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James Gandolfini's Legacy of Supporting Service Members Lives on Through Wounded Warrior Project®

Friends and Family Hope James will be Remembered as Someone Devoted to Giving Back

Jacksonville, Fla. (July 23, 2014) – Starting July 28, and with his family's blessing, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) will feature the late James Gandolfini as part of their national television campaign.

James filmed with WWP in May 2013, a month before his passing, for a television campaign focused on the challenges and obstacles warriors and their families face on the journey back to civilian life.

"I don't think he'd want to be remembered as Tony Soprano, or a famous person, or a personality," said Tom Richardson, a close friend of James. "I think he'd like to be remembered as someone who helped people."

Gandolfini, whose father was a World War II Purple Heart recipient, showed unwavering support for our nation's military. He and Tony Sirico, friend and co-star from "The Soprano's" television series, spent a great deal of time visiting injured veterans, especially those at hospitals where their journey to recovery was just beginning.

"They loved seeing us, and we loved hanging out with them. Me and Jimmy couldn't hug enough of them," said Sirico.

Through his interaction with injured service members, James truly understood the importance of putting a face to military service members who were coming home and living with the visible and invisible injuries of war. Through HBO documentary films "Alive Day Memories" and "Wartorn," he gave service members a voice and platform to share their stories.

"We went to Iraq in '04, during the war, to say hello to the troops. Jimmy was so touched by all the wounded he had seen there that he [later] got together with his cameraman, and they shot a documentary with seven seriously wounded service members, both men and women," said Tony Sirico. "He named the documentary 'Alive Day,' because they all lived through it."

According to Al Giordano, chief operating officer for WWP, it was during the production of "Alive Day Memories," when the relationship between WWP and Gandolfini solidified.

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“While most of the world knew James as Tony Soprano, we knew him as a passionate advocate for the wounded, and we’ll be forever grateful for his commitment and support,” said Giordano.

Last year, WWP [honored Gandolfini with an award](#) recognizing outstanding character in service to warriors and families.

“When he came in contact with and learned about Wounded Warrior Project, from then on in it was ‘Let’s take care of the people that have taken care of us,’” said Joe Scarpinito, a close friend of Gandolfini.

About Wounded Warrior Project®

Wounded Warrior Project is recognizing its ten-year anniversary, reflecting on a decade of service and reaffirming its commitment to serving Wounded Warriors for their lifetime. The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. The purpose of WWP is to raise awareness and to enlist the public’s aid for the needs of injured service members, to help injured servicemen and women aid and assist each other, and to provide unique, direct programs and services to meet their needs. WWP is a national organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, visit woundedwarriorproject.org.