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Service Women's Action Network

January 24, 2012



Dear Supporters,



The Invisible War

This weekend marked an important step toward the elimination of sexual assault in the military. *The Invisible War*, a documentary film featuring the stories of survivors and the work of SWAN and other advocates, had its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival. SWAN staff provided technical assistance in the development of the film and attended the premiere. Oscar nominated Director Kirby Dick (*Outrage, Twist of Faith*) [told the press](#) that the work he did on this film consisted of "the most

intense series of interviews [he had] ever been involved with."

The film opened two days after [a speech by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta](#) on military sexual assault and his plans for more vigorously addressing it. [SWAN immediately responded](#), noting the shortfalls of the proposed steps.

In May, SWAN will convene the first ever Summit on Military Sexual Assault to take our collective voices directly to Congress and the White House. We will include survivors and their families, advocates, policymakers, legal and civil rights experts, and members of the media to demand change and shed light on the military sexual assault crisis. **Please save the date (May 17th and 18th, 2012 in Washington DC) and join us!** Expect more updates soon.

The film has also spurred Representatives Mike Turner (R-OH) and Niki Tsongas (D-MA) to form the *Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus* in Congress. This caucus will "provide a bipartisan forum for all Members of Congress to learn about the problem, work with the Department of Defense to shape policy and create legislative solutions that improve Servicemember morale and welfare." SWAN has worked extensively with Reps Turner and Tsongas on H.R. 1529, the "Defense STRONG Act," which had portions signed into law by President Obama last December.



Mary J. Blige, contributing artist to Invisible War, with Director Kirby Dick

The filmmakers and those featured have created an [online petition at Change.org](#) asking the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Howard "Buck" McKeon and the Chairman of the Senate Armed Service Committee, Carl Levin and the leadership of the House and Senate to support the STOP Act (HR 3435) and the Holley Lynn James Act (HR 1517) in 2012. SWAN helped to draft and introduce

Save the Date!

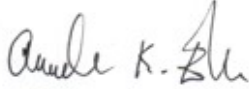
Mark your calendars - [Service Women's Action Network](#) hosts the Summit on Military Sexual Assault on Capitol Hill, May 17th and 18th, 2012. Stay tuned for more information!

Click here to see the trailer for [The Invisible War](#).

both HR 1517 and HR 3435. We ask that you [sign this petition](#), and share with as many people as possible!

SWAN is proud to support this work and grateful that in upcoming months, thousands of people will see the film. As this film raises further awareness about military sexual assault, we hope that many newcomers will join our movement to end rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military.

Sincerely,



Anu Bhagwati
Executive Director
Service Women's Action Network



Please consider making a gift to help SWAN eliminate sexual assault and gender discrimination in the military!

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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