

Beyond the Barracks: Structuring Wellness in Civilian Life



November 2025 | ISSUE 14

Community: **Pillars**



COMMUNITY



ACTIVITY



MENTAL HEALTH



RECOVERY & SLEEP



NUTRITION

The Lockerroom: A Sanctuary of Shared Service

This month, we are switching gears and highlighting the surprising connection between former elite athletes and veterans. Kevin Emore, former West Point hockey player, and Todd Fedoruk, former NHLer, found common ground and vital lessons about identity and accountability in the hockey locker room. Hear their story inside.

Over the last five years, the bond forged between the Philadelphia Flyers Warriors, a disabled veterans hockey program, and the Flyers Alumni has grown into something far deeper than a shared logo. It has become a profound reflection on the nature of identity, service, and transition. This unexpected partnership reveals that the psychological journey of a retired professional athlete is remarkably similar to that of a veteran leaving military service.



Photo Courtesy of Flyers Warriors

CONT. INSIDE ➡

MilitaryConnected.org is a nonprofit organization improving the military-connected community's transition experience through employer education, data driven research, and access to a network of job opportunities with military-ready employers.

The Vegetus Foundation is dedicated to helping Americans improve their quality of life through education on healthy living and has published the Nutrition Health Review since 1979. Learn more at nutritionhealthreview.com



LEARN MORE AT [MILITARYCONNECTED.ORG](https://militaryconnected.org)



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The Shared Crisis of Identity

When a soldier sheds their uniform after a career of selfless service to a common mission, or a professional player hangs up their skates after years of playing in front of 17,000 screaming fans - both confront an overwhelming **loss of identity**. For decades, their lives were defined by a clear, non-negotiable mission: duty, team, and high-stakes performance.

The military and professional sports are two of the most demanding and structured cultures in the world. They provide an absolute clarity of purpose, a guaranteed brotherhood, and instant status. Once outside those gates, that clarity vanishes. Where do you find your **mission** when the scoreboard is gone? Who is your **team** when the lockerroom dissolves? This shared experience of "civilian drift" is what drew the Flyers Alumni and the Warriors together. Both groups were seeking a return to a language and a community that understood the cost of commitment.

The Pure Space of Accountability

What both groups discovered is that the **hockey lockerroom** is more than just a place to change gear; it is one of the last truly pure spaces of unvarnished accountability and simplified existence in modern society.

Inside that room, titles don't matter, and rank holds little weight against honesty. When you step into that space, the noise of the outside world—the career worries, the financial pressures, the social media facade—disappears.

What remains is a **simple, direct transactional relationship**:

Can you do your job, and can I trust you to do your job?

For a veteran managing physical or invisible wounds, or a former NHL enforcer processing years of physical and emotional sacrifice, the lockerroom provides an essential escape back to simplicity. It is a space where:

1. **Things Are Simple:** The objective is clear: win the shift, clear the puck, backcheck hard, block a shot. This focus provides an anchor against the complexity of transition.
2. **Accountability is Immediate:** There is no HR policy, no politeness. Results are indisputable and don't care about your feelings. If you fail to cover a teammate, you hear about it instantly and directly. This raw, honest feedback, though sometimes hard, is precisely what both veterans and former players miss most. It proves they are **still valued members of the team**—not patients, not relics, but teammates.

The Sanctuary of Shared Experience

The true magic of the Flyers Warriors and Alumni bond is that we don't need to explain our pain or purpose to each other. The room itself provides the translation.

The veteran dealing with a TBI or PTSD finds common ground with the alumnus dealing with post-concussion syndrome or a broken-down body. They share the same language of pain, the same understanding of commitment, and the same desperate need for the structure and brotherhood of a team. The lockerroom doesn't offer therapy; it offers **resocialization through service to each other**. It is a sanctuary where the

Why Veterans Struggle With Civilian Careers

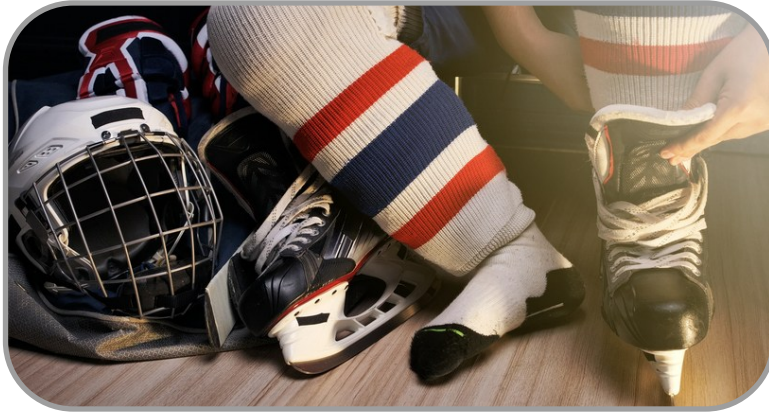
podcast with Scott DeLuzio and Jon Safran
on May 1, 2025

[Click here to listen to the podcast](#)





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trauma of the past is temporarily replaced by the urgency of the next shift. By putting on the jersey, both the soldier and the player reclaim their identity as an accountable, crucial member of a unit, validating their self-worth in a way that civilian life often fails to do.

It is in this shared, sacred space—amidst the smell of sweat and ice—that the healing begins. And if the rink attendant is passed out, and there are beers in the cooler, that healing will last until someone inevitably utters every session's closing phrase... "Ahh shit, I've got work in an hour."

Advancing the Military Connected Community with MilitaryConnected.org

MilitaryConnected.org connects businesses across the nation with top military connected talent. Our mission is to end attrition and unemployment in the workplace for military connected employees.

With our unique, holistic approach to talent engagement, employer education, and data-driven research, MilitaryConnected.org and our platform is the nation's best veteran and military family employment engagement strategy.

By entering your Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) code into a job matching tool, you can identify civilian careers that align with your military training and experience. These tools, such as the Veterans Job Matcher, analyze your MOS to suggest relevant occupations, providing information on matching roles. This approach helps veterans translate their military skills into civilian-applicable qualifications, potentially streamlining the job search process by focusing on compatible opportunities.

Access this FREE service on the platform by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Skillet Sweet Potato Hash with Kale:



Calories: 256; total fat: 12.2g; saturated fat: 2.6g; cholesterol: 185mg; sodium: 392mg; total carbohydrate: 29g; dietary fiber: 4.2g; total sugars: 1.9g; protein: 9.7g; vitamin D: 17mcg; calcium: 136mg; iron: 3mg; potassium: 906mg

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 tsp garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes

1. Heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and onion and cook for about 1–2 minutes.
2. Add the sweet potatoes and spices. Cook for about 10-12 minutes, stirring often.
3. Cover the skillet and cook for an additional 5 minutes, until the sweet potatoes are tender and easily pierced with a fork.
4. Add the kale and cook until wilted, about 1 minute.
5. Lower the temperature to medium-low heat. Create four wells in the hash, then crack an egg into each well. Cook until egg whites are set and yolks are slightly runny, about 5–7 minutes.

