

# PALM CENTER

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## **Palm Center Applauds Director of “Transgender, at War and in Love” on Selection as White House Champion of Change**

***Fiona Dawson, Director of NYT OpDoc on Transgender Service  
Members, Receives Prestigious Presidential Honor***

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** – The White House announced today that Fiona Dawson, director and producer of *The New York Times* Op-Doc, [Transgender, at War and in Love](#), has been selected as one of this year’s Champions of Change.

The [White House Champions of Change](#) program recognizes Americans making positive changes in their communities, and this year’s event honors individuals advancing LGBT rights through art.

**“The 12-minute video is a poignant portrait of a transgender military couple banned from openly serving**

**their country. By telling the stories of our nation’s transgender service members, Dawson brings the impact of the military ban into sharp focus,”** said Palm Center director [Aaron Belkin](#), who nominated her for the honor. **“Her film helps viewers understand what it means for transgender troops to risk their lives for freedoms they’re unable to enjoy themselves. I applaud Fiona for this deeply deserved honor.”**

Dawson is also creator of the media project [TransMilitary](#), which set out to contrast the lives of transgender military personnel in the US armed forces with British counterparts who have served openly since 1999.

**“I’m incredibly honored by this White House award. This accolade belongs to all of the tenacious individuals who have been doing the work for open transgender service,”** said Dawson. **“It belongs to the thousands of transgender service members waking up each day and performing their jobs under the pressure of pretending to be a gender they are not. It’s also for the believers in the power of film, like the Palm Center, who supported TransMilitary and made *Transgender, at War and in Love* possible.”**



## [Click here or above to watch the OpDoc](#)

This year's honorees will be featured at an event on Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 pm (ET) in the South Court Auditorium of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB) in Washington, D.C. The event will feature all of this year's Champions of Change honorees on a panel to discuss their work and the challenges and opportunities they have encountered.

Commissioned by the *New York Times* and produced by Dawson in partnership with Side X Side Studios, *Transgender, at War and in Love* was released June 4, 2015 as part of The Times' editorial series, "Transgender Today."

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### **About The Palm Center**

*The Palm Center is an independent research institute committed to sponsoring state-of-the-art scholarship to enhance the quality of public dialogue about critical and controversial issues of the day.*

*For the past decade, the Palm Center's research on sexual minorities in the military has been published in leading social scientific journals. The Palm Center seeks to be a resource for university-affiliated as well as independent scholars, students, journalists, opinion leaders, and members of the public. For more information, see [www.palmcenter.org](http://www.palmcenter.org)*

### **About TransMilitary**

*The TransMilitary project exists to create visual media for transgender service members and veterans to be seen and heard. Since 2012 the project has worked to advance transgender equality in and outside of the military through media that educates, entertains and inspires. Director and co-producers Fiona Dawson, Jamie Coughlin and Gabe Silverman were commissioned by the New York Times to work in synchrony to produce *Transgender, at War and in Love*. Inspired by this success, Dawson, Coughlin and Silverman are now in production together on a TransMilitary feature*

*length documentary, which shares the story of an underground movement that achieved a historic civil rights victory in America.*