The Military Service Initiative (MSI) of the Bush Institute honors the service and sacrifice of all post-9/11 veterans by fostering a successful transition and reintegration from military service to civilian life in order to improve their quality of life and maximize their leadership potential.

Our nation’s military took an oath to defend our Nation and our freedom, putting their lives in danger and making untold sacrifices, but many of the three million veterans who have served since 9/11 often return home to face challenges transitioning back into civilian life. More than one million post-9/11 service members will transition from the military over the next five years. Challenges can include unemployment, homelessness, feelings of isolation, and debilitating health issues. These educated and highly skilled patriots are in search of effective services to help them find renewed purpose and identity. Research by the Bush Institute’s Military Service Initiative has revealed that 71 percent of Americans say they do not understand the problems faced by those who have served since 9/11. There is a critical need for leadership to help establish a cohesive vision, collaborative focus, and accountability to effectively support post-9/11 veterans and military families in the areas of jobs, wellness, family, education, housing, and women veterans’ issues.

Team 43 Sports – Warrior 100K and Warrior Open

As part of a larger set of programs that support veterans in the transition to civilian life, MSI hosts two Team 43 Sports events: the Warrior 100K, a high-endurance three-day bike ride, and the Warrior Open, a highly competitive golf tournament. Team 43 Sports showcase the courage, commitment, and resilience of these warriors and underscore the importance of sports as part of the rehabilitation process for our men and women injured on the front lines. In spite of severe injury and trauma, these men and women have found new ways to use their minds and bodies to achieve and surpass great goals.

Since 2010, more than 130 warriors have participated in Team 43 Sports. Through these events, which include the personal participation of President Bush, the Bush Institute’s Military Service Initiative connects these warriors with resources to assist in their transition and assists them in developing their networks. The events also spotlight some of the leading nonprofit organizations delivering services to veterans, as well as private sector entities that prioritize making employment opportunities available to veterans. Finally, the events generate high-profile media coverage of participating organizations and the issues facing our nation’s transitioning veterans.

The impact of these events is far-reaching on the lives of the warriors and their families, with many taking on new work because of their participation in Team 43 Sports. Program alumni describe their experiences with Team 43 Sports in their own words:
“Many are coming home and are preparing for new missions as civilians. I intend to salute these men and women for the rest of my life. Through the work of the Bush Institute, we’ll be relentless in serving our vets.” – President George W. Bush