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Service Women's Action Network

October 13, 2011



Dear Friends,

With your help, SWAN is gearing up for our new Fiscal Year with renewed energy! Thanks to your donations, we ended our recent matching campaign with a final total of \$26,940. We are so grateful to you for making this happen!

Our campaign has translated into overnight success for SWAN. With additional help from our foundation supporters, SWAN is now able to hire a full-time Legal Director to support our [National Peer Support Helpline](#). This year, our aim is to expand our Helpline to meet the legal needs of service members and veterans facing gender-specific job discrimination, as well as issues related to military sexual harassment and sexual assault. As many of our staff and board know first hand, the assistance of outside attorneys can be the most helpful intervention to a service member facing real-time threats from perpetrators of discrimination or violence, or in seeing a VA claim based on Military Sexual Trauma through to success.

Additionally, we are excited to announce the arrival of more new staff at our NYC headquarters. With a new Development Director, Communications Director, and Senior Policy Researcher in tow, SWAN is equipped better than ever to take on our goals and challenges for the new fiscal year!

Legislative Momentum: In our last fiscal year, SWAN helped introduce [16 separate bills](#), and we will continue to work with legislators, fellow veterans advocates, and the media to push these bills to vote this year.

Women in Combat - SWAN will continue to drive reform in Congress and within DOD to eliminate the "Brass Ceiling" for military women. Using legislation, potential litigation, and education of policymakers and the public, SWAN will push for revocation of the Combat Exclusion Policy so that women will be afforded all opportunities to serve in uniform.



Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment - SWAN is pursuing multiple pieces of legislation and three new lawsuits this year to ensure that service members and veterans get access to legal redress and benefits that are currently unavailable to them after being raped, assaulted or harassed. SWAN is pursuing legal and legislative paths to challenge the Feres doctrine, to change Question 21 on the

About Face Blog

Read weekly blog posts by National Peer Support Helpline Director Rebekah Havrilla and Policy Director Greg Jacob [here](#).

Please read the [guidelines](#) and [consider submitting](#) to About Face!

SWAN's City Hall Testimony on Military Suicide

Read testimony by SWAN's National Peer Support Helpline Director Rebekah Havrilla at New York City Hall [here](#).

Article on SWAN in Trial Magazine

Read a [recent full length feature](#) on SWAN in Trial magazine.

security clearance form, and to change policy with respect to personality disorder diagnoses, in addition to several other legal and policy barriers to justice and equality.

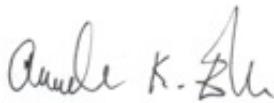
VA Health Care and Benefits - SWAN will continue working with policymakers and senior officials at VA to ensure that women veterans and their loved ones receive exceptional health care, resources and access to equal benefits. SWAN will also carry our momentum from this summer forward by ensuring that the VA changes its discriminatory policy with respect to Military Sexual Trauma claims.

Repro Rights - SWAN will continue to advocate for the full range of reproductive rights for service women. Today, service women whose pregnancies result from rape or incest are not afforded the right to publicly-funded abortion, unlike all civilian women.

LGBT Rights - SWAN will continue to advocate for women who are discriminated against, harassed or assaulted in the military because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. In today's post-DADT nation, SWAN will also advocate for LGBT cultural competency at the VA and for benefits for families of LGBT troops and veterans.

Thank you for all you do to support SWAN's work. Here's to a great new year!

In service,



Anu Bhagwati
Executive Director
Service Women's Action Network



About Us

SWAN is a human rights organization founded and led by women veterans. SWAN's vision is to transform military culture by securing equal opportunity and the freedom to serve in uniform without threat of harassment, discrimination, intimidation or assault. SWAN also seeks to reform veterans' services on a national scale to guarantee equal access to quality health care, benefits and resources for women veterans and their families. You can find the Service Women's Action Network on our [homepage](#), on [Twitter](#) or on [Facebook](#).

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