

*Operation Comfort Warriors represents the Legion's expression of gratitude to those who sacrificed to protect our freedoms.*



## HOW RECIPIENTS BENEFIT

Today, wounded warriors need a variety of items to help in their recovery. Some patients require loose-fitting sweatsuits to cover their healing wounds without adding pressure to burns sustained in combat. Others use fitness equipment to rebuild strength in their muscles. Still others enjoy the camaraderie and fresh air that come from a fishing trip, thanks to donated gear.

Some gifts have included sports equipment for the adaptive therapy program at Fort Jackson, gift cards to patients at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and fishing and kayak gear at Fort Drum.

The success of the program relies entirely on donations, which are used to purchase items for U.S. servicemembers.

**To make a donation, go to [www.legion.org/ocw](http://www.legion.org/ocw).**



## THE AMERICAN LEGION

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# BECAUSE WE CARE



Jennifer Whitney



# OPERATION COMFORT WARRIORS

As the war in Afghanistan winds down, U.S. military personnel are coming home, joining other recent veterans who served in Iraq. Many of these servicemembers left the battlefield only to be faced with a new fight: a struggle to overcome the mental and physical wounds suffered during deployment. Those with traumatic brain injury (TBI) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are returning home in unprecedented numbers. In fact, the Army has estimated that up to 20 percent of the men and women who served in Afghanistan or Iraq have suffered TBI.

Even as the wars end, those in the military still face inherent dangers while fighting the global war on terrorism, during training exercises and while performing other hazardous duties.

While the care at military hospitals and warrior transition units is extraordinary, The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) program was created to provide "nonessentials" – items that help wounded warriors in their recovery but don't usually show up as a budget line on government spreadsheets.

## HOW TO HELP

Most military medical centers are not equipped to store large quantities of care packages. The Legion strongly prefers monetary donations so that it can expedite the purchase and delivery of items to troops.

**HOW TO GIVE:** Visit [www.legion.org/ocw](http://www.legion.org/ocw) to contribute a donation electronically, using your credit card. Checks may be mailed to The American Legion, Operation Comfort Warriors, PO Box 361626, Indianapolis, IN 46236.

**HOW TO RAISE MONEY:** A fundraiser such as a motorcycle run or a fish fry can be a great way to gather donations. A Legion post, Auxiliary unit, Sons of The American Legion squadron, Legion Riders chapter, church group or other charitable organization could assist in sponsoring a fundraiser. Proceeds from a fundraising event can be donated to OCW via the website or mailing address listed above.

**HOW TO GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Check out [www.legion.org/ocw](http://www.legion.org/ocw) for the latest news and information about the program.

## HOW IT WORKS

The Legion contacts officials at military hospitals, VA hospitals, warrior transition units and surrounding communities, and obtains lists to determine what is most needed by wounded, injured or ill servicemembers. Once a need is identified, the items are ordered by the Legion and delivered in an expeditious manner. It's as simple as that. No red tape.

All of OCW's administrative and marketing costs are paid from Legion membership dues received, meaning that 100 percent of donated funds go directly to purchasing comfort items for the troops.