



#IAmVanessaGuillen: A Latina soldier fights to change the system that silenced her

LOGLINE

A documentary about the resilience of survivors of military sexual violence and their fight to change the system that silenced them.

SYNOPSIS

Army soldier Karina Lopez survived a sexual assault at the Fort Hood military base in 2018. But two years later, Vanessa Guillen, another Latina soldier, disappeared and was murdered there. #IamVanessaGuillen chronicles Karina's first time going public with her trauma, following other Latina military women who come forward demanding the end to abuse of active-duty soldiers and the right to justice.

Prosecutors and advocates say that the problem at Fort Hood has been widely known for years. Karina shared her story on social media using the hashtag #IAmVanessaGuillen. It quickly went viral, prompting others to speak up and make military sexual trauma more visible throughout the country. Through Karina's case, other soldiers' stories and expert voices, the #IamVanessaGuillen documentary film sheds light on the profound issues of racism, sexual violence and trauma that the military has historically neglected.

Most of the survivors featured in the film are Latina. They represent the Hispanic demographic which is now the fastest growing minority population in the U.S. military.

MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

Military sexual violence affects military members of all genders. **The latest 2018 statistics show that 20,500 service members were sexually assaulted or raped, including 13,000 women and**

7,500 men. The rate jumped by almost 40% from 2016 to 2018. For women, the rate increased by over 50% to the highest level since 2006.

Of these incidents, **76.1% go unreported.**

When soldiers like Karina come forward, their cases rarely make it to trial. If they do, they are limited to courts within the military. This almost never results in serious punishment for the abuser. Instead, soldiers say they face retaliation for the rest of their careers, often compounding the mental health issues caused by their sexual trauma.

64% of women who reported a military sexual assault faced retaliation. 66% of them alleged that retaliators were in their chain of command. Convictions have also plummeted by almost 60% since 2015, despite the increase in incidents.

President Biden has been the only president publicly committed to addressing the issue and his pick for Secretary of Defense, General Lloyd Austin, made it one of his priorities. It is within this context that Karina is demanding justice while fighting for structural change within the military's handling of cases like hers.

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<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13eHQ2H0VTAvYNeown2Ps5VQKbNwjNAXO?usp=sharing>

FILM STILLS

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_q39hM2LN2LKY7fsaeFSGaWvVBriASsZ?usp=sharing

TWITTER WORDING:

After the 2020 murder of Fort Hood soldier Vanessa Guillen, one woman faces her own military sexual trauma – causing the Army to reckon with its abusive history. From @UniNoticias, #IAmVanessaGuillen follows her and other Latina soldiers as they fight for justice.

After the 2020 murder of Fort Hood soldier Vanessa Guillen, one woman launches a viral social media campaign that causes the Army to reckon with its abusive history with sexual assault. #IAmVanessaGuillen

Military sexual assault is a pervasive problem. After the 2020 murder of Fort Hood soldier Vanessa Guillen, one woman faces her own military sexual trauma – causing the Army to reckon with its abusive history. #IAmVanessaGuillen

INSTAGRAM

The murder of Army soldier Vanessa Guillen at Fort Hood military base hit too close to home for Karina Lopez. Two years after surviving sexual assault on the same base, she created a viral Facebook post with the hashtag #IamVanessaGuillen. Facing retaliation, she and other Latina soldiers have pushed forward as they fight for justice.

FACEBOOK

The murder of Army soldier Vanessa Guillen at Fort Hood military base hit too close to home for Karina Lopez. Two years after surviving sexual assault on the same base, she created a viral Facebook post with the hashtag #IamVanessaGuillen. Facing retaliation, she and other Latina soldiers have pushed forward as they fight for justice.

RESOURCES

- The [Veterans Crisis Line](#) offers free and confidential support 24/7. Dial 1-800-273-8255 and press 1. You can also text 838255.
- The [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) offers support 24/7. Dial 988.
- The [DoD Safe Helpline](#) offers 24/7 anonymous and confidential support to members of the Department of Defense community affected by sexual assault. Dial 877-995-5247.
- The [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) offers confidential support and resources to those who are experiencing domestic abuse and violence. Dial 800-799-SAFE (7233).

PRESS COVERAGE

- **NPR Morning Edition**
[#IAmVanessaGuillen documentary explores the culture of toxicity at Fort Hood](#)
- **The 19th News**
[Latina veterans saw themselves in Vanessa Guillén. A new documentary tells their stories.](#)
- **Texas Standard**
[‘There is hope’: New documentary focuses on survivors of military sexual violence](#)
- **MetroFocus / NJ PBS**
[“#IAmVanessaGuillen”: Survivors of military sexual violence and their fight to change the system](#)
- **Portland Tribune Film Review**
<https://pamplinmedia.com/pt/11-features/559967-448189-portland-film-festival-review-iamvanessaguillen>
- **Boston Globe Film Review**

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/10/06/arts/globedocs-2022-massachusetts-mars-ma-ny-destinations-between/>