimmune disorder that leads to hyperthyroidism.

For Pitts, one of the keys for preserving a measure of stability is through participation in adaptive sports, which he first encountered while assigned to Fort Bliss, Texas Warrior Transition Battalion (WTB). "Through adaptive sports I was able to stabilize my disease a lot faster than normal, and my pain management skills have improved," said Pitts, a Tuscaloosa, Alabama native.

While recovering at the WTB he was able, through adaptive cycling, to gradually improve upon his strength and endurance.

Representing Team Army at the 2015 Warrior Games, Pitts demonstrated the extent to which his cycling and track abilities had progressed. The competition also allowed him to gauge his overall physical and mental well-being.

With expectations of graduating from the University of Alabama, Pitts has his sights set on becoming an officer in the U.S. Pacific Command.

He believes it important to pay it forward by serving as a role model for other wounded, ill and injured. According to Pitts, "When you're feeling down and out, you're not alone. There are other Soldiers that have been where you are, but they used adaptive sports to improve their overall well-being. And so can you!"

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**"THROUGH ADAPTIVE SPORTS I WAS ABLE TO STABILIZE MY DISEASE A LOT FASTER THAN NORMAL, AND MY PAIN MANAGEMENT SKILLS HAVE IMPROVED."**

## Haywood Range

### RANK

Spc.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### WTU

Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Palm Beach, Florida

### CURRENT LOCATION

San Antonio, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

Jacksonville University

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right arm amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Fort Irwin, California, 2012

### EVENT(S)

Field



Florida native Spc. Hayward Range attended Jacksonville University on a football scholarship. Athletics had always been crucial to Range as it gave him something upon which to remain focused.

After completing college, however, he found himself back in his hometown with

little sense of direction in regards to his future. It was then that he stopped by an Army recruitment office seeking to enlist. "After all," says Range, "the only thing more American than football, is serving our great nation."

With just over a year of service behind him Range became injured at Fort Irwin, California when his combat vehicle rolled down a mountainside, the violence of which forced Range to undergo the amputation of his right arm.

During his months of physical and emotional recovery Range assessed his new normal. As with his life on the gridiron he knew that he had but one choice, which was to keep moving forward.

Once assigned to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Warrior Transition Battalion, Range became acquainted with adaptive sports and rediscovered his love of athletic competition. "I was able to compete at many events, including triathlons, the Endeavor Games, and Texas Regionals," said Range, who also represented Team Army in the 2015 Warrior Games.

Now an Army Veteran, participating in the Invictus Games in nearby Orlando, Florida, Range continues to push himself forward, with aspirations of becoming a Paralympian, and taking up, again, his academic pursuits as he looks towards a degree in exercise science.

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**"THE ONLY THING MORE AMERICAN THAN FOOTBALL, IS SERVING OUR GREAT NATION."**

## Jennifer Schuble (US Paralympian)

### RANK

2nd Lt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### HOMETOWN

Homewood, Alabama

### CURRENT LOCATION

Homewood, Alabama

### SCHOOL(S)

University of Alabama

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

### EVENT(S)

Cycling/ Rowing



Hand-to-hand combat is the most ancient form of fighting, its instruction being a basic component of military training. One day during hand-to-hand combat class at U.S. Military Academy, West Point, cadet, Jennifer Schuble sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Shortly thereafter she suffered yet another TBI during a car accident. This was followed, in 2004, with a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis (MS).

A gifted athlete throughout her life, Schuble, an Army Veteran, wasn't about to let these medical hindrances stop her in her tracks. Rather, she took to the track, picking up adaptive cycling, combined with extensive weight training in order to maintain a strong core.

The Homewood, Alabama native, two-time state soccer champion and varsity track runner, went on to win world championships in Paralympic cycling. In 2006, Schuble was a runner-up in a U.S. national sprint triathlon championship, and in 2007 became a half-Ironman finisher. Since then, Schuble has earned three additional world championship titles and five Paralympic medals, all the while working as an engineer with Mercedes-Benz.

Despite her medical setbacks, Schuble remains grateful, saying, "Because of my MS diagnosis, I have been given the opportunity to race my bicycle around the track and also around the world."

She encourages others with MS to not set limitations upon themselves, but rather "Go out and pursue your passions and dreams. No matter how big or small they might be."

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**"GO OUT AND PURSUE YOUR  
PASSIONS AND DREAMS."**

## Alexander Shaw

### RANK

Staff Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

11B Infantryman

### WTU

Fort Sam Houston, Texas

### HOMETOWN

Baltimore, Maryland

### CURRENT LOCATION

Clarksville, Tennessee

### SCHOOL(S)

Southern High School

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Below knee leg amputation

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq, 2006

### EVENT(S)

Rowing/Sitting Volleyball



A cornerstone of Team Army sitting volleyball and wheelchair basketball, Veteran Staff Sgt. Alexander Shaw has an imposing reach that enables him to dominate at the net and to rebound beneath the basket. The Baltimore, Maryland native and Warrior Games

medalist brings his athletic prowess to Invictus Games, where he will once again strive for gold, competing in sitting volleyball and rowing.

Shaw enlisted in the Army in 1989 and saw numerous deployments. On one of those deployments, in 2006, the Humvee in which he had been riding was struck by an improvised explosive device (IED). The infantryman was severely injured, undergoing a below-knee amputation of his left leg. Shaw continued his military service until retiring in 2014.



During his recovery in a Warrior Transition Unit (WTU), Shaw, a recipient of two Purple Hearts and a Silver Star, encountered adaptive sports. In addition to keeping him physically fit, Shaw credits adaptive sports for instilling him with discipline, motivation and a sense of confidence that has enabled him to succeed.

Among his many goals, Shaw wants to continue serving as role model and mentor to young people. Currently residing in Clarksville, Tennessee, Shaw also wants to do his utmost in making adaptive sports more readily available to those who would benefit from it within his community. Last but not least, Shaw aspires to draw upon his considerable experience on the court and coach a wheelchair basketball team.

## **Michael Smith** *(U.S. Para-Skeleton Team Member)*

### **RANK**

Sgt. 1st Class

### **STATUS**

Active Duty

### **MOS**

13D Fire Control Specialist

### **HOMETOWN**

Dallas, Texas

### **CURRENT LOCATION**

South Little Rock, Arkansas

### **INJURY OR ILLNESS**

Above the elbow amputee

### **LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS**

Nashville, Tennessee, 2011

### **EVENT(S)**

Track/Field



For Sgt. 1st Class Michael Smith mornings are reserved for swimming or setting out on long bicycle rides through the Arkansas countryside. It is this sense of determination that has elevated Smith to an elite status within the world of adaptive sports.

Smith is also among the most vocal figures within the adaptive sports community, imploring his fellow Army athletes during the 2016 Army Trials at Fort Bliss, Texas to never refuse an opportunity to learn a new activity. "This is your pipeline to where you want to be," urged Smith. "Never turn down anything. The sky is your only limit!"

As an Army recruiter in Nashville, Tennessee, Smith was riding his motorcycle home one night when a merging automobile refused to surrender the right of way. The hit and run driver struck Smith's bike, sending him spiraling over a guardrail and into oncoming traffic. Though he survived the crash, Smith lost his right arm.

Smith discovered adaptive sports during the course of his recovery. A multi-medalist at Warrior Games and other competitions, Smith participates in practically every sporting category he encounters, including para-bobsledding and para-skeleton.

Smith uses his own experiences and outgoing personality to help others. "I've always had a sense of humor, was upbeat, a talker, and wouldn't turn down any type of challenge. I think why I lost my arm is so that I can motivate and inspire other people to find their purpose."

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**"NEVER TURN DOWN ANYTHING.  
THE SKY IS YOUR ONLY LIMIT!"**

## Juan Soto

### RANK

Spc.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

31R Multichannel Transmission System operator - Maintainer

### HOMETOWN

San Antonio, Texas

### CURRENT LOCATION

Arlington, Texas

### SCHOOL(S)

University of Texas, Arlington

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Spinal cord injury

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

2003

### EVENT(S)

Rowing/Wheelchair Basketball



Like many adaptive sports athletes, Retired Army Spc. Juan Soto would probably have never taken up most of the activities in which he now competes if it were not for an injury. In his case it was a spinal cord injury that occurred as a result of an accident in 2003.

Hailing from Arlington, Texas, home of the Dallas Cowboys and Texas Rangers, it's no wonder that Soto is drawn to sports. Given his injury, however, rowing, discus, shot put, wheelchair basketball, and wheelchair racing now also enthrall Soto.

Adaptive sports and reconditioning has become a paramount interest to Soto, given the importance for those with spinal cord injuries to establish a wellness routine.

To adaptive sports athletes in general, exercise figures prominently in their new normal. For Soto this has entailed a great deal of weightlifting and improving on his technique through specialized training.

According to Soto, "It's not always all about how strong you are. A lot of this is about technique."

In terms of his approach to other things in life, Soto encourages aspiring athletes to get out there and participate, saying, adaptive sports has "taken me to places I didn't know that I could go after my injuries."



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**"IT'S NOT ALWAYS ALL ABOUT HOW STRONG YOU ARE. A LOT OF THIS IS ABOUT TECHNIQUE."**

## Monica Southall

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

92A Automated  
Logistical Specialist

### HOMETOWN

Suffolk, Virginia

### CURRENT LOCATION

Henrico, Virginia

### SCHOOL(S)

Virginia State University,  
University of Phoenix

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right knee, partially torn  
anterior cruciate ligament (ACL)  
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder  
(PTSD)

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2009

### EVENT(S)

Field/Powerlifting/Rowing/  
Wheelchair Rugby



After graduating college in 2001, Veteran Sgt. Moncia Southall felt the burden of student loans and signed on with the U.S. Army, taking advantage of its student loan repayment program. The Suffolk, Virginia native served in Iraq and then Afghanistan where, in 2009, she suffered a fall from

atop a Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle, leading to a host of injuries, in addition to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Upon returning home from Afghanistan, Southall became isolated as a result of her depression, seldom venturing out or interacting with others. She then discovered adaptive sports, becoming a central figure in Team Army competition, including the 2015 Warrior Games, as well as representing the United States at the 2014 Invictus Games in London.

“Adaptive sports has given me a reason to enjoy life again,” says Southall, who goes out of her way in sharing her story with others, especially those facing a similar situation to hers and who might benefit from athletics.

Adaptive sports also keeps her physically active and aids in her recovery. Alongside her throughout the recovery has been Southall’s friends and family. “They were always there for me, giving me encouragement when I was dealing with a lot of pain and felt like giving up,” said Southall.

Having retired from the Army in 2013, Southall returned to school, completing a Master of Criminal Justice.



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**“ADAPTIVE SPORTS HAS GIVEN ME  
A REASON TO ENJOY LIFE AGAIN.”**

# 2016 INVICTUS GAMES ARMY ATHLETES

## Aaron Stewart

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

15P Aviation Operations Specialist; 15Q, Air Traffic Control Operator; 92Y, Unit Supply Specialist

### WTU

Fort Riley, Kansas

### HOMETOWN

Springfield, Missouri

### CURRENT LOCATION

San Antonio, Texas

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Back, right shoulder and rotator cuff injuries

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Multiple

### EVENT(S)

Cycling/Swimming



Aaron Stewart vividly remembers the immense pride that he felt representing the United States at the 2014 Invictus Games in London. With his mother in attendance, the Springfield, Missouri native captured two gold medals and is looking forward to competing on behalf of the U.S. military at this year's Invictus Games in Orlando.

"My number one goal is to make my country proud," says Stewart. "I look forward to doing this by setting new personal bests, and in adding to the US Team medal count.

After injuring his back and right shoulder, Stewart was assigned to the Fort Riley, Kansas, Warrior Transition Battalion, where he discovered adaptive sports. As a competitive swimmer growing up in Missouri, Stewart was naturally drawn to the sport upon first attending Army Trials in 2014. In addition to Invictus, he has competed in Warrior Games along with various other premier adaptive sporting events.

"Adaptive sports changed my life," says Stewart. "It renewed my purpose and pride at a time that I felt both had been taken from me. Learning to compete in new events, with other adaptive athletes, truly demonstrated to me that nothing is impossible with focus, motivation, and adaptation."

For Stewart, the most enjoyable aspect of adaptive sports is in being around other athletes. "We support each other, and continue to push our limits together," says Stewart. "We celebrate our successes, and overcome our defeats. I've had more fun than I could ever have imagined."



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**"WE CELEBRATE OUR SUCCESSES,  
AND OVERCOME OUR DEFEATS."**

## Nicholas Titman

### RANK

Sgt.

### STATUS

Veteran

### MOS

14G Air Defense  
System Operator

### WTU

Fort Carson, Colorado

### HOMETOWN

Damascus, Virginia

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Carson, Colorado

### SCHOOL(S)

Troy State College

### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Lower back injuries

### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Qatar and Afghanistan

### EVENT(S)

Swimming/Track/Cycling



An avid athlete growing up in the hills of southwestern Virginia, Sgt. Nicholas Titman developed a runner's body that enabled him to excel across a number of sports. In addition to track, volleyball grew into another important activity for Titman given his long arms that made him a natural, not only during high school, but as an Army athlete.

Even with his lower back injuries Titman was a standout player on the Army sitting volleyball team as it captured gold during the 2015 Warrior Games. He also drew upon his prowess at track, which he has been running competitively since the ninth grade, taking his place on the medal stand at Warrior Games.

Titman has a close connection with his fellow Army athletes, as well as those of the other military branches against whom he competes.

"I know everyone's always preaching medals, and that's amazing. No one wants to come and compete and lose," says Titman. "I don't know anybody that does. But for me, ultimately, it's about the friends, and it's about the bonds. It's about getting out here and communicating with one another and talking about what you face in life and what your struggles are and helping each other overcome that."

Recently retired, Titman is heading back to school to earn a degree in nursing. He also intends to become active on issues involving injured Soldiers and Veterans.



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**"NO ONE WANTS TO COME AND  
COMPETE AND LOSE."**

# 2016 INVICTUS GAMES ARMY ATHLETES

## Justin Feagin

### NEW ADDITION

#### RANK

Sgt.

#### STATUS

Veteran

#### MOS

11B Infantryman

#### HOMETOWN

Merit, Texas

#### CURRENT LOCATION

Melissa, Texas

#### SCHOOL(S)

Bland HS

#### INJURY OR ILLNESS

Left leg, below-knee  
amputation

#### LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

2010, Afghanistan

#### EVENT(S)

Track



Army Veteran Justin Feagin served in Iraq from 2007-2008, and in Afghanistan in 2010. During his service he sustained injuries that resulted in a below-knee amputation of his left leg. The Army infantryman entered Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) in San Antonio, Texas,

where he was introduced to adaptive sports.

Both Feagin and his doctors at BAMC were insistent upon getting him up and moving. "It's been important for me to keep moving," says Feagin. "Still waters breed bacteria and I feel that can be said about life as well. Being stagnant can get into your head."

Feagin has played on a wounded warrior softball team, traveling throughout the United States, as well as the Team USA Disabled Baseball Team which took gold during a competition in Japan in 2014. His proudest moments, however, have come while teaching a kid's camp (children who have undergone amputation) with the Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team. "I relished watching the kids grow more confident each day, and learning about much more than just softball," says Feagin. "I really want to shine a spotlight on adaptive sports. I think there is a huge community in America that would love to see more of this."

At the Invictus Games, Feagin intends to do his utmost to help the U.S. team win. He also intends to demonstrate that his injuries have not defeated him, saying "I've not lost an ounce of try because of my injuries and I want everyone to see our nation's resolve."

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**"I'VE NOT LOST AN OUNCE OF TRY  
BECAUSE OF MY INJURIES AND  
I WANT EVERYONE TO SEE OUR  
NATION'S RESOLVE."**



# INVICTUS GAMES

