



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 13, 2014

By Sgt. Eric Leiber,
Warrior Transition Unit, Fort Campbell, Kentucky

Changing her life for the better

West Point, New York — “I was in a dark place, and then was introduced to the sport of shooting. Life started to get better from then on,” says Spc. Jennifer Pariona, a Reservist assigned to the Warrior Transition Battalion, Fort Belvoir, Virginia. The sport, she says, has changed her life for the better by giving her a way to get out and not sit around and focus on her injuries.

Pariona is one of more than 100 wounded, ill and injured service members and Veterans from across the United States who joined together at West Point to participate in the 2014 U.S. Army Trials. The Warrior Trials are hosted by Warrior Transition Command, and athletes from the Army, Marines and Air Force are facing off in archery, basketball, cycling, track and field, swimming, shooting, sitting volleyball and wheelchair basketball. Participants in the trials include athletes with spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, visual impairment, serious illnesses and amputations.

“My favorite sport is air rifle,” says Pariona. Along with cycling and sitting volleyball, she will compete in a shooting challenge combining air rifle and pistol. The rules for the event are modified from the Paralympic rules and are broken into three categories based upon injuries. The competitors will have unlimited number of practice shots but will have only 40 pellets to shoot at a ten meter target that can be used to determine the winner.

“I trained two or three times a week back at my unit to prepare myself for the trials,” says Pariona, the only female from the Fort Belvoir WTB who is competing in the shooting event. She is in the SH2 categories because her injuries require braces over her hands and arms. The rules allow her to use a stand to rest the rifle on because of her injuries.

“The Adaptive Reconditioning Program has been very helpful in my healing process,” says Pariona. The program includes activities and sports designed to optimize physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being. But “I can’t shoot my best without sleep,” notes Pariona, citing one of the three elements of the Performance Triad which, along with activity and nutrition, contribute to optimum physical performance.

“It’s like a mansion compared to our facilities back home,” says Pariona of the facilities at the U.S. Military Academy, and adds that she is grateful for the opportunity to participate in the Army Warrior Trials and hopes to take back a win in her events – and a spot on the Army team for the 2014 Warrior Games.

#



CUTLINE: Spc. Jennifer Pariona stays focused as she fires her air rifle at a 10-meter target on the indoor range at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY June 12, 2014, in preparation for this year's U.S. Army Warrior Trials. More than 100 wounded, ill and injured service members and Veterans from across the United States are at the event, hosted by Warrior Transition Command. Athletes from the Army, Marines and Air Force are facing off in archery, basketball, cycling, track and field, swimming, shooting, sitting volleyball and wheelchair basketball. Participants in the trials include athletes with spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, visual impairment, serious illnesses and amputations. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Eric Lieber)

##

Warrior Transition Command (WTC) is a major subordinate command under the U.S. Army Medical Command (MEDCOM). WTC's mission is to develop, coordinate and integrate the Army's Warrior Care and Transition Program (WCTP) for wounded, ill and injured soldiers, veterans and their families. For more information on WTC, visit the new WTC website, www.WTC.army.mil, follow on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/armyWTC> or join Facebook at <http://facebook.com/armyWTC>.

200 Stovall Street - #7S05 - Alexandria, VA 22332