

## Sales from new metalworking outfit to benefit Workshops for Warriors®

**G**abriel Lara is one example of the hundreds of veterans who found a purpose with the help of Workshops for Warriors® (WFW), a nonprofit organization that trains and certifies veterans and transitioning service members in welding and CNC machining for careers in advanced manufacturing.

Gabriel, 22, grew up near Los Angeles, often in the same room as his two siblings and mother. At 17, after a recruiter from the Marine Corps visited his high school. Gabriel served in logistics and maintenance management, where he was responsible for inventorying and instituting preventive maintenance for his entire unit's gear. In 2017, he was chosen for a Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force, which put him in Kuwait and Afghanistan.

Almost immediately after transitioning out, Gabriel's girlfriend found out she was pregnant and plans to go to college were put in doubt.

"Everything changed all of a sudden. With a pregnant girlfriend and a baby

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on the way, I knew I had to find a way to support them," Gabriel said. "I needed something I knew would give me financial security quickly. I needed my daughter to have more than I did growing up."

After attempting community college for a couple of months, Gabriel found out about Workshops for Warriors.

"Before Workshops for Warriors, I felt lonely, like I didn't really have a purpose," he said. "Here, everyone is a veteran. I feel like I got some of that brotherhood back, and we are all learning a trade that will give us financial security and a future as America's manufacturing workforce."

Gabriel graduated from the welding program in April, earning 10 nationally-recognized welding certifications. Now married with a daughter, Gabriel plans to move with his family to Nevada, where he hopes they can buy their first home.

### The Ironworker Outfits

The Harris Products Group and its parent company, Lincoln Electric, have long histories of supporting veterans. Harris' Industrial Sales Manager for North America Patrick Fagerquist learned about WFW after spending time at their school in San Diego and seeing the significant contributions made by the organization. He suggested that Harris create a promotional program to draw attention to WFW and raise funds for its operations. Fagerquist took his idea to Greg Barnes, a graphic designer at Harris and a fellow veteran.

He said, "I am like most veterans – good with my hands. What Workshops for Warriors is doing is amazing because



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affording a veteran the opportunity to have a career in welding can be a perfect fit. I wanted to develop a product that would pay homage to our military personnel and what they mean to this country. We chose an actual US Government-issued 40MM ammo can to package the product in, and outfitted the regulators with a digital camo pattern that makes them totally unique and different from anything in the market. I wanted to design the kit in a way that would make it a collector's item and I think we achieved that."

Harris rolled out its new limited edition Ironworker outfit in June and, for every outfit sold, Harris will donate \$5 to WFW, with a goal of raising \$25,000. Harris is also encouraging its distributors to donate \$5 per outfit sold.

The Ironworker outfit is packaged in a US Government issued 40 mm metal ammunition can with side-carry handles and a removable lid. It features Model 25GX regulators with a special digital-camo pattern. The outfits are available in Harris Series and V-Series with either 300 or 510 CGA fittings. They also come with a cutting tip, shade 5 safety glasses, ignitor and a 3/16" x 20' twin grade 'R' hose. [gasworld.com](http://gasworld.com)