

I AM TEAM US



INVICTUS
GAMES
SYDNEY 2018

TEAM US ATHLETES

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Capt. Steve Bortle - *Veteran*

Sgt. David Crook - *Veteran*

Sgt. Brandi Evans - *Veteran*

Staff Sgt. Megan Grudzinski - *Veteran*

Spc. Stephanie Johnson

Staff Sgt. Michael Kacer - *Veteran*

Staff Sgt. Altermese Kendrick

Sgt. Ryan Major - *Veteran*

Staff Sgt. Ryan McIntosh

1st Lt. Chris Parks - *Veteran*

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U.S. Army social media platforms

Facebook: www.facebook.com/USArmy

Twitter: www.twitter.com/USArmy

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U.S. Army Warrior Care and Transition social media platforms

Website: www.wct.army.mil

Facebook: www.facebook.com/armywct

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Twitter: www.twitter.com/armywct

Flickr: www.flickr.com/armywarriorcare

YouTube: www.youtube.com/warriorcarecom

Snapchat: @Army WCT

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Ross Alewine

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/Staff Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

11B - Infantryman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Williamston, South Carolina

CURRENT LOCATION

Williamston, South Carolina

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Left knee, ankle, back, shoulder, PTSD and TBI

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Rowing, Swimming
Wheelchair Basketball,

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

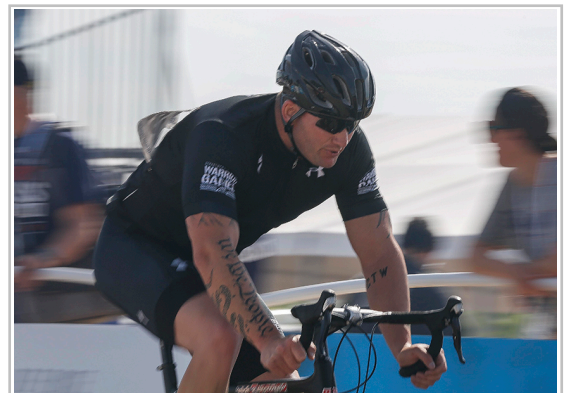
Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

When Staff Sgt. Ross Alewine sets his mind to something he goes after it with his mind, heart and soul. After enduring many surgeries following injuries he sustained over multiple deployments, Alewine set his mind on competing in adaptive sports.

The South Carolina native trains six days a week for four hours a day and earned the title of "Ultimate Champion" at the 2018 U.S. Department of Defense Warrior Games. Since that competition, he has resumed his training regimen in preparation for the 2018 Invictus Games.

"I want to lead by example, challenge myself, and show other Soldiers who have injuries they can still be a competitor," Alewine said. "One day I want to be able to look back on this and teach my kids a valuable life lesson: Sometimes life gets hard and knocks you down, but you always have to get up and give it your all no matter what."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Steve Bortle

RANK, SERVICE

O-3/Capt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

25A - Signal Officer

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Special Education Teacher

HOMETOWN

Ewa Beach, Hawaii

CURRENT LOCATION

Ewa Beach, Hawaii

SCHOOL(S)

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENTS

Athletics, Cycling, Rowing, Swimming

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

Retired U.S. Army Capt. Steve Bortle is a self-driven individual. After recovering from shoulder surgery at the Warrior Transition Unit at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii he added goal setting to his physical regimen.

“Goal setting is important. Small achievable goals can lead up to something bigger. Find things that you love that you can do after the Army that are sustainable. For example, I signed up for and completed a half-marathon after injury.”

Bortle fell in love with several adaptive sports including cycling and sitting volleyball. He has his own goals set for competing at the 2018 Invictus Games, but he says it's not about the competition.

“Making a difference means a lot to me. As a special education teacher, I see things much like I see adaptive sports for wounded, ill and injured Soldiers: no one left behind. If I can't show them it can be done, than who can?”



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



David Crook

RANK, SERVICE

E-5/Sgt., U.S. Army Reserve

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

42A - Human Resource Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Victoria, Texas

CURRENT LOCATION

Joint Base San Antonio, Texas

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENTS°

Athletics, Rowing,
Powerlifting

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

Sgt. David Crook has benefited greatly from his time recovering at the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

"My experience was incredible, from the physical changes to mental health. Being at the WTB gives me a reason to press on and to adjust to my new normal," said Crook.

Crook's experience has also prompted him to further his education and take classes in Kinesiology, the study of movement. He hopes to combine this new knowledge and his passion for sports to teach the next generation of leaders and athletes.

"Sports has always been my passion and I love children. There are some important life lessons they can learn from sports such as hard work, tenacity and team work; I want to be part of that," he said. Being part of a team is Crook's current focus as he heads to Sydney, Australia to represent Team US for the first time. The human resource specialist will compete in athletics, rowing and powerlifting.

"I am honored to represent the Army and America. I love the competitiveness. The camaraderie is awesome. You have a whole new family pushing you to excel. Adaptive sports is a well-kept secret that must be tapped into."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Brandi Evans

RANK, SERVICE

E-5/Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

68W - Combat Medic

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Transition Coordinator

HOMETOWN

Denver, Colorado

CURRENT LOCATION

El Paso, Texas

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Knee replacement

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Athletics, Cycling, Rowing,
Powerlifting

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

U.S. Army veteran Sgt. Brandi Evans is a long time sports enthusiast. Growing up, she played volleyball, basketball and ran track. In 2003, she sustained a leg fracture and a shattered right knee after being hit by a car as she crossed the street. She spent three months in a wheelchair and 14 months in physical therapy. After six knee surgeries, to include a full knee replacement, Evans credits her recovery to the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Bliss, Texas.

"The WTB has shown me the road to adaptive reconditioning. While I was in the military, there was not a program for the Soldiers at the time. Adaptive reconditioning is a way for all of us to relate, adapting to something new and reconditioning ourselves," Evans said.

"My injuries are no longer a setback. Many Soldiers and veterans struggle with finding a sport or activity that is therapeutic and helps their individual needs. It is encouraging to know that you are not alone in facing struggles."

Evans won multiple medals at the 2016 and 2017 U.S. Department of Defense Warrior Games and the 2017 Invictus Games. She is excited to be representing Team U.S. at the Invictus Games again this year where she will be competing in athletics, cycling, rowing and powerlifting

"Representing the Army and the U.S. at the Invictus Games makes me proud," Evans said. "From the time of my accident I did not believe or think that I could achieve what I have and what I think I can today. Never give up and never think that you cannot accomplish your goals."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Megan Grudzinski

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/Staff Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

74D - Chemical Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Strongsville, Ohio

CURRENT LOCATION

Strongsville, Ohio

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

PTSD

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENTS°

Athletics, Cycling,
Swimming, Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

If ever there were an aptly named place of origin for a first time Invictus Games athlete it's Strongsville, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland and hometown of retired U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Meagan Grudzinski. Having returned to Strongsville after serving in Afghanistan, Grudzinski realized that she needed to confront her Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

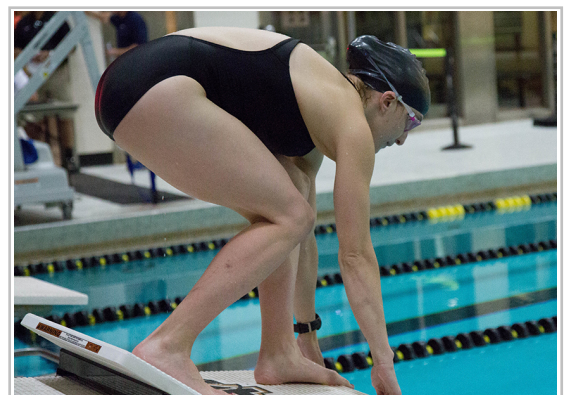
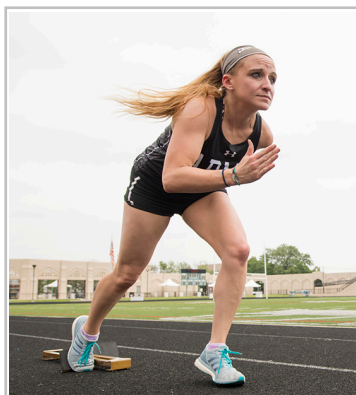
"When I returned from Afghanistan, I felt so isolated," said Grudzinski. "None of my friends were veterans, and my Reserve unit was in Illinois."

Grudzinski was matched up with a service dog named Harley and given the attention that she needed in order to address her injuries. "It helped to know that someone was there as a support system to aid in my recovery," she said.

While getting help, Grudzinski was also introduced to adaptive sports. As a first time competitor during the 2016 U.S. Department of Defense Warrior Games, Grudzinski won three gold medals and broke three Warrior Games records in track events (400, 800 and 1,500 meter). She had another strong performance at the 2017 DoD Warrior Games where she again won multiple gold medals.

Grudzinski, now a nursing student, is excited to be competing at the Invictus Games in Sydney, Australia and looking to embrace the experience with the other competitors and her Team U.S. teammates.

"You see your teammates for the awesome individuals they are and you don't see each other's injuries. It makes me realize how strong I truly am."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Stephanie Johnson

RANK, SERVICE

E-4/Spc., U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

92F - Petroleum Supply Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Toledo, Ohio

CURRENT LOCATION

Alexandria, Virginia

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Below the knee amputation

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2013

EVENTS

Athletics, Cycling, Sitting Volleyball, Wheelchair Basketball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

U.S. Army Spc. Stephanie Johnson of Toledo, Ohio has experienced more than her fair share of trials, tribulations and challenges. Johnson survived an indirect fire attack at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan in 2013. During the attack, she suffered a shattered left femur and badly fractured right foot.

In July 2016, after three years of limb salvage efforts, Johnson decided to have her right leg amputated below the knee for better quality of life.

Adaptive sports have remained a large part of Johnson's life as she continues to adjust to using her prosthetic and pushing her limits. "I have always been a competitive person and adaptive sports has let me get that part of myself back after my injuries."

Johnson spent five years recovering at the Warrior Transition Brigade at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, and after putting in the hard work to heal and recover, she has resumed her Army career.

She is proud to be participating in the Invictus Games for the second year in a row. "It's an honor to be a part of Team U.S. again, and I'm looking forward to the competition."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Michael Kacer

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/Staff Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

11B - Infantryman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Student/Para-taekwondo athlete

HOMETOWN

Throop, Pennsylvania

CURRENT LOCATION

Cary, North Carolina

SCHOOL(S)

North Carolina Central University

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Left above the elbow amputation; TBI

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2008

EVENTS

Athletics, Rowing, Swimming

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

After suffering a traumatic brain injury and losing his left arm in an explosion in Afghanistan in 2008, Staff Sgt. Michael Kacer says his recovery period at Walter Reed Army Hospital, in Washington, D.C. at the time, 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 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 previous U.S. Department of Defense Warrior Games. 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 athletics, swimming and rowing.

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 along with becoming a high school physical education teacher," 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."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Altermese Kendrick

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/Staff Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

56M - Religious Affairs Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Fort Worth, Texas

CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Hood, Texas

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Hip labrum tear

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENTS

Archery, Rowing, Powerlifting

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

As a Chaplain's Assistant at Fort Hood, Texas, Staff Sgt. Altermese Kendrick leans on her spiritual faith and calm demeanor to do her job. She relied on those same strengths through her own trying times after injuries to her right hip and a persistent pain in her back derailed her once active lifestyle.

"A week after completing an Army Physical Fitness Test, I experienced a stabbing pain in my back with intense pain daily, but I couldn't quit," Kendrick said. "It turned out that I had an extensive labrum tear in my right hip and pain in my right back. Surgery followed and the pain in my hip got better, but my back got worse. My ability to move quickly was gone, and I had to give up going to the gym or performing any workouts."

Kendrick recovered at the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Sam Houston, Texas where she dedicated much of her time to adaptive reconditioning. "I was able to join in the activities that helped me to keep moving as I healed which in turn, allowed me to stay active," Kendrick said.

The Mississippi native is now focused on representing Team U.S. for the first time at the 2018 Invictus Games.

"Representing the Army and the U.S. is an honor which I am thankful to have been blessed with. Being wounded isn't being weak, and being able to compete with that in my heart, I know that I will be forever 'Army Strong'."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Ryan Major

RANK, SERVICE

E-5/Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

11B - Infantryman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Towson, Maryland

CURRENT LOCATION

Towson, Maryland

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Bilateral amputation

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq, 2006

EVENTS

Athletics, Rowing, Swimming, Wheelchair Rugby

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

U.S. Army retired Sgt. Ryan Major is very familiar with adversity. After stepping on an improvised explosive device in Iraq, Major lost his right leg and right thumb from the explosion and later his left leg, ring and pinkie finger to a fungus. In the aftermath, Major found himself in a very dark place, but a ray of light would come when he discovered the adaptive sports program at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

“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 trying other adaptive reconditioning activities like cycling and swimming.”

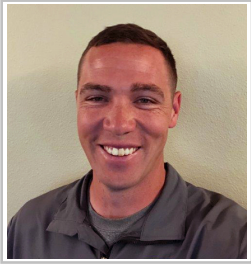
Major is heavily involved in adaptive sports, competing in various competitions as well as playing on a few wheelchair rugby teams.

Major is looking forward to once again representing Team U.S. at the 2018 Invictus Games, where he will be competing in athletics, rowing, swimming, and wheelchair rugby.

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



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Ryan McIntosh

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/Staff Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

11B - Infantryman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Rifle, Colorado

CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Carson, Colorado

SCHOOL(S)

Colorado Mesa University

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Below the knee amputation

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2010

EVENTS

Archery

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

In December 2010, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan McIntosh stepped on a pressure-plate land mine while on a foot patrol mission in Afghanistan. The injuries McIntosh sustained would result in him having his right leg amputated below the knee. At the time, he was 21-years-old with a child on the way and a seemingly long road to recovery. However, McIntosh was determined to heal as quickly as possible.

"Six weeks after I stepped on the land mine, I was walking again. Two weeks after that, I was running again."

McIntosh recovered and rehabilitated at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He quickly regained his speed on his prosthesis and began dropping his times on the track.

McIntosh went on to compete in the first few U.S. Department of Defense Warrior Games competitions, with his final appearance being in 2013. That year, he applied for and was selected to be part of the Army World Class Athlete Program. He entered WCAP as a track and field athlete and has since begun competing in para-archery. McIntosh remains in the WCAP program where he currently serves as a Paralympic liaison and an athlete.

McIntosh was a member of Team U.S. at the inaugural Invictus Games in 2014 where he won the first ever U.S. Invictus Games medal when he took bronze in the 100 meters. McIntosh is excited to once again represent Team U.S. at the 2018 Invictus Games in Sydney.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Chris Parks

RANK, SERVICE

O-2/1st Lt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

65D - Physician's Assistant

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Lakeside, California

CURRENT LOCATION

Kempner, Texas

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Above the knee amputation

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENTS

Athletics, Cycling, Rowing,
Powerlifting, Wheelchair Basketball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

Adaptive sports has allowed retired U.S. Army 1st Lt. Chris 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 his adjustment was relatively quick because there had been no buildup in losing his leg. "It was just gone," said Parks. "So you have to deal with it immediately."

While assigned to the Fort Hood, Texas, Warrior Transition Unit, Parks found that adaptive sports allowed him to get back in the game.

"Adaptive reconditioning allowed me to tap into my competitive nature which helped my recovery, both physically and mentally."

Parks competed in the 2016 Invictus Games and he is ready to take on athletics, cycling, rowing, powerlifting, and wheelchair basketball in this year's Invictus Games.

Parks epitomizes the get-up-and-go spirit of an Army warrior. "Get out there and do it," he says to other aspiring athletes. "Don't be afraid of failure or trying something new. Just get out there and see what you can do!"



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Timothy Payne

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/Staff Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

11B - Infantryman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Amherst, New York

CURRENT LOCATION

Raleigh, North Carolina

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Bilateral amputation

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan, 2011

EVENTS

Athletics, Cycling, Swimming

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

After losing his legs to an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan in 2011, retired Staff Sgt. Timothy Payne relied on his Army values to shape his overall attitude. According to Payne, "My appreciation for Army values, the Soldier's creed and the Warrior Ethos helped me to adapt and overcome adversity and become the man that I am today."

Payne, who competed in the 2016 Invictus Games in Orlando, Florida, says physical fitness has 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 describes as a sense of "mental clarity."

Payne is proud to be representing the U.S. Army and his country once again at the 2018 Invictus Games. Payne looks forward to the experience and hopefully taking home a few medals. But more than anything, Payne relishes being around his fellow athletes and service members saying, "After 11 years in the military, you get used to being a part of a team; they feel like family."

In addition to athletic competitions Payne enjoys sharing his story and telling others how he overcame his injuries. He published his memoir and is looking forward to taking his story on the road.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Joel Rodriguez

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/Staff Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

15Q - Air Traffic Control Operator

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Orlando, Florida

CURRENT LOCATION

Tampa, Florida

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

C5, C6 Spinal Cord Injury

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENTS

Athletics, Rowing, Swimming, Wheelchair Rugby

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

When retired Staff Sgt. Joel Rodriguez joined the U.S. Army, he was looking for a new, rewarding career. Within no time, the former firefighter says he grew to love his work.

In 2014, a devastating car accident derailed his plans, leaving Rodriguez with a broken neck and a severe spinal cord injury, but the resilient Orlando, Florida native didn't let his new normal stop him from setting and achieving new goals. He took the passion he had for serving in the Army and put it into adaptive sports.

"At first, my wife wasn't too happy about me playing such a rough sport after breaking my neck," Rodriguez says about his choice to take up wheelchair rugby not long after the accident. "But she eventually warmed up to it. Being around other athletes in the wheelchair community has been some of the best rehabilitation for me."

Rodriguez also picked up a number of other sports, which earned him a spot at the 2018 U.S. Army Trials, where he won 8 gold medals. This is his first time competing in the Invictus Games and he looks forward to competing in athletics, rowing, swimming and wheelchair rugby.

"It makes me feel great that all my hard work is paying off and I just want to make my family proud," Rodriguez said. "We're in an age where your disability has nothing to do with what you can do. It's about finding something you love and working hard on it."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Christina Truesdale

RANK, SERVICE

O-4/Maj., U.S. Army

STATUS

Retired

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

64B - Veterinary Preventive Medicine

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Veterinarian

HOMETOWN

Jefferson City, Missouri

CURRENT LOCATION

Columbus, Georgia

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Tethered spinal cord, stroke, TBI

DATE AND LOCATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENTS

Archery, Cycling

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Julia Oliveri

571-318-8472

Maj. Christina Truesdale, a flight surgeon, jumpmaster and veterinarian, considers herself lucky to be alive after several injuries and health challenges almost ended her life.

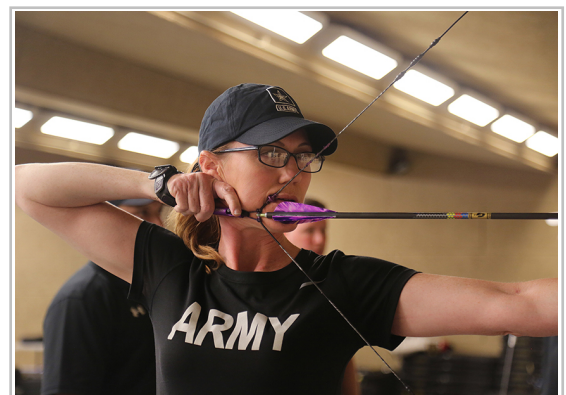
Truesdale developed chronic neck issues from jumping out of planes and rucking for many years. She cannot turn her head to the right and she has lost feeling in her right hand and left foot. She has also had several traumatic brain injuries along with lower back issues. Truesdale also had surgery for a rare neurological condition—otherwise known as a tethered spinal cord.

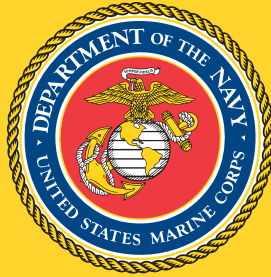
However, through it all, Truesdale says she remained optimistic.

"I just kept going. I set small goals and reveled in those small accomplishments. These were key to my recovery. I was able to get both of my socks on in under 10 minutes and I drove to Starbucks and back. I call these 'small victories'," Truesdale laughed.

While the South Carolina native celebrated those small victories, she found something else to conquer: adaptive sports. After competing at the 2018 U.S. Department of Defense Warrior Games, Truesdale is excited to join Team U.S. for the 2018 Invictus Games where she will compete in archery and cycling.

"The Invictus Games aren't just another athletic competition. They're a way for all of us wounded warriors to stand proudly once again after all of our challenges and say 'Hello world! I'm back in the saddle again!' They help you reflect on all of the things you faced to get to the competition and gives you perspective on how far you've come."





U.S. MARINE CORPS

Gunnery Sgt. John Ayo - *Veteran*

Corporal Josue Barron - *Veteran*

Staff Sgt. James Dunaway - *Veteran*

Gunnery Sgt. Dorian Gardner

Gunnery Sgt. Douglas Godfrey - *Veteran*

Lance Corporal Matthew Grashen Jr. - *Veteran*

Sgt. Gabby Graves-Wake - *Veteran*

Sgt. Rob Jones - *Veteran*

Corporal Kira Lavine

Sergeant Alex Nguyen - *Veteran*

Staff Sgt. Jason Pacheco

Gunnery Sgt. Alexis Padilla - *Veteran*

Staff Sgt. Danielle Pothoof - *Veteran*

Corporal Michael Sousadocarmo - *Veteran*

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U.S. Marine Corps social media platforms

Facebook: www.facebook.com/marines

Twitter: www.twitter.com/USMC

Instagram: www.instagram.com/marines

U.S. Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment social media platforms

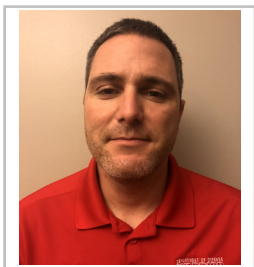
Website: www.woundedwarriorregiment.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/wwr.usmc

Twitter: www.twitter.com/usmcwwr

Blog: www.medium.com/@usmcwwr

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



John Ayo

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/ Gunnery Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Aviation Maintenance

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Program Director

HOMETOWN

Tampa, Florida

CURRENT LOCATION

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Lower Back Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

2010

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Rowing, Indoor Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps veteran John Ayo joined the Marine Corps in August 1997 in the aviation maintenance field. In 2010, during Marine Corps Martial Arts Black Belt training, he broke his back and suffered an impartial tear to his spinal cord. This placed him in a wheelchair as well as many other devices such as a cane and walker.

The Tampa, Florida, native spent many hours working toward his recovery. He was returned to active duty and was selected for Warriors Games 2016, earning one gold medal, two silver Medals, and one bronze medal.

Gunnery Sergeant Ayo says, "It is an amazing honor to represent my brothers and sisters that cannot be here with us, the Marine Corps and Team U.S. at Invictus. This is very humbling to be selected to compete in Sydney."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Josue Barron

RANK, SERVICE

E-4/ Corporal/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Infantryman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Small business owner

HOMETOWN

Cudahy, California

CURRENT LOCATION

Temecula, California

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Amputee, Blind in left eye

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Sangin, Afghanistan/ Oct 21, 2010

EVENT(S)

Wheelchair Basketball, Hand Cycling

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps Corporal Josue Barron joined the Marine Corps in September 2007 as an 0311 infantryman. In 2010, during his deployment in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Corporal Barron stepped on an IED, resulting in the loss of his left leg above the knee and vision on his left eye.

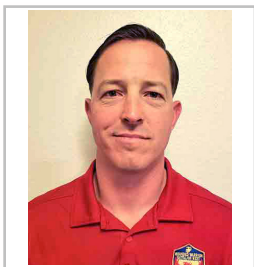
While he was doing his rehab in San Diego, California, Barron learned how to walk on a prosthetic leg and was fitted with a glass eye. What helped him get through his injury was the love for sports and the camaraderie of other disabled veterans.

Barron worked hard every day, striving to get better. He was returned to active duty and selected in the 2012 and 2013 Warrior Games, earning a silver medal in wheelchair basketball.

The Cudahy, California, native says, "Being able to compete in Australia at the Invictus Games and knowing that I am representing not only the Marine Corps, but also the United States, fills me with so much pride. The games will also give me an opportunity to represent my fellow combat wounded brothers and sisters, past and present, and show them that we are still in the fight."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



James Dunaway

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/ Staff Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Infantry Unit Leader

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Lithia, Florida

CURRENT LOCATION

San Clemente, California

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

PTSD, TBI

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Iraq/ Afghanistan

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Rowing, Archery, Jaguar Driving Challenge

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

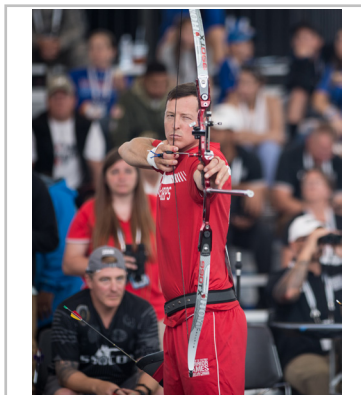
GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps veteran James Dunaway joined the Marine Corps in September 2004 as a infantry rifleman. Between Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, Dunaway has a combined time of 35 months in combat.

Dunaway believes that participating in adaptive reconditioning and sports has helped him keep his mind in shape, as well as kept his body fit and healthy.

The Lithia, Florida, native says, "It will be a great honor to represent the Marine Corps and Team U.S. at the Invictus Games in Australia. It will give me a chance to not only prove to myself but to everyone else that I can do anything I set my mind to and just because I have PTSD, it is not going to stop me from achieving my goals."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Dorian Gardner

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/ Gunnery Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Comm Strategy and Operations

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Rialto, California

CURRENT LOCATION

California

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Legally Blind

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Kajaki, Afghanistan/ October 2010

EVENT(S)

Field, Swimming, Indoor Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

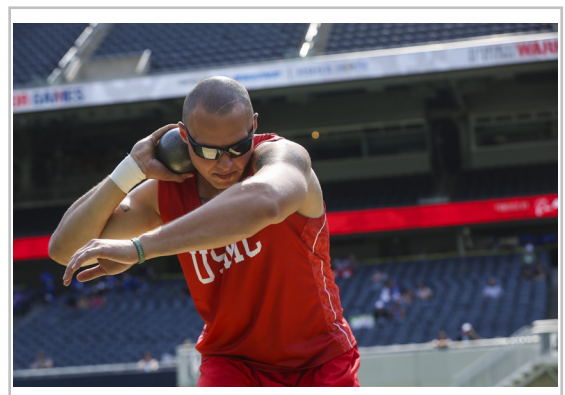
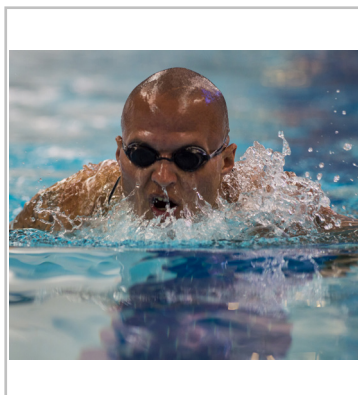
U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant Dorian Gardner was born and raised in Southern California. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in October 2003.

He deployed to Delaram, Afghanistan, on February 15, 2010. Gunnery Sgt. Gardner worked as the public affairs chief, supporting the 12th Marine Regiment and its subordinate commands for the duration of the deployment. While providing support to India Battery, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, he was injured on a foot patrol by an improvised explosive device. During the fire fight, Gardner suffered lacerations to his face and arm, ultimately losing his left eye and suffering irreversible damage to his right eye. The injury left him with a lasting visual impairment and an unquenchable thirst for the blood of his enemy.

The Rialto, California, native has participated in snowboarding, surfing, music therapy (guitar) as well as hiking and lifting. Since his injury, taking part in these activities, with the support of guides and instructors, has helped him to realize there is still a lot he can do and participate in regardless of his visual limitations.

Gardner says, "Representing the Marine Corps at Invictus is an honor. I will be participating with my brothers and sisters from the other services as part of Team U.S., and I believe that to be a big responsibility and I am honored to take part in this event."

"Keep challenging yourself and reaching past your goals. When you reach a goal, don't stop reaching. Continue to grow and challenge yourself in new ways and never let your injuries or the voices in your head make you believe you can't do something you want to do."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Douglas Godfrey

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/ Gunnery Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Logistics Chief

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Tampa, Florida

CURRENT LOCATION

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Spinal Cord Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Okinawa/ March 2016

EVENT(S)

Archery, Hand Cycling, Swimming

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps veteran Douglas Godfrey joined the Marine Corps in October 2002. He became paralyzed from a spinal cord decompression injury while scuba diving off the coast of Okinawa, Japan. He underwent hyperbaric chamber treatments at Camp Schwab for two days and was transferred from Naval Hospital Camp Foster to a Japanese Hospital in Naha. He continued hyperbaric chamber treatment and electrical stimulation therapy for two weeks, in an attempt to regain neuromuscular and functional ability in the trunk and legs. He was then transferred back to Naval Medical care and sent to the San Diego VA Hospital for a two month in-patient therapy program.

The Tampa, Florida, native pressed forward with 10-12 hours of physical therapy, 7-8 hours of recreational therapy, and numerous hours of education each week to regain as much functional ability, and live life as independent as possible. He was retired in October 2017 after being selected for Warrior Games 2017, and earning one silver and one bronze medal. He was then selected for Warrior Games 2018 as a veteran, earning one gold, five silver, and three bronze medals. He continues to mentor the younger service members and veterans to set and achieve their goals, and to never give up on themselves or each other.

Godfrey says, "I have been provided with an unparalleled opportunity to represent the Marine Corps and Team U.S. at the Invictus Games. I am amazed to be able to foster the spirit of the Unconquered Warrior with the other participating nations, and continue working together as we did in Iraq and Afghanistan."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Matthew Grashen Jr.

RANK, SERVICE

E-3/ Lance Corporal/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Infantry

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

North Chicago, Illinois

CURRENT LOCATION

Temecula, California

SCHOOL(S)

Mesa College

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Double Amputee

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan/ August 1, 2013

EVENT(S)

Field, Indoor Rowing, Powerlifting, Wheelchair Basketball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps veteran Matthew Grashen joined the Marine Corps in May 2011 as an infantryman.

Grashen reported to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, on November 1, 2013, at Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina. He then deployed to Afghanistan in March 2013. Grashen was severely injured by an improvised explosive device on August 1, 2013, in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He suffered a double amputation of both his legs.

Grashen was sent to Walter Reed Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, on August 7, 2013. He then checked in to Wounded Warrior Battalion-East. There he started the beginning stages of his physical therapy. After three months of therapy, he was able to stand and walk on his prosthetics. On August 7, 2014, he reported in to Wounded Warrior Battalion-West at Balboa Naval Medical Center in San Diego, California.

Grashen says, "It's an awesome feeling to be a part of a team that consists of the best of the best! Having the opportunity to compete in these games has expanded my horizon in a way I never expected. I have met some amazing men and women who understand me. I've also been given the chance to become an elite athlete."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Gabby Graves-Wake

RANK, SERVICE

E-5/ Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Intelligence Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Student

HOMETOWN

Phoenix, Arizona

CURRENT LOCATION

Phoenix, Arizona

SCHOOL(S)

Embry Riddle Aeronautical University

INJURY OR ILLNESS

TBI, Back Injuries, Gait Disturbance

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

February 23, 2014

EVENT(S)

Track, Field, Cycling, Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps veteran Gabby Graves-Wake joined the Marine Corps at the age of 17. She was an intelligence analyst with 2nd Intelligence Battalion in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

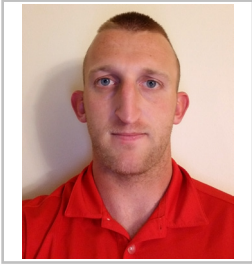
Prior to joining the Marine Corps, she was a full-time competitive sport martial arts athlete and instructor. Graves-Wake traveled the world performing and competing. She has earned many state titles and top 10 world finishes. She is a 4th degree black belt in the American Taekwondo Association.

The Phoenix, Arizona, native's winter sport is sledge hockey. Graves-Wake is a member of the U.S. Women's National Sledge Hockey Team, who just won gold at the Women's Para Ice Hockey World Cup held in the Czech Republic. She plays goalie.

During the spring and summer, Graves-Wake trains and competes with the Arizona Heat track and field team. Her post Marine Corps life has been about continued recovery, family, furthering her education, and working toward a career in the aviation industry.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Rob Jones

RANK, SERVICE

E-5/ Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Combat Engineer

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Public Speaker

HOMETOWN

Lovettsville, Virginia

CURRENT LOCATION

Middleburg, Virginia

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Double above knee amputations

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Sangin, Afghanistan/ July 22, 2010

EVENT(S)

Track, Indoor Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

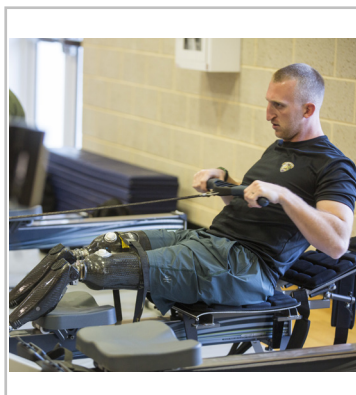
U.S. Marine Corps veteran Rob Jones joined the Marine Corps Reserve as a combat engineer during his junior year at Virginia Tech. He deployed to Habbaniyah, Iraq, in 2008, and again to Delaram/Sangin, Afghanistan, in 2010.

During his deployment to Afghanistan, while operating as a part of a push into Taliban territory, Jones was tasked with clearing an area with a high likelihood of containing an IED. It was in this capacity that he was wounded in action by a land mine. The injury resulted in a left knee dis-articulation and a right above knee amputation of his legs.

The Lovettsville, Virginia, native was taken to National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, for the initial phases of his recovery, which consisted primarily of healing and closing his wounds. He was then transferred to Walter Reed Army Medical Center for the remainder of his rehabilitation. At Walter Reed, Jones was fitted with prosthetics, and worked very hard to learn how to walk with two bionic knees.

On October 14, 2013, Rob began a solo supported bike ride across America which started in Bar Harbor, Maine, and ended in Camp Pendleton, California. The ride was 5,180 miles long and completed on April 13, 2014, a total of 181 days after it began. Over the course of the ride, along with his team, he raised \$126,000 for the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund, and Ride 2 Recovery, three charities which aid wounded veterans.

In the fall of 2017, Rob completed a month long back to back marathon challenge in which he ran 31 marathons in 31 days in 31 different major cities, once again raising awareness and funds for wounded veteran charities. This challenge began in London, England, on October 12, and finished, appropriately, on Veterans Day, November 11, 2017 in Washington, D.C. Along with providing perspective on the capabilities of all wounded veterans, Rob and his team raised over \$200,000 for the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, and the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Kira Lavine

RANK, SERVICE

E-4/ Corporal/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Air Support Operations Operator

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

San Diego, Calif.

CURRENT LOCATION

Camp Pendleton, Calif

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Depression, Anxiety, TBI

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Rowing, Sailing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

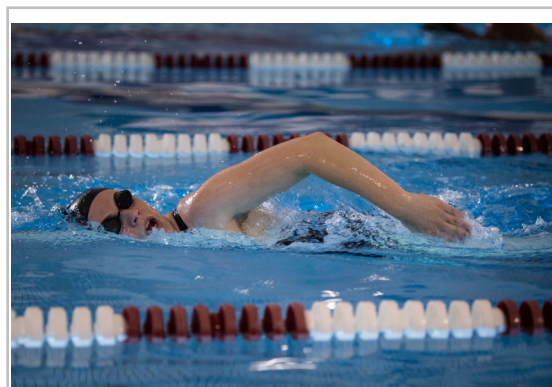
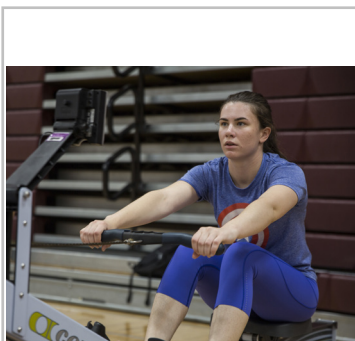
GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps Corporal Kira Lavine joined the Marine Corps in September of 2015 as an air support operations operator. In 2017, Cpl Lavine sought mental health help after a near attempt on her own life. The ongoing process in addressing the causes of her depression and anxiety included enrollment in an Intensive Outpatient Program, which led to her involvement with the Wounded Warrior Battalion-West.

The San Diego native trains every day in the pool as part of her treatment to combat depression and anxiety by committing to physical exercise. She also attends physical therapy twice a week for a rotator cuff injury. She has stayed with her parent unit Marine Air Support Squadron 3 on active duty. At the 2018 DoD Warrior Games she won 4 gold medals, one silver and broke two records for Female 6.0 50m freestyle and 100m freestyle swim events.

Lavine says, "It is an incredible honor and opportunity to represent the Marine Corps and Team U.S. at Invictus in Australia this year; to come from where I was a year ago to now shows that there is never an end to a story-just another chapter."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Alex Nguyen

RANK, SERVICE

E-5/ Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Combat Engineer

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Student

HOMETOWN

Sioux City, Iowa

CURRENT LOCATION

Omaha, Nebraska

SCHOOL(S)

University of Nebraska-Omaha

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right leg BKA, Left leg impairment

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Sangin Valley, Afghanistan

EVENT(S)

Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Rugby

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps veteran Alex Nguyen enlisted into the Marine Corps March of 2007 as a combat engineer. In April of 2011, he deployed to Afghanistan to conduct route clearance missions in Northern Helmand Province.

While clearing routes on September 20, 2011, his vehicle was hit with a remote-controlled IED. The blast broke both his ankles, broke his left leg, and a few bones in his left foot.

The Sioux City, Iowa, native was sent to Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Virginia, to undergo numerous surgeries to repair both ankles. In July 2013, Nguyen's right ankle wasn't getting any better and resulted in a below the knee amputation.

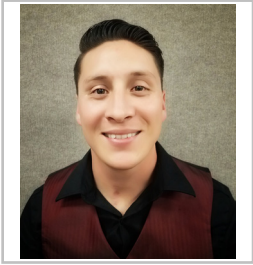
Nguyen went through three years total of physical therapy while in Virginia.

He went to his first Marine Corps Trials in March 2014 and was selected to the Warrior Games in 2014 and 2015. He also competed in the 2016 Invictus Games, where he won 2 gold medals and 1 silver medal. He currently competes collegiately in wheelchair basketball at The University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Nguyen says, "Being able to compete gives me a lot of motivation and still helps with my recovery. It's always a great time competing against other branches, but it's an even better feeling to compete with them against other countries. I love being a Marine and I couldn't ask for a better way to represent the Marine Corps and this great nation of ours."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Jason Pacheco

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/ Staff Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Infantry Unit Leader

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Las Vegas, New Mexico

CURRENT LOCATION

Oceanside, California

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Right Leg Amputation

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan/ August 3, 2010

EVENT(S)

Sitting Volleyball, Cycling, Field, Track, Swimming

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

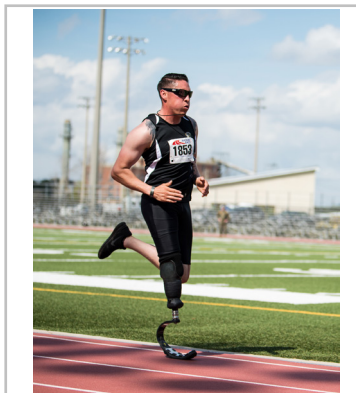
GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Jason Pacheco joined the Marine Corps in July 2006 as an infantryman and became a scout sniper in 2009. In 2010, during his deployment to Marjah, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Staff Sergeant Pacheco was conducting a battle damage assessment (BDA) on a couple of compounds and tree lines, which were a few minutes before the shooting positions for multiple Taliban fighters. He unfortunately stepped on an IED that resulted in a TBI, below the right knee amputation, left leg limb salvage, right femur fracture, left pinky amputation, two ear drums ruptures, and took shrapnel to his hands, arms, neck, torso and lower extremities. On September 13, 2010, he arrived at Naval Medical Center San Diego where he was assigned to Wounded Warrior Battalion-West and participated in grueling physical therapy. It took him 3 months to learn to walk and 6 months to run. In April of 2011, just months after his injuries, he returned to 2nd Battalion 4th Marine Regiment to be back with his fellow Marines. He was then assigned to 1st Marine Division Schools as a Pre Scout Sniper Course Instructor.

The Las Vegas, New Mexico ,native dedicated three to six hours every day to his physical therapy and getting a solid fit for his prosthesis. He returned to active duty and was found fit for full duty. He then redeployed as the Marine Corps' first amputee to return to a combat zone in an infantry MOS. In March 2018, he attended the Marine Corps Trials and medaled in 8 of his 13 events with 2 gold, 2 silver, and 4 bronze. He was selected for Warrior Games 2018, earning 1 gold, 1 silver, 1 bronze, as well as the Marine Corps Heart of the Team Award.

Pacheco says, "I feel that getting injured did not damper my morale it only slowed me down momentarily. I have always proven that I will accomplish everything I set out to do. Being wounded has not changed who I am or held me back in any way. It has helped me to believe in myself, be strong and to help others achieve their goals along the way. The only thing that has changed is my perspective on life and that tomorrow is not promised to anyone, so live life to the fullest and take nothing for granted. My goal is to keep moving forward, no matter what."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Alexis Padilla

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/ Gunnery Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Infantry Unit Leader

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Jacksonville, Florida

CURRENT LOCATION

Jacksonville, North Carolina

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

PTSD, Lower Back Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Cycling

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

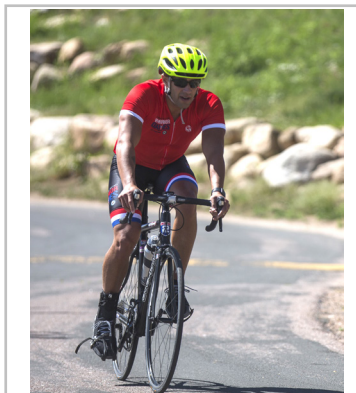
U.S. Marine Corps veteran Alexis Padilla joined the Marine Corps in July 2002. In 2011, during his deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he was in a convoy that hit an IED. Padilla's back was injured during the blast but he was never medically evacuated. After the deployment, he was told he had two herniated discs.

Along with injuring his back in combat, he had sustained other injuries throughout his career, including 3 right ankle surgeries, 2 left shoulder surgeries, and 1 left hip surgery. For each surgery, the physical therapy was 3-6 months long.

Padilla transferred to Wounded Warrior Battalion-West to help with the recovery process, while there he started swimming and cycling. Swimming was really easy on the body and helped a lot with the recovery. With cycling, he was able to up his cardio with out hurting himself further.

The Jacksonville, Florida, native was able to participate in the DoD Warrior Games in 2017 and earned 4 golds, 1 silver, and 1 bronze, and in the 2018 Warrior Games where he won 3 golds, 1 silver, and 1 bronze medals.

Padilla wants everyone to know, "You are not alone."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Danielle Pothoof

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/ Staff Sergeant/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Motor Transportation Operator

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Bay City, Michigan

CURRENT LOCATION

Springfield, Missouri

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Below Knee Amputee, TBI, PTSD

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Helmand Province, Afghanistan/2011

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Cycling, Sitting Volleyball, Track

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps veteran Danielle Pothoof joined the Marine Corps in October 2009 as a motor transportation operator. In 2011, during her deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, then, Lance Cpl. Pothoof was conducting convoy operations where her vehicle was struck by an Improvised Explosive Device. Her leg was crushed between the door and the floor of the vehicle, she was medically evacuated and had multiple surgeries in Bagram, Afghanistan, as well as Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Germany. After multiple surgeries Pothoof was transferred to Bethesda, Maryland, as an in-patient for treatment. She was eventually sent to Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune, N.C., where she started rehabilitation for her leg injuries and speech therapy for her traumatic brain injury.

Pothoof continued treatment with Wounded Warrior Battalion-East, and after more than a year and a half of physical therapy and speech therapy she was returned back to full duty. In 2016, Pothoof was transferred to Wounded Warrior Battalion-West due to continued complications with her leg. She spent months receiving treatments and having surgeries to try and contain the complications but after months of no results her lower left leg was amputated.

She dedicated multiple hours every day to physical therapy and getting fit for her prosthesis. She continued therapy and rehabilitation for 2 years and was medically retired January 31, 2018.

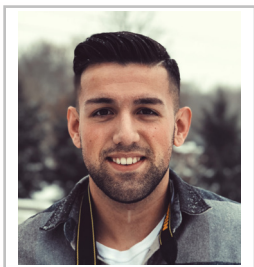
The Bay City, Michigan, native was selected for Warriors Games 2017, earning 1 gold, 2 silver, and 1 bronze medal, and Warrior Games 2018, earning 3 gold, 4 silver, and 1 bronze medal.

Pothoof says, "It is an amazing honor to be selected to represent the Marine Corps and Team U.S. at Invictus. This is an opportunity to show the world that no matter the struggle in life, if you push yourself past your absolute limits, there's nothing in the world you can't do. I feel proud to be selected and to represent my country and that's exactly what I will do."

"Without self-discipline, success is impossible."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Michael Sousadocarmo

RANK, SERVICE

E-4/ Corporal/ Marine Corps

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Machine Gunner

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Bartender

HOMETOWN

Millbrook, New York

CURRENT LOCATION

Oceanside, California

SCHOOL(S)

Mira Costa College

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Left Drop Foot

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Track, Field, Rowing, Sitting Volleyball, Golf

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

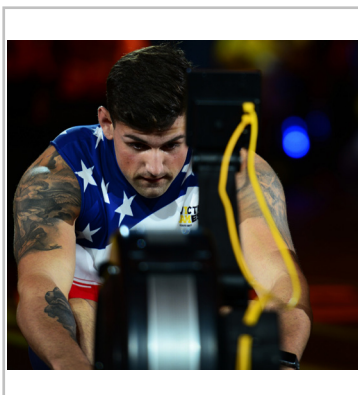
GySgt Kristin Bagley

202-437-2556

U.S. Marine Corps veteran Michael Sousadocarmo enlisted into the Marine Corps in 2015 as a machine gunner.

He was injured during a training event and after having back surgery to repair the injury, he woke up and couldn't feel his leg from the knee down, resulting in a condition called drop foot.

The Millbrook, New York, native says, "Being able to represent the Marine Corps and be part of Team U.S. at the Invictus Games is a tremendous honor. It means a lot given the situation where I can no longer serve in the infantry. I will continue to push limits and escape boundaries."





U.S. NAVY AND U.S. COAST GUARD

Petty Officer 3rd Class Brian Canich – *Veteran*

Petty Officer 3rd Class Mark Eldridge – *Veteran*

Petty Officer 1st Class Joshua Erickson – *Veteran*

Seaman Austin Field – *Veteran*

Petty Officer 3rd Class Jaime Garza – *Veteran*

Petty Officer 2nd Class Emmanuel Gonzalez

Petty Officer 3rd Class Damion Hedington – *Veteran*

Master Chief Petty Officer Raina Hockenberry

Petty Officer 2nd Class Mario Ingram

Lieutenant Daniel Lee (Coast Guard) – *Veteran*

Petty Officer 2nd Class Lerroy McCullough – *Veteran*

Lieutenant Jason Roberts – *Veteran*

Petty Officer 1st Class Tyson Schmidt – *Veteran*

Petty Officer 1st Class Carlos Valerio

U.S. Navy Public Affairs Point of Contact

Kyle Malloy

Marketing Account Manager

Navy Wounded Warrior

Commander, Navy Installations Command

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

U.S. Navy social media platforms

Facebook: www.facebook.com/USNavy

Twitter: www.twitter.com/USNavy

Instagram: www.instagram.com/usnavy

U.S. Navy Wounded Warrior –

Safe Harbor social media platforms

Website: www.navywoundedwarrior.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/navywoundedwarrior

Twitter: www.twitter.com/navywounded

Instagram: www.instagram.com/navywoundedwarrior

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Brian Canich

RANK, SERVICE

E-4, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Hospital Corpsman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Upland, CA

CURRENT LOCATION

Ramsay, MT

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Combat Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Wheelchair Basketball, Golf

Why I joined the Navy:

To get the education and experience in the medical field which would make it easier to become a smoke jumper/firefighter.

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:

I'm excited to participate and it's awesome to have the skills and ability to be on Team USA.

What I do for fun:

I like horseback riding, ranching, hunting, buying/selling cattle, and spending time with my family.

Who has been your biggest support on your road to recovery?

My wife because has been my biggest support through injuries - without her, I wouldn't be here.

Quote:

Never give up and go achieve your dreams.

Cowboy up!!

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Mark Eldridge

RANK, SERVICE

E-4, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Aviation Structural Mechanic

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Columbus, OH

CURRENT LOCATION

Grove City, OH

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Sitting Volleyball

What I am most proud of from my military service:

Knowing that when faced with a challenge, I have the ability to adapt and overcome it with the right attitude.

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games?

Sitting volleyball because I was a part of the 2017 Navy team that went undefeated for the entire Warrior Games.

Who is your biggest support on your road to recovery?

My family and close friends because they know me better than I know myself sometimes and are able to notice when I need help.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?

You're not the first, and definitely not the last person facing your challenge. Reach out to someone and ask for help and get back to enjoying life.

Favorite Quote:

"If you never try, you'll never know."

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Joshua Erickson

RANK, SERVICE

E-6, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Aviation Electrician's Mate

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Ruidoso, NM

CURRENT LOCATION

Lakeside, CA

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Combat Illness

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Archery, JRL Driving Challenge

What I am most proud of from my military service:
Serving my country

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:
Archery because when I shoot, I'm so focused and think about nothing else.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
Ask for help and don't try to take care of it yourself.

Who is your biggest support on your road to recovery?
My wife because she is there to listen to my problems and she pushes me forward when I need it.

Favorite Quote:
"Not all who is injured is broken."

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Austin Field

RANK, SERVICE

E-3, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Aviation Electronics Technician

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Amarillo, TX

CURRENT LOCATION

Amarillo, TX

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track, Wheelchair Basketball,
Wheelchair Tennis

What I am most proud of from my military service:
Representing my country

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games?
Sharing in the camaraderie and being in Sydney with my fellow teammates.

Who has been the greatest support on your road to recovery?
My parents because they were an important part of my recovery.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
It always gets better

Favorite Quote: "It's life, just roll with it."

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Jaime Garza

RANK, SERVICE

E-4, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Hospital Corpsman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Security Advisor

HOMETOWN

The Colony, TX

CURRENT LOCATION

Little Elm, TX

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

OEF/Philippines - 2010

EVENT(S)

Field, Powerlifting

What I am most proud of from my military service:
Humanitarian Missions as a Corpsman.

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:
Field because I don't lose!

Who has been the greatest support on your road to recovery?
My family because they have always been there.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
Push through, keep going!

Favorite Quote: "Just Livin' the Dream"

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Emmanuel Gonzalez

RANK, SERVICE

E-5, Navy

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Hospital Corpsman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Rialto, CA

CURRENT LOCATION

Camp Pendleton, CA

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Combat Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Archery, Rowing, Powerlifting

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

What I am most proud of from my military service:
Going through my recovery

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:
Archery because I competed in it last year and hopefully I've improved and can win a medal!

Who has been your greatest support on your road to recovery?
My kids because they gave me a reason to want to be a better person.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
Don't give up, see past the now and try to see what a positive future can look like and try to achieve it.

Favorite Quote: "Get Some!"

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Damion Hedington

RANK, SERVICE

E-4, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Operation Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Holden, LA

CURRENT LOCATION

Virginia Beach, VA

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Track

What I am most proud of from my military service:
Being contracted to go to SEALs training

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:
I'm excited to compete in archery and track because they're fun, I like training in them and improving my skills in both events.

Who has been your greatest support on your road to recovery?
Wounded warriors because they are the only people who understand and know how it feels. They're the people who didn't quit when times got hard. They are very inspiring.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
Pick your chin up and put a smile on your face, it's addictive.

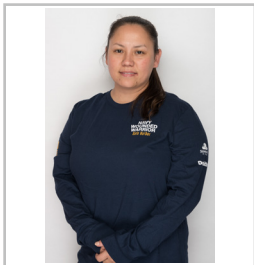
Favorite Quote: "The world isn't a peaceful place, we've all had very tough times and it'll drop you to your knees and keep you there permanently if you let it."

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Raina Hockenberry

RANK, SERVICE

E-9, Navy

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Personnel Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Kalihi, HI

CURRENT LOCATION

Honolulu, HI

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Combat Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Cycling, Powerlifting

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

What I am most proud of from my military service:
Knowing that you belong to something more than yourself.

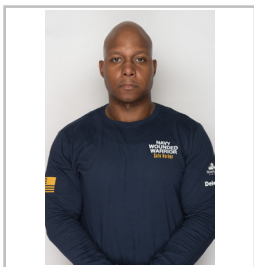
What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:
Life after an injury isn't an end. It's just a new normal. After you have this traumatic injury/illness, people treat you like your life will never be the same, and it will never be the same. And that's okay! You just find a new normal. Different is not bad.

Who has been your greatest support on your road to recovery?
My family because they believe in me and my fellow service members because they remind me why we do what we do.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
Continue to reach out.

Favorite Quote:
"Day one or one day. You decide."

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Mario Ingram

RANK, SERVICE

E-5, Navy

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Culinary Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Culinary Specialist

HOMETOWN

Aliceville, AL

CURRENT LOCATION

Orange Park, FL

SCHOOL(S)

Aliceville High School, Alabama St. U.

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Illness

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

April 2016

EVENT(S)

Track, Field, Powerlifting

What I Am most proud of from my military service:
Being able to help other countries in need.

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:
Wheelchair basketball and sitting volleyball because I like the competition. The competition is fierce and so is the camaraderie with my teammates.

Who has been your greatest support on your road to recovery?
My family because they stuck with me through the worst of me.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
Keep your head up and hang in there.

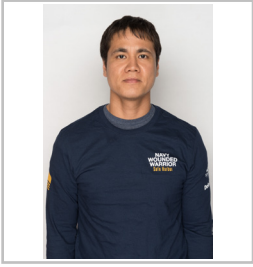
Favorite Quote:
"Even with the toughest time, always remember someone has it worse than you."

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Daniel Lee

RANK, SERVICE

O-3, Coast Guard

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Cyber Security

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

American Samoa

CURRENT LOCATION

Palm Harbor, FL

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track, Swimming, Cycling, Sitting Volleyball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

What I am most proud of from my military service:
Being a part of the humanitarian mission for the tsunami in Samoa 2009.

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:
Track because it is the biggest challenge for me. I used to run a lot but now with my pain and physical issues, it's become a challenge.

Who has been your greatest support on your road to recovery?
My wife because she helps me with everything I used to do on my own. She is always there even though it is hard dealing with me.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
Be patient. never give up.

Favorite quote:
"Psalm 91: He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the almighty."

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Lerroy McCullough

RANK, SERVICE

E-5, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Electrician Technician

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Bishopville, SC

CURRENT LOCATION

Kapolei, HI

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Archery, Powerlifting

Why I joined the Navy?
For my first job

What I do for fun:
Astrology and star-gazing

Quote:
"Today is the tomorrow that you worried about yesterday"

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Jason Roberts

RANK, SERVICE

O-3, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Auburn, NY

CURRENT LOCATION

Honolulu, HI

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Track

Why I joined the Navy:

I come from six generations of family serving and I wanted to continue the tradition.

What I do for fun:

Martial arts and photography

Quote:

"Sapere Aude Sine Timore"

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Tyson Schmidt

RANK, SERVICE

E-6, Navy

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Cryptologic Technician

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Retired

HOMETOWN

San Antonio, TX

CURRENT LOCATION

San Antonio, TX

SCHOOL(S)

Colorado State University

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Injury

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Field, Rowing, Power Lifting, Golf

What I am most proud of from my military service:

Just serving my country. There is a sense of pride and honor serving my country, particularly considering the division within our country and current state of the world. its nice to know you're part of making a difference.

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games:

The Field events because I just did an adaptive sports event and the coach that was running it invited me to paralympic trials so I must be good at it.

Who has been your greatest support on your road to recovery?

My parents and family because they have always been supportive from the beginning. They have been with me during the hard times and have always help keep me positive.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?

Never give up. God has a plan. As hard as things may seem now, there's a lesson learned in everything you go through.

Favorite Quote:

"I am the master of my faith, master of my soul."

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Carlos Valerio

RANK, SERVICE

E-6, Navy

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Hospital Corpsman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Hospital Corpsman

HOMETOWN

El Paso, TX

CURRENT LOCATION

Emmitsburg, MD

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Illness

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Light Armed Recon BN 2016

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Track, Sitting Volleyball

What I am most proud of from my military service:
Helping others.

What I am looking forward to competing in at the 2018 Invictus Games?
Knowing that I can be great with my new normal because I am blessed with the opportunity to be a part of the team.

Who is your biggest support on your road to recovery?
My wife because of her enormous strength and support.

What I would say to someone currently facing challenges?
Find your victory everyday!

Favorite Quote: "Find your victory and with God everything is possible!"

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Kyle Malloy

kyle.malloy@navy.mil



U.S. AIR FORCE

Senior Airman Jami Biviano - *Veteran*

Senior Airman Heather Carter - *Veteran*

Master Sgt. Linn Dillard

Tech. Sgt. Christopher Ferrell - *Veteran*

Master Sgt. Kenneth "Kennie" Guinn

Master Sgt. Shanon "Shay" Hampton - *Veteran*

Capt Lawrence "Rob" Hufford - *Veteran*

Staff Sgt. Sebastiana Lopez-Arrellano - *Veteran*

Capt Kristen Morris - *Veteran*

1st Lt. Ryan Novak

Tech. Sgt. Ryan Pinney - *Veteran*

Master Sgt. Benjamin Seekell

Tech. Sgt. Joshua Smith - *Veteran*

Senior Airman Hannah Stolberg - *Veteran*

Master Sgt. Brian Williams

U.S. Air Force Public Affairs Point of Contact

Shawn Sprayberry

Communications Program Manager

Air Force Wounded Warrior Program

Shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

U.S. Air Force social media platforms

Facebook: www.facebook.com/USairforce

Twitter: www.twitter.com/usairforce

Instagram: www.instagram.com/usairforce

U.S. Air Force Wounded Warrior Program Office social media platforms

Website: www.woundedwarrior.af.mil

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AirForceWoundedWarrior

Twitter: www.twitter.com/AFW2

Instagram: www.instagram.com/AFW2

Flickr: www.flickr.com/AirForceWoundedWarrior

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Jamie Biviano

RANK, SERVICE

E-4/SrA/US Air Force

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Security Forces

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Syracuse, New York

CURRENT LOCATION

Syracuse, New York

SCHOOL(S)

Chittenango High School

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Track, Cycling, Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Retired Senior Airman Biviano joined the New York Air National Guard in June 2008 as a Security Forces Defender. In 2012 she deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. It was during that deployment that she started to exhibit symptoms that would later be diagnosed as transverse myelitis, an inflammation of one section of the spinal cord. After being unable to serve as security forces, she said she struggled to understand her purpose. The Air Force Wounded Warrior Program introduced her to adaptive sports and athletes that actively assist her understanding that there are more ways to contribute to humanity. While she initially thought her diagnosis would limit her athletic ability she found that adaptive sports and her fiancé's motivation have helped her, in her words, "to overcome obstacles and barriers I had no idea I was capable of overcoming."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Heather Carter

RANK, SERVICE

E-4/SrA/US Air Force

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Signals Intelligence Analyst

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Reach Orthotics & Prosthetic Svcs

HOMETOWN

Barrington, Rhode Island

CURRENT LOCATION

Newport News Virginia

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Amputee

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Track/Field, Cycling, Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Retired Senior Airman Heather Carter joined the Air Force in 2008 as a Signals Intelligence Analyst, graduating in the Top 5% of her technical school class as the class leader. Her supervisors called her a “Critical Conduit” helping facilitate an analysis of a system worth \$100 Million, proving herself to be a dedicated and highly motivated Airman. She always loved sports but, following her amputation, was unable to see a way of being competitive again. Heather says, “The Air Force Wounded Warrior Program helped me by introducing me to adaptive ways of performing sports that I previously loved and provided the means of psychologically accepting my new physique and way of life.” Her goal is to create a kayaking program for blind Air Force veterans and she hopes to work more with disabled people, helping out in many areas that she feels currently need work. Heather says she’s truly honored to represent the Air Force at Warrior Games, “It gives me a sense of accomplishment. After enduring my injury while representing the Air Force I thought my athletic days were over. This has shown me new ways of adapting to sports again and getting selected has shown me how far I have come since the beginning.”



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Linn Dillard

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/MSgt/US Air Force

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Explosive Ordnance Disposal

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Spring Branch, Texas

CURRENT LOCATION

Tyndall AFB, Florida

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Cancer

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

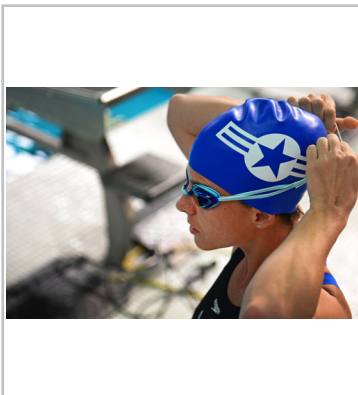
Swimming, Track, Cycling, Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

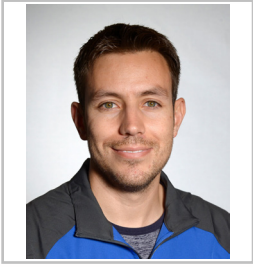
Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Master Sgt. Linn Dillard joined the Air Force in 2004 as a Medical Laboratory technician, retraining into Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) in 2009. Shortly after retraining she volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom where she was instrumental in expanding the EOD footprint in the region. Sgt. Knight helped build a 24,000 square foot compound, relocating 7 teams along with equipment and storage facilities, enhancing mission effectiveness. In 2013 she was diagnosed with breast cancer and was treated at the Airman Medical Transition Unit (AMTU) at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. She said, "After all I have been through, I really value my health. Every lap, every sprint, and every lift makes me feel grateful to be alive. Competing keeps me motivated to train, eat right, and maximize my body's potential."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Kenneth "Kenny" Guinn

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/MSgt/US Air Force

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Explosive Ordnance Disposal

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Sunray, Texas

CURRENT LOCATION

Tyndall AFB, Florida

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

PTSD, TBI

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan

EVENT(S)

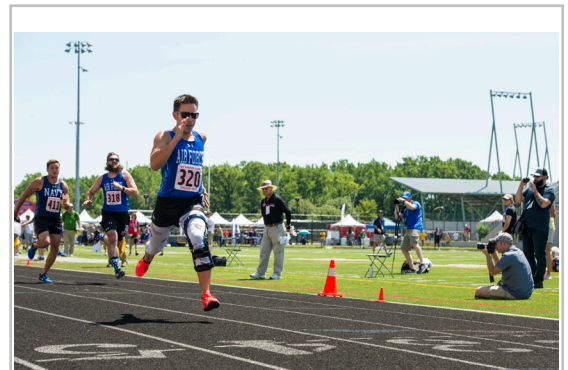
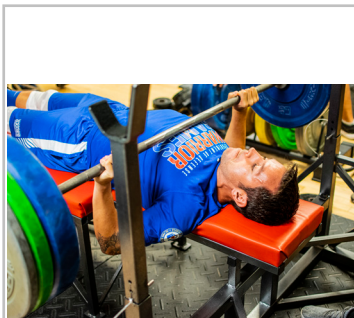
Track/Field, Powerlifting, Sitting Volleyball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

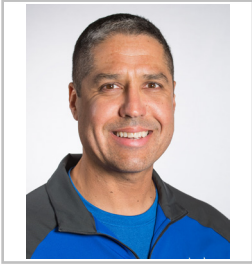
Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Master Sgt. Kenneth Guinn joined the Air Force in 2004 as an EOD tech, starting out his career at Lackland AFB, Texas. Kennie deployed multiple times, suffering a traumatic brain injury during one deployment and blowing out both knees on another. This is his second Warrior Games competition, a feat his doctors never thought he would be able to do again. Now, he competes to be part of a "team" again. "It gives me a reason to push harder and further when I don't want," he said. "Because I know that I have a team that is counting on me. Last year, proving to myself that I wasn't broken and out of the fight was my biggest motivator. I accomplished what I set out to do, so this year I'd like to focus more on helping others and the team."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Shanon "Shay" Hampton

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/MSgt/US Air Force

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Tactical Air Control Party

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Santa Clarita, California

CURRENT LOCATION

Reno, Nevada

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

TBI

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Undisclosed location

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Cycling, Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

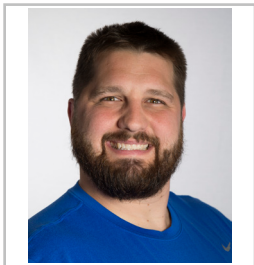
Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Retired Master Sgt. Shanon "Shay" Hampton has had an interesting career as a full-time Air Force Reservist. He has served as a Tactical Air Control Party specialist, a firefighter and an aircraft loadmaster. During his career he deployed multiple times in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and has supported operations in the Horn of Africa. His first competition with the Air Force was at the 2018 Air Force Trials. He said, "Competition is in my blood, always has been!" His primary focus at Warrior Games is, "To better myself and those around me, after all you cannot lead from the rear! Participating in the Warrior Games allows me to do just that! It also allows me to show others in my community that are ill or injured that they can still move forward in life; they are not a loss, they are loved and cared about...just keep pushing forward, find a reason, any excuse to win!"



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Lawrence "Rob" Hufford

RANK, SERVICE

O-3/Capt/US Air Force

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Civil Engineering Officer

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Insurance Salesman

HOMETOWN

Hamilton, Ohio

CURRENT LOCATION

Omaha, Nebraska

SCHOOL(S)

U.S. Air Force Academy (2006)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

TBI

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Undisclosed location

EVENT(S)

Field, Rowing, Powerlifting

Retired Captain Lawrence "Rob" Hufford is a graduate of the U.S Air Force Academy class of 2006, serving as Chief of Construction Management. Rob's career was peppered with phrases like, "Proven leader," and "Superb officer!" As a sophomore at the Academy he set a personal best in the shot put, with a 47 foot throw. It is this athletic ability that will contribute greatly to the success of the Air Force Warrior Games Team. He says his competition at Warrior Games is about being an example. "Not only does it show that I and others are Warriors and won't let anything hold us back," he said. "But, I also enjoy the camaraderie and fight between the Services. There will always be intra-Service banter as to who is better or weaker. At WG, we get to settle it on the field!"

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Sebastiana Lopez-Arellano

RANK, SERVICE

E-5/SSgt/US Air Force

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Crew Chief

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

San Bernadino, California

CURRENT LOCATION

New Braunfels, Texas

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Amputee, Nerve Damage

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

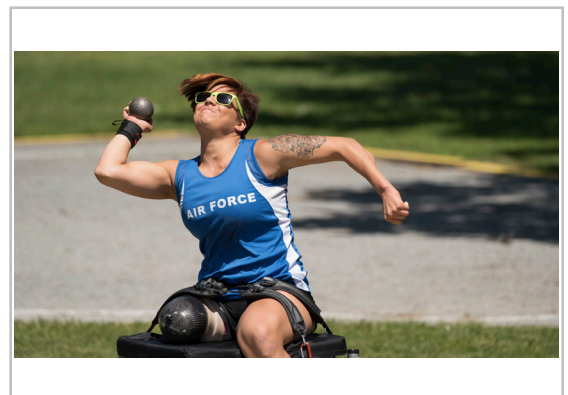
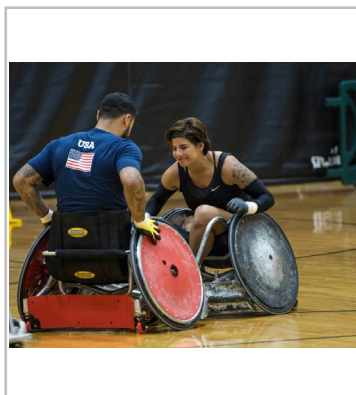
Track/Field, Cycling, Rowing, Powerlifting, Wheelchair Rugby

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Staff Sgt. Sebastiana Lopez Arellano joined the Air Force in 2009 as a C-17 Crew Chief and has been responsible for preparing units for deployment and tracking health and individual mobility requirements. In her off-duty time, she coaches youth volleyball and works on her Associate's Degree in Aviation Maintenance Technology. Sebastiana says sports competition is in her DNA and that, despite her injury, she works to stay positive and get up every morning to continue working towards her goals. She competes in crossfit and recently made an appearance at the Arnold Classic.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Kristen Morris

RANK, SERVICE

O-3/Capt/USAF

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Pilot, C-130J

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Camas, Washington

CURRENT LOCATION

Destin, Florida

SCHOOL(S)

U.S. Air Force Academy (2012)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

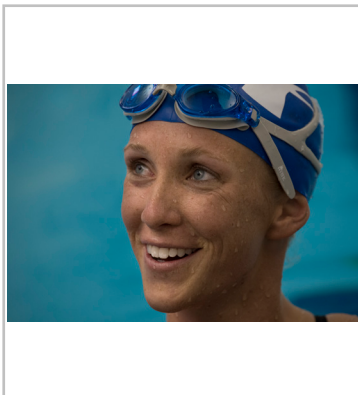
Swimming,
Track/Field,Cycling,Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Retired Captain Kristen Morris is a graduate of the Class of 2012, U.S. Air Force Academy. She earned her pilot wings as a mobility pilot in the C-130J. Throughout her career she was known as a “Dedicated and motivated officer” and was seen as a “go-to for every challenge.” Kristen served on active duty for 4 years until she was diagnosed with a hip disorder that required replacement of her right hip. Initially she chose a less invasive procedure involving steroid shots, but they began to give less relief, leading to the decision for hip replacement. Kristen says, “Adaptive sports allow all my physical limitations to no longer limit me in an athletic capacity.” Also, it is an incredible privilege to be able to represent the Air Force and to be a part of the amazing team we have!



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Ryan Novack

RANK, SERVICE

O-2/1st Lt/USAF

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Flight Commander

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Aurora, Illinois

CURRENT LOCATION

Andersen AFB, Guam

SCHOOL(S)

U.S. Air Force Academy (2015)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

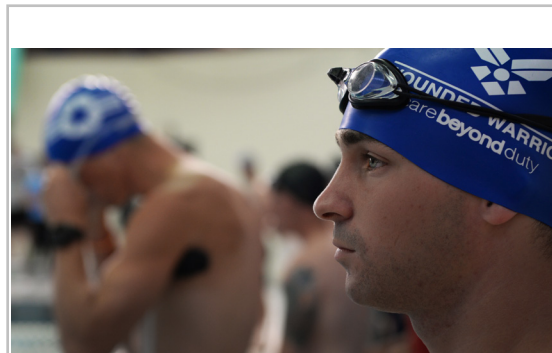
Swimming, Track/Field

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

First Lieutenant Ryan Novack was commissioned in the Air Force in 2015 as a Materiel Officer. He led production efforts for 185 Airmen responsible for managing accountability and reliability of munitions in the Air Force's largest conventional munitions stockpile supporting Pacific Air Force operations. Lt. Novack was ranked as the top 2nd Lieutenant out of 13 in his maintenance group, winning accolades and praise from his leadership who say, "Ryan's off to a running start." He was enrolled in the Air Force wounded Warrior Program following a recreational bike accident that initially left him fully paralyzed after he burst-fractured his T12 vertebrae. Currently, he has enough mobility to walk but still suffers partial paralysis below his knees. Of Warrior Games he says, "Training for the Games keeps me motivated to improve my overall strength, health and well-being. More importantly, the Games provide a venue to me where I feel like I can celebrate that despite the literal paralysis of my injury, I can still go out and compete in sports! Having done one Warrior Games and seeing how I stacked up against the competition has given me the confidence boost I needed to know that my life is not over, it has only just begun, and it is still promising and fulfilling!"



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Ryan Pinney

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/TSgt/USAF

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Aerial Refueler

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Phoenix, Arizona

CURRENT LOCATION

Phoenix, Arizona

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Spinal cord injury (T-12 vertebrae)

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track/Field, Cycling, Powerlifting, Wheelchair Basketball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Retired TSgt Ryan Pinney enlisted in the Air Force 9 Feb 2001 as an Aerial Refueler. His first assignment was to Fairchild AFB, WA with the 96th Air Refueling Squadron. While with the 96th ARS, he deployed many times to Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia, Al Dhafra AB, UAE, Al Udeid AB, Qatar and flew more than 200 combat sorties in a KC-135. In 2006, TSgt Pinney transferred from the active duty side of the Air Force and joined the 161 Air Refueling Wing with the Arizona Air National Guard. While with the 161 ARW, TSgt Pinney continued to deploy and fly combat missions. On 2 July 2012, TSgt. Pinney returned home from his last deployment. Ten days after he returned, he fell off a bicycle and encountered a spinal cord injury. He is currently going through physical therapy and continuing to recover from the injury that changed his life forever. While recovering, he joined Team Ride 430 to raise money for other wounded Marines, Sailors, Soldiers, and Airmen and helped the organization raise more than \$430,000. He also participated in the ride and became the first person to complete the more than 380 mile ride on a hand-cycle.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Benjamin Seekell

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/MSgt/USAF

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Security Forces Instructor

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Charlestown, Rhode Island

CURRENT LOCATION

Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, TX

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track/Field, Cycling, Rowing

Master Sergeant Benjamin Seekell joined the Air Force December 2004 in Security Forces as a military working dog handler. In 2011, during his deployment to Bagram Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Sgt. Seekell was conducting a routine foot patrol mission outside the airfield when he and his patrol dog, Charlie, stepped on a landmine blowing them both in the air. His first reaction was to attend to his team, including Charlie. Charlie had multiple shrapnel wounds to his hind quarters and his ear drums had burst during the explosion but made a full recovery. After recovering from multiple surgeries to remove his left leg below the knee, Sgt. Seekell dedicated four to five hours every day to physical therapy and getting fit for his prosthesis. He was returned to active duty and was selected for Warriors Games 2015, earning two bronze medals, and Invictus Games 2016, earning one gold and two silver medals. He was recently selected to be the Team Co-Captain for the Air Force at Warrior Games 2017 and to represent the USA at the Invictus Games in Toronto 2017. Ben says, "It is an amazing honor to represent the Air Force at Warrior Games. It is an opportunity not afforded to most and I feel an immense responsibility to showcase the excellence that makes our service great!"

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Joshua Smith

RANK, SERVICE

E-6/TSgt/USAF

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Aircrew Life Support

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Fairfield, Montana

CURRENT LOCATION

Spanish Fork, Utah

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track/Field, Cycling, Rowing, Wheelchair Basketball and Rugby

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Retired Tech Sgt. Joshua Smith joined the Air Force 2003 as an Aircrew Flight Equipment specialist. During the POW Camp and Resistance Training portion of Combat Survival School, Joshua was thrown into a culvert that led to injuries that plagued him for over thirteen years. He had bilateral hip surgery in 2015, surgery on the right shoulder and elbow shoulder surgery which decreased his range of motion. Joshua feels the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program impacted his recovery in a positive way saying, "I have been impacted through the adaptive sports program, the association with other Wounded Warriors, the mentoring of the staff, and the association with other branches." His experience representing the Air Force leaves him humbled and honored and says, "This is a huge blessing that has helped me continue to train, work hard, overcome, and adapt to my new lifestyle with the injuries, illnesses, and wounds I have suffered while serving on active duty for 13 years."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Hannah Stolberg

RANK, SERVICE

E-4/SrA/USAF

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Contracting and Acquisitions

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Student

HOMETOWN

Las Cruces, New Mexico

CURRENT LOCATION

Austin, Texas

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

PTSD/TBI

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

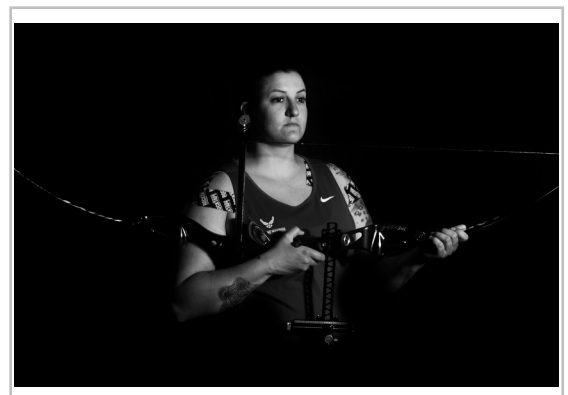
Swimming, Cycling, Archery, Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Retired Senior Airmen Hannah Stolberg enlisted in the Air Force Oct 2010 as a Contracting Officer delivering strategic sourcing, acquisition support, while ensuring contractual compliance with applicable procurement regulations, policies, and directives within federal statutes. A notable accomplishment for Hannah was when she aced her Contracting Officer exam; earning 92% first time up! After her injury she felt broken and confused. All that changed when she attended an Air Force Wounded Warrior (AFW2) adaptive sports camp. She had been told of all the things she couldn't do because of her injury, however at AFW2 sport camp, she was encouraged to adapt and overcome obstacles, set and accomplish goals, and rely on your warrior team family. She says, "Competing in the Warrior Games gives me a renewed sense of purpose and motivation. Adaptive sports has made me a better person mentally, physically, and spiritually and has introduced me to the most incredible and resilient people I have ever met."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Brian Williams

RANK, SERVICE

E-7/MSgt/USAF

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Security Forces Instructor

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Sierra Vista, Arizona

CURRENT LOCATION

Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, TX

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

Left leg amputee

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Afghanistan

EVENT(S)

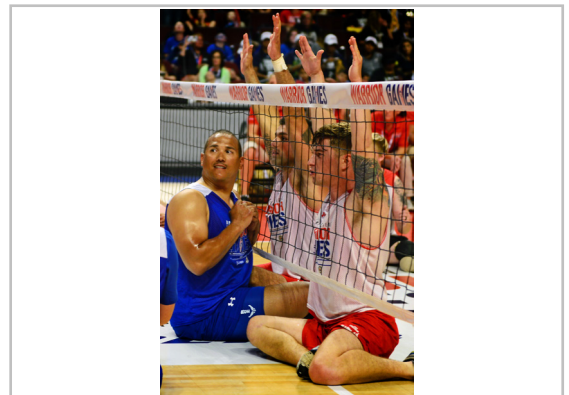
Cycling, Rowing, Wheelchair Basketball, Rugby and Tennis

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Shawn Sprayberry

shawn.sprayberry.2@us.af.mil

Master Sergeant Brian Williams joined the Air Force in 2000 as a Security Forces military working dog handler. During his second deployment to Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he was injured by an improvised explosive device after attempting to clear a known Taliban compound. The blast amputated his left leg above the knee and caused damage to his left arm. He said that if it weren't for a watch he was wearing on that wrist during the blast he would have lost his hand in the explosion as well. Despite his injuries, he worked hard to stay on active duty, earning a position as a Security Forces Instructor. Brian competed in the 2015, 2016 Warrior Games and 2016 and 2017 Invictus Games, he says adaptive sports, "Gives me a new sense of purpose, playing ball with the local wheelchair basketball team is fun, it gives me an outlook of what I could possibly do once I have finished my enlistment."





U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Spec. Vairon Caicedo-Ocampo

First Sgt. Jarrid Collins

Chief Petty Officer Phillip Fong

Maj. Lee Harvey

Capt. Brian Hotchkiss

Sgt. 1st Class Brant Ireland

Master Sgt. Keith "AJ" Jackson

Sgt. Major Shawn Mello - Veteran

Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Norman

Master Sgt. Edward O'Neil - Veteran

Sgt. 1st Class Dawn Page

Master Sgt. Francis Reilly

Sgt. 1st Class Sualauvi Tuimalealiifano - Veteran

Master Sgt. George Vera

Staff Sgt. Jason Wakefield - Veteran

U.S. Special Operations Command Public Affairs Point of Contact

Phillip Chitty, LT, USN

Action Officer

USSOCOM Office of Communication

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

U.S. Special Operations Command social media platforms

Facebook: www.facebook.com/socom

Twitter: www.twitter.com/USSOCOM

Instagram: www.instagram.com/specialoperations

U.S. Special Operations Command Warrior Care Program (Care Coalition) social media platforms

Website: www.socom.mil/care-coalition

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sofcarecoalition

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Vairon Caicedo-Ocampo

RANK, SERVICE

Specialist, U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Unit Supply Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Tampa, FL

CURRENT LOCATION

Fayetteville, N.C.

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track, Sitting Volleyball

U.S. Army Spc. Vairon Caicedo-Ocampo is an active duty Unit Supply Specialist.

Caicedo-Ocampo suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury, and was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins Follicular lymphoma.

Caicedo-Ocampo competes because "I would like to show that I am capable of being healthy and to fight cancer. To let the cancer know that I am a stronger person, and to be a motivational person for others."

His motivation is his entire family, especially his wife Sharon and son, Kingston.

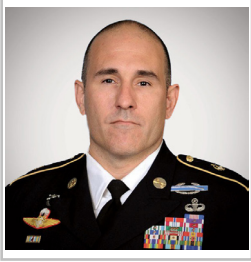
Caicedo-Ocampo previously competed in the 2018 Department of Defense Warrior Games, his first military adaptive sports competition event. He competed in sitting volleyball, cycling, track and field, swimming, rowing.

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Jarrid Collins

RANK, SERVICE

First Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Special Warfare Medical Group

CURRENT OCCUPATION

First Sgt., Special Warfare Med. Group

HOMETOWN

Scobey, MT

CURRENT LOCATION

Ft. Bragg, N. C.

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Track, Wheelchair Rugby

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

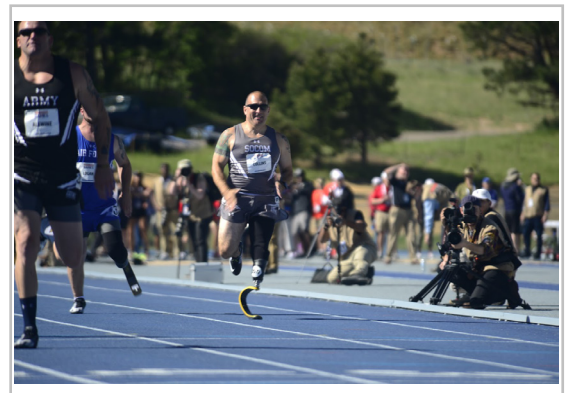
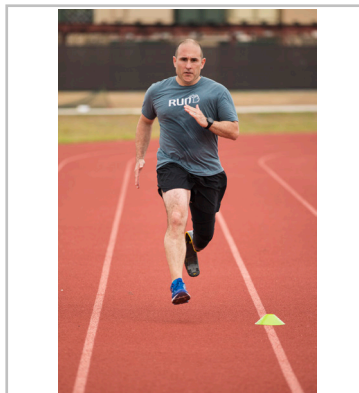
Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

A Green Beret with 21 years of service, First Sergeant Jarrid Collins was born and raised in Scobey, Montana. In 1996, he joined the U.S. Army as an Intelligence Analyst (96B). His initial duty station was with the 8th Army in Pyong Taek, South Korea. In 1997, he was assigned to the 4th ID (Mechanized) at Fort Carson, Colorado. In 1999, he was nominated for and assigned to Royal Air Force Base Molesworth, UK. In 2001, he returned stateside and was assigned to 1/325 82nd Airborne.

First Sergeant Collins was selected to support US CENTCOM in April - September, 2002 for the early stages of the War on Terror. He attended Special Forces Assessment and Selections (SFAS) in October 2002. In 2004, he completed the Special Forces Qualification Course and was assigned as an 18D, Special Forces Medical Sergeant, to the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne). While assigned to 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), he participated in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM as well as multiple deployments to the SOUTHCOM Areas of Operation. In 2008, he was assigned to the Special Warfare Medical Group to be a Combat Medic instructor. At the Medical Group, he instructed Combat Trauma Management, Advanced Life Support, Basic Life Support, Pediatric Advanced Life Support, and Triage. In 2009, he was assigned to a Special Missions Unit, serving as a Senior Medic and Team Sergeant. While assigned to the Special Mission Unit, he participated in deployments to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and OPERATION NEW DAWN. In January 2014, First Sergeant Collins was assigned to Walter Reed National Medical Center to rehabilitate from a below the knee amputation. In July 2014, he was assigned to 1st Special Forces Command's (A) Office of Special Warfare directorate, where he developed the Non-Standard Medical Team, SOF Austere Care Course (SOFACC), and Regional Support Medic (RSM) Course. In April of 2017, First Sergeant Collins Assumed Duties as HHC First Sergeant for the Special Warfare Medical Group (A).

First Sergeant Collins' military and civilian education include: the Special Forces Qualification Course (18D), Warriors Leaders Course, Senior Leaders Course, and Advanced Leaders Course, Airborne School, Static Line Jumpmaster, Military Freefall Course, and Military Freefall Jump Master. He is a graduate of Norwich University with a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership. His awards and decorations include the Soldiers Medal, Bronze Star, Purple Heart w/Oak Leaf Cluster, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal w/Oak Leaf Cluster, Joint Service Commendation Medal w/Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal w/ three Oak Leaf Cluster, Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal w/ Oak Leaf Cluster, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan and Iraq Campaign Medals, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Military Freefall Jumpmaster Badge, and Special Forces Tab.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Phillip Fong

RANK, SERVICE

Chief Petty Officer, U.S. Navy

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Machinist's Mate

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Operations Manager

HOMETOWN

Stafford, TX

CURRENT LOCATION

Riverview, FL

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Field, Powerlifting

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

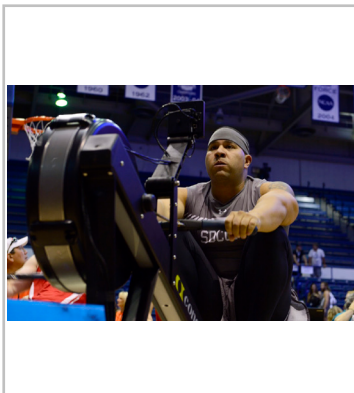
Chief Fong was born in Houston, Texas in 1982. He joined the Navy as an Engineman in 2002 and reported to Recruit Training Command Great Lakes for Engineering Common Core, Mechanical Core, and "A" School where graduated Distinguished Graduate from each. His first permanent duty station was the USS REUBEN JAMES (FFG-57), homeport Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. While aboard the USS REUBEN JAMES, he held various positions ranging from Maintenance Man to Auxiliaries Division Leading Petty Officer and advanced from ENFA to Engineman Second Class.

Upon departing the REUBEN JAMES he transferred to Joint Mobile Ashore Support Team (JMAST) in Sigonella, Italy where he earned several awards and achievements and was meritoriously advanced to Engineman First Class. During a deployment to Monrovia, Liberia EN1 contracted Cerebral Malaria and was transferred in 2008 to National Naval Hospital Bethesda.

After rehabilitation at Naval Hospital Bethesda, he received orders to Naval Small Craft Instructional and Technical Training School (NAVSCIATTS) Stennis Space Center, Mississippi in 2009. He served as the Leading Petty Officer of Maintenance and Training and deployed to various locations around the world. EN1 Fong was selected as Command Sailor of the Year, Instructor of the Year, and Naval Special Warfare Group Four Sailor of the Year in 2012. Upon completion of this tour he reported in August 2012 to SOMERSET LPD-25 PCU in Avondale, LA. After reporting onboard PCU Somerset he was advanced to Chief Petty Officer and converted to a Machinist Mate. He is currently stationed at NOSC Tampa as the Operations and Training Officer Department Head.

Chief Fong is qualified as an Expeditionary Warfare Specialist, Enlisted Surface Warfare, Master Training Specialist, and a Coxswain on several Naval Special Warfare Craft. His awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (7), Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, as well as various unit and campaign awards.

Chief Fong has a wonderful wife and 3 great sons. All of which reside with him in Riverview, FL.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Lee Harvey

RANK, SERVICE

Maj., U.S. Army

STATUS

National Guard

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Special Forces Detachment Cmdr.

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Houston, TX

CURRENT LOCATION

El Paso, TX

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track, Field, Powerlifting

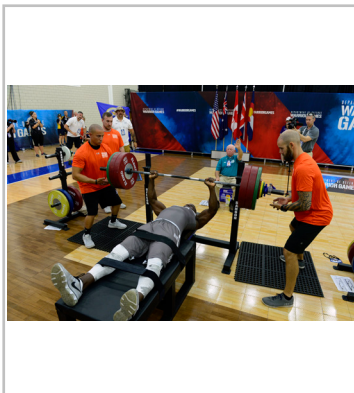
MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

I have always felt my injuries have not stopped me but instead provided me with yet another opportunity to demonstrate my inner grit. I love competition and participating in these tests of strength, speed and will with the men and women of USSOCOM would be an honor.

I absolutely love giving back and working with today's youth. I'm active with the Big Brother Program and the Omega Psi Phi Youth ministries. I came from a dirt-poor family where I was the first in the history of my family to ever attend college, let alone graduate. We grew up on government assistance and my mother was legally blind and could not read or write. Despite her struggles she instilled in me an undying drive to succeed. Since my youth I've become college educated, played a small stint in the National Football League, worked at NASA as a scientist and engineer and became a Detachment and Company Commander in the United States Army Special Forces. I firmly believe the rough road to where I am now was laid out as such so that I could use my lessons learned in life to provide mentorship to youth in achieving their goals and aspirations.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Brian Hotchkiss

RANK, SERVICE

Capt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Infantry

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Mora, MN

CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Stewart, GA

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Cycling

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

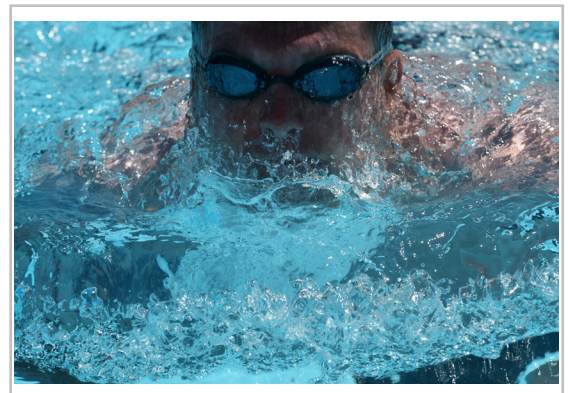
I was wounded in an IED blast in Orzagun, Afghanistan on July 30, 2005. I had blast injuries to my lower extremities. I was in the gun turret during the time of the blast. I had minor shrapnel in the legs, severe bruising and difficulty walking for a couple of weeks. I was RTD a few days later from Kandahar and remained at Cobra Firebase with my ODA until November, 2005. I currently have piriformis syndrome that is related to the injury but not limited in any way.

My life feels as if I've had to consistently persevere, but when I put things in perspective, I think I have it quite well. I grew up in rural Minnesota. My family was extremely poor, but I valued education. I enlisted in the Army and was selected for Special Forces before 9/11. After many deployments and 20 years, I earned my bachelor's degree in order to become a commissioned officer.

Over the years, one memory stands out. I was working to become a Combat Diver. This was very difficult for me. I could have easily given up, but my Team Sargent at the time, Guy Valiquette, said to me (after drowning, of course) "don't quit on me and I won't quit on you." I completed CDQC a few months later and went on to be a Dive Supervisor. Master Sargent Valiquette didn't give up on me, I didn't give up on myself and never looked back.

My wife Carla and daughters Elisabeth and Emma would follow me to the end of the earth and have been solid support in everything that I do.

Several things motivate me for many different reasons. I love cycling for many reasons, but mostly no matter what kind of mood I am in before I go riding, without fail, I will be in a great mood after. Hard exercise has always been an emotional reset for me. In my career, young Soldiers that aspire to be more motivate me and have influenced me to become an officer.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Brant Ireland

RANK, SERVICE

Sgt. 1st Class, U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Special Forces Intel/Medic

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Special Forces Intel Sgt.

HOMETOWN

Columbus, OH

CURRENT LOCATION

Willow Spring, N.C.

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Rowing, Wheelchair Rugby

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

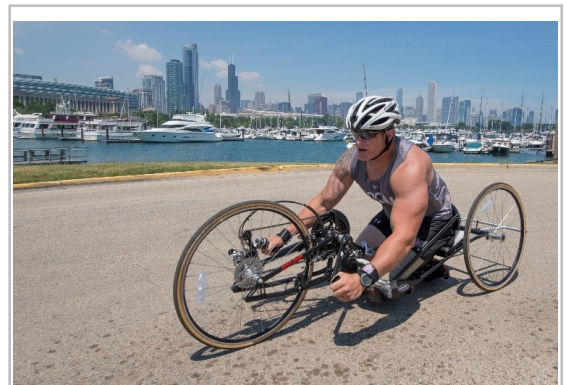
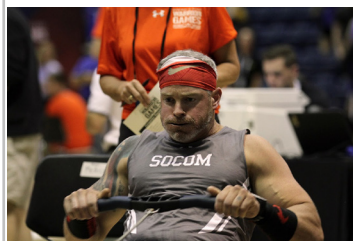
Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

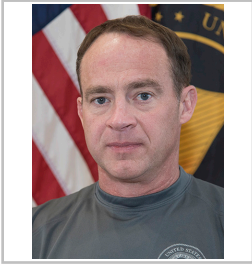
Sergeant First Class Brant Ireland was born in Columbus, Ohio. He enlisted in the United States Army in July, 1993 and completed Infantry One Station Unit Training at Fort Benning, Georgia. Brant has served in the Army for over twelve years, the majority of it in 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne). He was injured in June, 2003 during a night combat operation with Afghan Commandos in the mountains of Eastern Afghanistan. He suffered severe damage to his lower left leg. During his recovery he elected to have his leg amputated after attempts to use various braces to support his leg ultimately failed.

In January of this year, Brant returned to his unit at Fort Bragg where he continues physical therapy and transitions to his new position as the 3rd Special Forces Group Wounded Warrior liaison.

Although relatively new to adaptive sports, Brant was introduced to sled hockey and hand biking while in San Antonio. He was able to compete in a tournament with the San Antonio Rampage Sled Hockey team and completed a MS 150 on the hand bike. He stated "I grew up playing several different sports, so I am looking forward to the challenge of learning and sharing this experience with other soldiers who may be interested in all the options available to stay active and competitive, regardless of any physical setbacks."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



AJ Jackson

RANK, SERVICE

Master Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Observer Coach Trainer Team Sgt.

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Holts Summit, MO

CURRENT LOCATION

Ft. Bragg, N.C.

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Rowing

Master Sergeant Keith "AJ" Jackson joined US Army Special Operations in 2005. He was initially assigned to Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne). In 2007, while conducting a "right seat - left seat" handover mission in Kandahar, Afghanistan with a 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Detachment, he was involved in a vehicle accident, resulting in a dislocated shoulder, TBI and a small spine fracture.

After recovering, AJ attempted his first bike race in the fall of 2015, and became a regular competitor in North Carolina in 2016. He was selected to the US Special Operations Command Warrior Games Cycling Team in March, 2016.

He stated, "Watching many of my friends lose the physical capability to serve on an Operational Detachment over the years was heartbreaking. What I didn't understand was the profound sense of being outcast and the loneliness this creates. Military Adaptive Athletics has returned my sense of 'physical training with purpose'. Being selected to serve on the SOCOM Warrior Games team and now, Invictus Team USA has returned my sense of 'Team' both on the field of competition, and at the unit. I highly encourage Commanders and Senior Enlisted Leaders to research the adaptive sports avenues and venues available to your Service Members. There is no downside."

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Shawn Mello

RANK, SERVICE

Sgt. Major, U.S. Army

STATUS

Veteran (Retired)

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Special Forces Senior Sgt.

CURRENT OCCUPATION

USSOCOM Civilian

HOMETOWN

Clearwater, FL

CURRENT LOCATION

Tampa, FL

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Archery, Cycling

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

Sergeant Major (Retired) Shawn Mello enlisted as an 18D/Special Forces Medic and has over 20 years of active service. He received promotion through the ranks in Special Forces to the rank and grade of 18Z - SGM/E-9. SGM Mello served in numerous overseas deployments to Europe, the Middle East, Central America and South America. After retiring in July 2005, he is now employed as a government civilian at United States Special Operations Command.

In March 2003, during a training exercise at the Special Forces Combat Diver School, SGM Mello was run over by a F470 Combat Rubber Raiding Craft boat that resulted in extensive vascular and nerve damage to his lower right leg as well as multiple fractures to the right femur which resulted in the amputation of the lower right leg. After having multiple follow-on surgeries in an attempt to repair nerves in the affected leg, he ultimately had a revision surgery to shorten his residual limb. Now after a full recovery he is involved in many sports oriented activities to include cycling, hunting and fishing, as well as being an advocate of various outdoor activities.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Douglas Norman

RANK, SERVICE

Sgt. 1st Class, U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Special Forces Comms. Sgt.

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Casper, WY

CURRENT LOCATION

Cameron, N.C.

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Cycling, Sitting Volleyball, Golf

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Norman, a member of U.S. Special Operations Command's team (SOCOM) and a former member of 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), competed in the 2018 Department of Defense Warrior Games held at the U.S. Air Force Academy, June 1-9, 2018.

Norman, who suffered a traumatic brain injury while serving as a Green Beret, first started participating in adaptive sports two and a half years ago.

"It was not anything that I expected," said Norman. "I usually push back from stuff like that because there is an idea that adaptive sports is only for people who are missing limbs, and it's not for an able-bodied person."

This year Norman participated in track, sitting volleyball, swimming and cycling. His first introduction to adaptive sports was an adaptive sports triathlon camp.

Although Norman admitted he was not good at any of the sports, his time there relit his competitive spirit.

"What really hooked me was seated volleyball and cycling," he said. Although Norman initially started playing adaptive sports as a distraction, he was surprised to find that it also helped him recover.

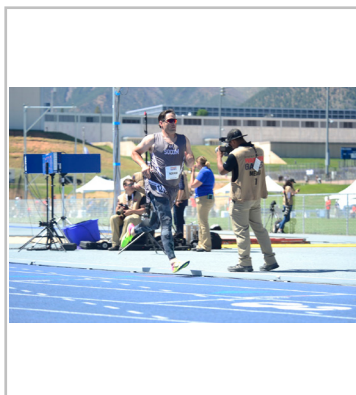
"It's amazing how fast and targeted it was to my recovery, and still is," said Norman.

"We are not ones to run to sick call," Norman said. "We are not ones to sit in the waiting room. We suck it up and drive on. We work through all natures of malfunctions."

Norman hopes his participation in adaptive sports will help to change the misperceptions within the Special Operations Forces (SOF) community. "A lot of our injuries leave us focusing on everything we can no longer do and it's frustrating," said Norman. "The adaptive sports side of it gave me a sense of empowerment. It showed me everything that I am still capable of doing."

An unconventional yet inherent part of SOF and the Green Berets, adaptive sports motivated him to set goals, which also supported his recovery.

"What a tool it is for recovery," he added "It's that internal drive that starts to push us and we start pushing our recovery. It's unconventional, and it's where we come from."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Edward O'Neil

RANK, SERVICE

Master Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Telecommunications Operations Chief

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Northampton, MA

CURRENT LOCATION

Fremont, NE

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Field, Sitting Volleyball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

Edward E. O'Neil was born on 1 March 1970 in Northampton, MA to Mary O'Neil and the late Edward P. O'Neil. He graduated from Amherst Regional High School in 1988 and entered the Navy in the fall of 1988 for four years.

After leaving the Navy and getting married, Ed joined the Army in May 1995. He served from May 1995 - Aug 31, 2013 on Active Duty retiring with a little over 22 years on active duty.

Edward lost his left leg as a result of a blast and gunshot wounds in Iraq on 25 May, 2008, while assigned to 3rd Battalion 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne). He was wounded near the Iraqi city of Najaf. He spent several months recovering at home and at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, TX.

His last active duty assignment was with the US Army's World Class Athlete Program at Ft. Carson, CO. Ed retired with the rank of Master Sergeant.

He currently resides in Fremont, NE with his wife of 23 years Shalynn and their three children: son Addison(22), son Jack(20) and daughter Sophie(12).



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Dawn Page

RANK, SERVICE

Sgt. First Class, U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Civil Affairs Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

San Diego, CA

CURRENT LOCATION

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track, Sitting Volleyball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Sergeant First Class Dawn Page was 29 when she quit as the director of women's basketball operations at Stanford University to enlist, spurred by images of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

"Once I saw people being rescued from their houses in helicopters, I said that's what I wanted to do," she said.

She enlisted in April 2006, was assigned to the 82nd Airborne at Fort Bragg that December and deployed on Jan. 1, 2007, to Iraq for 15 months.

"I had a hard time dealing with some of the issues I had early on in my career," she said. "Being a combat medic in Iraq the first 15 months, my life was seeing lots of blood -- not just blood from our American soldiers but from Iraqi police officers, from Iraqi kids coming in to get assistance that they were otherwise unprovided for in their country. I had a tough time dealing with it. Even though we were in a medical unit, we didn't get a lot of debriefing. Then I had an Afghanistan deployment a year and a half later. I kind of served in the role of medical coverage. I was dealing with a lot with Afghani women, and I was the only woman dealing with all that. It took a little too much."

Deployed with Special Ops in Jordan in June 2015, Page fell into a cave behind a waterfall, breaking her left arm and dislocating her shoulder. No one saw her fall. No one knew where to find her.

"There is no way they would have found me, even though they were looking for me, because I was right below their feet, with a current of water and a waterfall in between."

"I had a hard time seeing myself getting out of that cave, getting out of that hole," she said. "So when I was down there in the cave, I prayed to God. It was so dark in there, and I prayed to God for a sign. I got this millisecond ray of sunlight that shone through the cave in the direction that I came from. I didn't believe it. I just decided, let me go that way, and if I die going that way then at least I died trying to get out."

It took Page two hours to crawl out to safety.

In the adaptive sports program, Page found people she could relate to. "That was enough for me to get out," she said. "I understand their struggle. I'm not going to view myself through their struggle, but at least acknowledge that I had my own struggle to walk through and to be acknowledged. There's a goal in mind, and I know I'm not the only one. That's what helped me."



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Francis Reilly

RANK, SERVICE

Master Sgt., U.S. Air Force

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Pararescueman

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Jersey City, N.J.

CURRENT LOCATION

Melbourne, FL

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Swimming, Rowing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

Master Sergeant Francis X. Reilly retired after 24 years active duty 1 May 2018 from the 38th Rescue Squadron.

After graduating from High School in 1993, MSgt Reilly enlisted in the United States Air Force. After Basic Military Training, he volunteered for Tactical Air Command and Controller duty training in 1994 where he successfully completed the TACP apprentice course. His first assignment was with the 19th Air Support Operations Squadron operating with the 101st Airborne Division and 5th Special Forces Group at Fort Campbell, KY. He graduated Air Assault, Airborne, Special Forces Combat Diver Qualification course and the Joint Firepower Control Course earning his Terminal Attack Controller certification. In 1996 he was Airmen of the year for the 19th ASOS and the 18th Air Support Operations Group. He Deployed in support of OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH with Special Forces teams providing Close Air Support capabilities and controlled multiple US and Allied aircraft. His next assignment was the 14th Air Support Operations Squadron supporting 82nd Airborne Division at Pope AFB, NC. Always seeking new challenges, he volunteered for Pararescue (PJ) training in 1998 where he successfully completed the pipeline and was awarded the Charles D. King Academic Award in 2001. His first assignment as a PJ was the 56th Rescue Squadron (RQS), Keflavik NAS, Iceland, where he served as PJ team member. He conducted several Search and Rescue missions in support of the DoD and Icelandic Defense Force. As a team member, in 2002 he was selected as one of the first PJ's to deploy in support of combat operations in Afghanistan, OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). In March of 2003, while assigned to the 48th RQS, Davis Monthan AFB, AZ he was PJ team leader for several deployments in support of OEF. Late 2004 MSgt Reilly returned from his 3rd deployment to Afghanistan after a CSAR event he was involved in killed one of his teammates and seriously injured another. Upon return garrison he was the Jumpmaster on a full mission profile upgrade check-ride and his right knee was completely dislocated and paralyzed upon exit from a C-130. After 2 years of limb salvage and intensive rehabilitation in July 2006, he was selected for assignment to the Pararescue (PJ) and Combat Rescue Officer (CRO) School, where he instructed over 350 Pararescue and Combat Rescue Officer students. From December 2009 to July 2013 he was assigned to the 24th Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, FL as a Special Operations Recruiter Liaison. He recruited and trained over 194 Pararescue, Combat Control and Special Operations Weathermen, he was 371st TRS NCO of the year in 2012. From July 2013 to October 2015 he was Guardian Angel Weapon System Requirements Superintendent, Personal Recovery Division, Head Quarters Air Combat Command, Langley AFB, VA. MSgt Reilly is currently assigned as the Operations Superintendent, 38th Rescue Squadron, Moody AFB, GA and deployed as the Senior Enlisted Leader for the 52nd Expeditionary RQS in support of OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



Sualauvi Tuimalealiifano

RANK, SERVICE

Sgt. 1st Class, U.S. Army

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Civil Affairs Specialist

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Kalihi, HI

CURRENT LOCATION

Land O'Lakes, FL

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Field, Wheelchair Rugby, Sailing

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

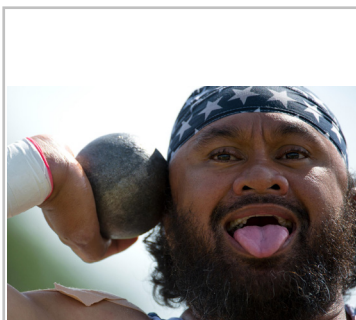
phillip.chitty@socom.mil

SFC Tuimalealiifano was born in American Samoa. His family moved to the United States to seek better opportunities for the future when he was six years old. Struggling as an immigrant family with six children in a foreign country with parents who were ministers laid the foundation that shaped the character traits Sgt. Tui would always be known for: compassion, respect, faith, and hard work.

Sualauvi joined the US Army in June 1997, three weeks after graduating high school and proceeded to maximize the opportunities service offered. His natural confidence, capability, athleticism, and leadership skills flourished in the military environment: as a Paratrooper, a Jumpmaster, a combat veteran of multiple deployments and national disaster recovery relief efforts (Hurricanes Katrina and Rita), and a top secret security clearance Special Operations soldier.

SFC Tui married another Ft. Bragg soldier in 2000 and has three children, two boys and one girl. He continues to reach out to other wounded soldiers in their struggle to battle depression, and relationship difficulties with their families. He has been asked to address airmen and soldiers, newly wounded and able bodied about his experiences throughout his journey. As a Special Operations soldier who returned from Afghanistan quadriplegic, he is a subject matter expert on loss, anger, frustration, fear, depression, suicidal thoughts, crisis of faith, the possibility of divorce, self-determination, and hope. He and his wife are certified peer mentors with several national wounded/ill/injured military programs, including Wounded Warrior Project.

SFC Tuimalealiifano has battled to a point beyond what doctors believed was possible for him to ever achieve and has begun to explore the realm of competitive sports. Already in his debut, he has broken one national record and been awarded two gold medals. More importantly, he continues to pursue his recovery and gain progress in his mobility, function, bodily sensation and control. Most importantly, he continues to strive to model for his children what is most important – faith (in God), hope (never give up) and love (family).



2018 INVICTUS GAMES US TEAM ATHLETES



George Vera

RANK, SERVICE

Master Sgt., U.S. Army

STATUS

Active Duty

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Special Forces Operations Sergeant

CURRENT OCCUPATION

HOMETOWN

Swansboro, N.C.

CURRENT LOCATION

Land O'Lakes, FL

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Track, Field, Wheelchair Basketball

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

It was out of love for his country that inspired Master Sergeant George Vera to join the Army in June of 1995 out of Nashville, Tennessee.

In August of 2015, Master Sergeant Vera's base came under attack from a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (IED) driven by suicide bombers. Master Sergeant Vera exposed himself to the blast as he pulled wounded soldiers away from enemy fire. He was shot during his efforts to secure the perimeter.

Sergeant Vera suffered a spinal cord injury that resulted in paralysis. He is now confined to a wheelchair. He also suffered a traumatic brain injury (TBI), and a loss of his vital organs, including a kidney, and part of his liver and intestines.

For his service to his country, Master Sergeant Vera has been awarded the Purple Heart, Silver Star, Bronze Star Medal (4x), Meritorious Service Medal (2x), Army Commendation Medal (3x), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal (7x), Army Good Conduct Medal (6x), the Ranger tab, Special Forces tab, Combat Infantry Badge, Expert Infantry Badge and the Air Assault Badge.



2018 INVICTUS GAMES U.S. TEAM ATHLETES



Jason Wakefield

RANK, SERVICE

Staff Sgt., U.S. Air Force

STATUS

Veteran

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY

Airborne Mission Systems Operator

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Adjunct Professor, Substitute Teacher

HOMETOWN

Tuscon, AZ

CURRENT LOCATION

Fort Worth, TX

SCHOOL(S)

INJURY OR ILLNESS

LOCATION AND DATE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

EVENT(S)

Rowing, Sailing, Golf

MEDIA POINT OF CONTACT

Lt. Phil Chitty

phillip.chitty@socom.mil

Jason Wakefield is a U.S. Air Force veteran and a former Airborne Mission Systems Operator who served from 2003 to 2010.

Wakefield was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress after being deployed to Iraq and sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury while deployed to Afghanistan. In addition, he sustained orthopedic injuries from training and his time in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Transitioning from the military, the Air Force's Wounded Warrior program initially helped him to start competing in military adaptive sports.

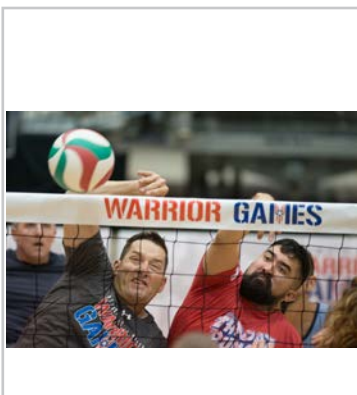
"It is an outlet and allows people to find a new normal," said Wakefield. "It has helped me because I am now able to leave the house and feel healthier."

Adaptive reconditioning and sports activities have helped him to deal with stress and to seek help for his injuries. Wakefield regularly participates in shooting, archery, and indoor rowing.

"My wife [Sarita], the USSOCOM Care Coalition, the Team Americas Fund have supported me in my training," Wakefield said. "My wife has always been there and encourages me by getting to competitions and providing resources."

Wakefield is an adjunct professor and substitute teacher. He is currently working on his Ph. D. in Educational Technology. His career goal is to become a University Professor. His long-term goals are to qualify for U.S. National Team and to not have any more surgeries.

Wakefield previously competed in the 2016 Department of Defense Warrior Games.



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