



Lake Project provides opportunity for

WOUNDED WARRIOR

By Scott Saunders and Diana McCoy

Fort Riley has taken the Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2) and adapted it locally with their Project WIN (Warrior Intern Network). Project WIN is designed to help transitioning warriors, injured Soldiers and their Families receive professional training and experience in a potential future career.

Fort Riley's Warrior Transition Battalion (WTB) and supporting medical units have partnered with the Junction City, Kan.-based Welcome Home to Heroes Foundation to develop the Warrior Intern Network.

While still on active duty, Soldiers in the WIN program are placed as non-paid interns with pre-approved government and private-sector entities to experience and learn various vocations in advance of applying for civilian employment.

Project WIN internships impart confidence to wounded Soldiers regarding the value of their talents and abilities, and how their skills might translate into opportunities and careers after the Army. Additionally, evidence suggests that injured soldiers heal more rapidly when focused on something other than their wounds.

Project WIN also helps ease Soldiers' anxieties about how they will support themselves and their Families in their civilian futures.

The Army has long prided itself on taking care of its own, and AW2 and WIN are about taking care of those Soldiers who, in this case, have given so much and are ready to give so much more.

For a Soldier, coming home from a deployment is never easy, but coming home with an injury is even harder.

Officials at Fort Riley in Kansas are working with the Welcome Home to Heroes Foundation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Kansas City District at Milford Lake to make that transition just a little easier.

R.J. Harms, project manager at Milford Lake, was asked if he would like to work with the foundation and provide an internship for a wounded warrior. The Soldier would remain on active duty and still receive military pay and benefits. All Harms had to provide was a training opportunity to someone who would benefit from it.

"This is clearly a win-win decision," said Harms. "I saw this as an opportunity for us to gain some much-needed help while giving Steve some valuable experience. We simply signed him up in a volunteer position and assign him maintenance-related tasks keeping his abilities and limitations in mind."

Lee has served in the Army since 2003 and during his second tour in Iraq, he sustained a back injury and was sent to the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Riley, Kan.. A determination is pending on whether his injury would result in a medical discharge or a return to his unit.

Soldiers in the WTB are given an opportunity to participate in the Warrior Intern Network Program, the same program that placed Lee at Milford Lake.

"The WIN program asked me what I was interested in doing, and I told them I wanted to do something in wildlife biology," Lee said. "They then gave me three

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places from which to choose an internship —Milford Lake, Tuttle Creek Lake or the Milford Fish Hatchery. I thought Milford Lake sounded like the best opportunity for me.”

Lee’s been working part-time at Milford Lake as a maintenance technician since October and says he is thankful for this opportunity. He can’t say for sure, but expects to be medically discharged from the Army.

“I decided to participate in the WIN program so I could get a feel for what it’s like to work in the civilian world again,” Lee said. “This opportunity has given me confidence that I’ll be able to find a job and provide for my Family.”

Lee said participation in the WIN program is voluntary.

“Having this job helps me feel like I’m accomplishing something instead of sitting around all day feeling sorry for myself because I got injured,” Lee said. “It’s important to me to be a productive member of society instead of sitting around waiting for hand-outs.”

Lee spends his mornings going to various Army classes and is working on his bachelor’s degree. He spends his afternoons at Milford Lake working on projects given to him by Harms.

“I admire his attitude and work ethic,” Harms said. “I’m glad that we could provide this opportunity for him to learn and hopefully help him gain employment after he gets out of the Army.”



Sgt. Steve Lee performing maintenance duties as part of the Warrior Intern Network Program at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’, Kansas City District’s Milford Lake Project in Kansas.
Photo by Diana McCoy



2009 is the year of the District Move

The Kansas City District is poised to proceed with a time-phased move to newly renovated floors within the Richard Bolling Federal Building. The General Services Administration (GSA) is in the process of completely renovating every floor in the federal building. In order to accomplish this, current occupants must vacate the space they are in and move into newly renovated space. The renovated spaces are designed to be state of the art and, when combined with new furniture, will provide an atmosphere that will enable district employees to better accomplish both their individual and collective missions.

The move will occur in four phases.

Phase 1 will begin in mid-March when the Environmental Programs Branch (PM-E), the Environmental Engineering Branch (EC-E), the Military Construction Section (PM-MM), Human Resources (HR) and the Operations Division (OD) will relocate from their current locations to the fourth floor.

Phase 2 occurs in mid-August. In this phase, the remainder of the Planning, Programs and Project Management Division, the Hydrology Engineering Branch (EC-H) and the Construction Branch (EC-C) will move to the west half of the fifth floor.

Phase 3 begins in late September of 2009. During the third phase, the Design Branch (EC-D) and the Geotechnical Branch (EC-G) move to the east half of the fifth floor.

Phase 4 is the final phase in which all remaining offices will relocate to the sixth floor in January 2010.

Information regarding the specifics of each phase of these impending moves will be updated and distributed through this publication, the Intranet homepage and other communication tools as needed.

Please contact Mr. Rick Van Saun at (816) 389-3552 or email him at richard.vansaun@us.army.mil with all questions regarding the move.