

## **Biographies of Lioness Soldiers and Filmmakers**

**Major Anastasia Breslow** is the daughter of LTC Marc Breslow (USA Retired) and grew up an Army Brat in North Carolina, Germany, Kansas and Israel. Of Chinese and Russian heritage, she was commissioned through ROTC and graduated with a major in history from the University of California at Berkeley. She trained in Signal Communications and after returning from Iraq, took command of 331st Signal Company, 1st BDE 1st ID, out of Fort Riley KS. In January of 2009, she and her husband, CPT Merlin Kynaston, USA, were transferred to Korea.

**Rebecca Nava** is of Puerto Rican descent and grew up in Queens, New York. After graduating from Thomas Edison High School in 2000, she joined the Army and served for eight years. Her last posting was at Fort Riley, KS as a supply clerk. The first member of her family to serve in the military, she is married to Sgt. Nelson Nava, 20<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, USA, and works as a data entry clerk while taking classes part-time. She and her husband live in Killeen, Texas and have one daughter.

**Shannon Morgan** grew up in Mena, Arkansas. A star-basketball player and honor student, Shannon graduated from Acorn High School in 1999. On the advice of her uncle, a Vietnam veteran who survived three combat tours, Shannon joined the Army where she served for four years as a track vehicle mechanic. She is currently service-connected 100% for PTSD and hopes one day to become a nurse.

**Staff Sgt. Ranie Ruthig** was born in Cherokee, Iowa and five years later moved to Wentworth, South Dakota where she graduated from Chester High School, in Chester, SD. After attending Black Hills State University for a year, she enlisted in the Army in May of 1992 as a track vehicle mechanic. She is currently in an Active Guard position with the Kansas Army National Guard, at the RTS-M (Regional Training Site – Maintenance) in Salina, Kansas as an instructor. She is married and has a 10-year old daughter.

### **Not in attendance at the 3/31 House Lunch & Learn but in the film:**

**Major Kate Guttormsen** is a 1996 West Point graduate who grew up in Toledo, Ohio. The second member of her family to join the military, her father served with the Air Force in Vietnam, Kate was the commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 1st Engineer Battalion as well as the highest-ranking female in her battalion. A year and a half after returning from Iraq, she was posted at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California and then transferred to Hawaii where she currently serves in the Public Affairs Staff of the Special Operations Command - Pacific. She lives with her husband, Lt. Col. Douglas Guttormsen, and son in Hawaii.

## 2) LONG BIOS FOR FILMMAKERS

**Meg McLagan** is a documentary filmmaker and cultural anthropologist. She is the co-director and co-producer, with Daria Sommers, of *Lioness*, which won the Center for Documentary Studies Filmmaker Award at the Full Frame Film Festival in 2008 and was broadcast nationally on the PBS series Independent Lens. Her film *Tibet in Exile*, co-directed with Barbara Banks, aired on public television and was screened at festivals and museums in the U.S. and Europe.

She began her film career working as a producer on the highly acclaimed independent documentary *Paris Is Burning*. McLagan's work has been supported by the Sundance Documentary Fund, New York State Council on the Arts, Fledgling Fund, Chicken & Egg Pictures, and National Endowment for the Humanities.

Meg graduated from Yale with a BA in English Literature, and earned a doctorate in cultural anthropology from New York University. In addition to her film work, McLagan is the co-editor of *Visual Cultures of Nongovernmental Politics*, forthcoming from Zone Books. Meg grew up in Hinsdale, Illinois but has lived in New York City since 1983.

**Daria Sommers** is a filmmaker whose work includes both documentaries and narrative fiction. She is the co-director and co-producer, with Meg McLagan, of *Lioness*, which won the Center for Documentary Studies Filmmaker Award at the Full Frame Film Festival in 2008 and was broadcast nationally on the PBS series Independent Lens. Her previous films include *Eastern Spirit Western World*, which was broadcast by PBS, BBC and CBC and premiered at the Smithsonian, and her drama *Ready To Burn* which received a Panavision's New Director Award.

Daria began her career at PBS and her work has garnered support from the NEH, the NEA, the Sundance Documentary Fund, the Fledgling Fund, Chicken & Egg Pictures and NYSCA. She has been an artist-in-residence at the MacDowell Colony and Mass MoCA. She recently completed *Sawadika American Girl*, a screenplay about Americans in Thailand during the Vietnam War. Daria is a graduate of Oberlin College.