

# JENNIFER JENKINS



Jennifer Jenkins understands the complexities of being a full-time caregiver. “I had to start from scratch finding the answers,” says Jennifer. “My brother’s care required a unique set of skills that my background did not include. That’s why the connections I’ve made through Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) have been invaluable.”

In 2005, her brother James was wounded in combat while on a mission with his Army Stryker Brigade in Iraq. James endured a traumatic brain injury (TBI), partial hearing and vision loss, damage to his spine, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Jennifer discovered WWP when another injured veteran invited James and his family to the Chicago Air & Water Show. They almost didn’t make the trip. “It’s a challenge for my brother to travel,” says Jennifer. “At the time, we didn’t know any other military families going through what we were going through. A support structure for us didn’t exist – or so we thought.”

“WHEN THE STRUGGLE FELT OVERWHELMING, WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT WAS THERE TO HELP EASE OUR BURDEN AND GET US TO THE NEXT STAGE OF HEALING.”

That outing to the air show was the beginning of a life-changing experience for Jennifer’s family. Now, she says they have a team of people through WWP who are eager to provide support. Perhaps most important was her discovery of the WWP Independence Program, which has helped James live on his own without sacrificing the care he needs.

“Wounded Warrior Project has been life-changing for us,” says Jennifer. “The progress I’ve seen my brother make and the growth I have experienced have inspired me to help others.”

Jennifer’s journey has helped her understand the sacrifices, challenges, and unmet needs that caregivers face every day. Her message of love and support is clear and empathetic: “I do not see my brother’s needs as a burden. If I had to drop everything to help him, I would and, quite frankly, I sometimes have. Thankfully, Wounded Warrior Project is always there to help us, too.”

Today, Jennifer wonders what life would be like if she had declined the invitation to attend the air show. “The people who have helped our family truly made a difference,” says Jennifer. “I look forward to helping as many people as I can and tell them, ‘you can make a difference too.’ We are all better together.”

