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## **America's Warrior Partnership Collaborates on Research into Recreation-Based Health and Wellness Programs for Military Veterans**

*-- Clemson University research finds adaptive sports and recreation therapy has positive mental health impact on veterans and their families --*

WASHINGTON – April 3, 2018 – America's Warrior Partnership, a national veteran-serving nonprofit, is assisting researchers from Clemson University and other academic institutions in collecting data to measure the impact of recreation-based health and wellness programs for military service members, veterans and their families. An initial study resulting from the partnership found that veterans participating in these programs experience a positive shift in mental health functioning. Future studies will analyze the impact of recreation and leisure activities on military families as they transition to civilian life.

"One of our priorities is to educate veterans on the resources that are available to them within their community, and we hope this research will help to better inform them of the benefits they may gain from recreation-based health and wellness programs," said Jim Lorraine, president and CEO of America's Warrior Partnership. "Our Four Star Alliance initiative is dedicated to providing adaptive sports and recreation therapy opportunities to our nation's warriors, so we're well positioned to connect researchers with veterans who have participated in these type of programs."

The first study, titled "[Preliminary Long-Term health Outcomes Associated with Recreation-based Health & Wellness Programs for Injured Service Members](#)," examined the health outcomes of 127 veterans who participated in Project Sanctuary, a week-long recreation-based health and wellness family retreat for injured military service members. The results indicated that participants experienced notable improvements in mental health functioning immediately following the program. Researchers also studied the long-term duration of these improvements and found that participants maintained positive psychological health changes both three and six months after the program.

“Very little research has been conducted into the effectiveness of recreation-based health and wellness programs on military service members and their families,” said Jasmine Townsend, Ph.D, CTRS, assistant professor at Clemson University, who acted as the principal investigator of the study. “These families experience a unique set of challenges, especially during combat deployments, so we hope this research and future projects will start a national conversation about the most effective ways to support warriors with reintegration.”

America’s Warrior Partnership will assist Dr. Townsend and her team with a second study examining the impact of recreation and leisure on the reintegration of military families who have experienced a combat deployment. The study is slated to be completed in 2019.

For more information on America’s Warrior Partnership, visit [www.AmericasWarriorPartnership.org](http://www.AmericasWarriorPartnership.org).

**About America’s Warrior Partnership**

America’s Warrior Partnership is committed to empowering communities to empower veterans. We fill the gaps that exist between current veteran service organizations by helping nonprofits connect with the veterans, military members and families in need: bolstering their efficacy, improving their results and empowering their initiatives. America’s Warrior Partnership is a force multiplier for warrior community integration that enhances communities where great Americans choose to live and contribute. For more information on the organization and how to get involved, visit [www.AmericasWarriorPartnership.org](http://www.AmericasWarriorPartnership.org).

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