

AMERICA'S HEROES

Improving Care For Soldiers And Their Families

(NAPSA)—A recent symposium by the Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2) brought together more than 70 severely wounded, injured and ill soldiers and their families to identify the most important issues to be addressed in wounded soldier care. Based on their personal experiences, wounded soldiers and family members engaged in a week of intensive focus group discussions and selected the top five issues to be presented to Army leadership.

The 2008 AW2 Symposium delegates presented the following five issues to Army leadership:

1. Alternative treatment options for wounded warriors
2. Support groups and counseling for wounded warrior families
3. Continuing on Active Duty (COAD)/Continuing on Active Reserve (COAR) Process
4. Treatment of COAD/COAR soldiers by the Physical Evaluation Board
5. Eligibility criteria for Warrior Transition Units.

These top issues were chosen from more than 80 topics that were discussed in focus groups in categories including medical issues, transition, family, continue on active duty or active reserve duty, employment and Department of Veteran Affairs (VA).

With subject matter experts on site, each focus group discussed issues in one category and then all the groups came together to vote on the top five overall issues. Previous AW2 Symposium issues and recommendations contributed to the creation and design of the Army's new Warrior Transition Units and Soldier Family Assis-



During an annual symposium, severely wounded soldiers and their families identified the most important issues in soldier care.

tance Centers and impacted legislation to benefit wounded soldiers.

"I was honored to attend the AW2 Symposium as a delegate," said Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Henderson. "As a wounded soldier, I was able to share my personal experiences to help the Army improve its care to wounded soldiers and families."

The AW2 Program hosts the annual symposium as a part of the Army's overall mission to improve care for wounded soldiers and also their families. As part of the focus on the families of the severely wounded, this year, for the first time, the children of AW2 delegates were included in the symposium. The children participated in a day camp for the duration of the symposium, made possible by a partnership with the National Military Family Association's Operation Purple.

The Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2) personally assists the most severely wounded soldiers and their families for as long as it takes. For more information about the Army Wounded Warrior Program, call (800) 237-1336 or visit www.AW2.army.mil.