



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Take a Warrior Fishing at West Point Lake

MOBILE, Ala.—A group of partners that included the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), West Point Lake, a marina, a high school service club, fishing guides, a hospital and many others came together on June 8. Members of this varied group donated their time at West Point Lake to provide some fun and enjoyment for soldiers who had put their lives on the line in the service of our country. The first of its kind in Georgia, Take a Warrior Fishing, was a great success with 68 soldiers and family members enjoying a beautiful day of fishing and boating on the lake.

Volunteers came out to Highland Marina Resort at 7 a.m. to prepare for the festivities. Participants arrived soon afterward and were provided all the necessary fishing equipment and safety gear needed to enjoy a morning on the water. They were paired with 48 experienced anglers from the local area who volunteered their time and services for the day. The soldiers and fishing guides then headed out on the lake for about 4 hours of fishing and boating and returned at noon to join other volunteers, families, and friends for a barbeque lunch provided by the marina. At a weigh-in after lunch, the warriors got to show off their catches on the main stage in front of the crowd. Some stringers of fish were large enough to make them difficult to lift.

The Take a Warrior Fishing program is designed to provide wounded soldiers a day of fishing and boating where they can leave their problems and concerns on the shore, and the event is much more than simply a fishing trip for these warriors. The program is designed to provide an outdoor recreation/community-based event to support disabled/impaired service members, increase social interaction, encourage outdoor recreation, and support positive community activities for individuals most affected by military related injuries. Additionally, the event utilizes fishing as a therapeutic element that positively contributes to a soldier's transition back to military work or work in the civilian sector.

The Catch a Special Thrill Foundation (CAST) approached USACE at West Point Lake because of the lake's close proximity to Fort Benning Ga., as well as its popularity with large bass tournaments such as the Bassmaster Elite Series. "We are extremely proud to participate in this wonderful program because of our high regard for our soldiers and the commitment they make for our freedom. When contacted, we were very excited about doing anything we could do to show our appreciation for these men and women and their families. We are very thankful to be a part of it and hope to participate again in years to come!" said Steve Logan, West Point Operations Manager. Local partners for this event included the Highland Marina Resort, Martin Army Community Hospital, LaGrange Academy Service Club, Ft. Benning Wounded Warrior Association, Benning Bass Club, Hunters for Christ, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and others. Personnel from CAST were so impressed with West Point Lake, Highland Marina's facilities and the local community's support that plans for a Take a Warrior Event at West Point Lake next year have already begun.

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