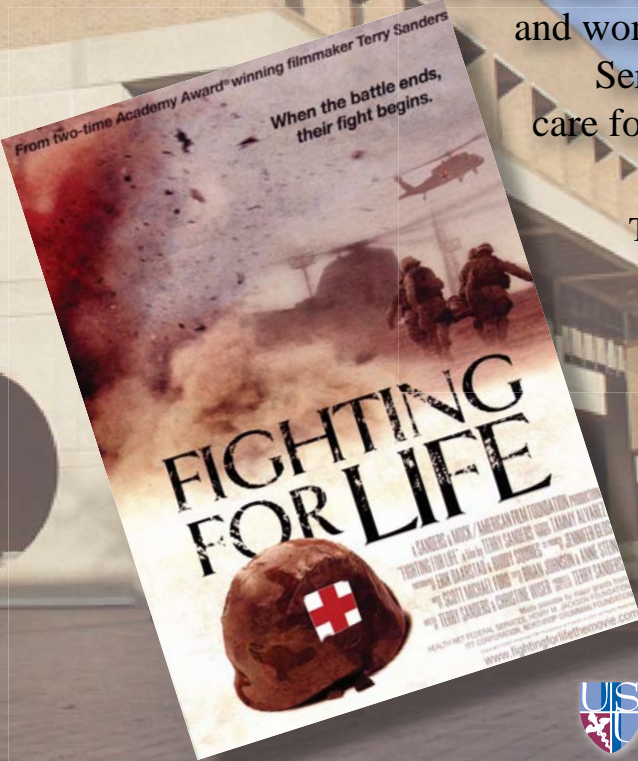


# USU in the News

## Fighting for Life

The film that features the brave men and women of the Uniformed Services University who care for those in harm's way

To learn more about USU and the film visit our Web site at [www.usuhs.edu](http://www.usuhs.edu)



UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY  
of the Health Sciences

A new documentary that opened in theaters on March 7, "Fighting for Life," features alumni, students, staff and faculty of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. The university is a traditional academic health center with a unique focus on military medicine and public health. USU includes a medical school with graduate programs in the biomedical sciences and a graduate school of nursing.

This powerful and emotional documentary focuses on the role USU plays in educating leaders in military medicine and looks at the care they provide to servicemen and women injured in combat. Academy Award-winning filmmaker Terry Sanders produced the documentary, which was the brainchild of Mrs. Tammy Alvarez, president of the "Friends of USU" organization. Alvarez's son, Navy Lt. Bryan Alvarez, is a 2005 graduate of USU.



“I started out to make a film about the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda,” said Sanders. “It was to be an in-depth portrait of this very special institution, the ‘West Point’ of military medicine, which has trained more than 25 percent of current active duty physicians...and the film grew until it became an odyssey through the world of military medicine in a time of war.”

The university’s story is told through footage, photos and interviews with a number of students, alumni, faculty and staff. The film focuses on some of USU’s unique educational programs, including the first-year Antietam road march, and field training exercises Operation Kerkesner and Operation Bushmaster, as well as several alumni as they care for wounded troops on the battlefield and throughout the patient evacuation system.

## EXCERPTS FROM REVIEWS OF FIGHTING FOR LIFE

### The Washington Post

March 14, 2008

#### ‘Fighting for Life’ Shows Real Blood, And Real Guts

By Ann Hornaday

Most documentaries about the Iraq war have sought to investigate, expose, critique and provoke. “Fighting for Life” bucks that trend. Rather than join the polemical free-for-all of the past five years, filmmaker Terry Sanders has chosen to take viewers on a riveting, often painfully graphic journey through the extraordinary efforts of military physicians, nurses and medical aides who receive their training at the elite Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda. As one of the film’s subjects astutely observes, issues of life and death on the battlefield transcend politics.

### The Washington Post

March 14, 2008

#### A Savior For Those Who Save Lives in War

By Ellen McCarthy

“I saw so much in this school...They’re not about war, they’re about saving their fellow man. They put themselves in harm’s way to serve others,” said Mrs. Tammy Alvarez, her voice cracking with emotion. “They” includes her son Bryan Alvarez, who trained to be a doctor at USU and is finishing his second tour in Iraq. “I was so upset that anyone would want to close it. If the public knew what was going on behind these walls, there would be an outcry.”



**War Wounds**

By Matt Zoller Seitz

Shot in battlefield hospitals in Iraq and rehab centers in the United States, "Fighting for Life" takes an unflinching look at the physical sacrifices of soldiers and Marines, and the fortitude of the doctors and nurses who treat them.



**The Washington Post**

**Film Comes to the Defense of Embattled School**

By Steve Vogel

"There's a much grander purpose beyond the education," he said. "Whether the war is right or wrong, what I love about the profession is they're trying to give the best care for people," said 2LT Christian Labra, a West Point graduate and current medical student at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

**U.S. News and World Report**

**Serving Military Medicine**

By Bernadine Healy, M.D.

Battlefield expertise, of course, is a unique part of USU teaching. The school has trained 25 percent of today's military physicians. From the perspective of Gen. James L. Jones, former commandant of the Marine Corps, "it's become an institutional anchor important to the quality and stability of military medicine."

**Variety**

By John Anderson

The only people who seem immune to the politics of the Iraq war are also at its epicenter: the doctors and nurses who mend and tend to the wounded, and who provide the heart and soul of Terry Sanders' "Fighting for Life."

**Washington Times**

**Iraq Taxi to Bright Side**

By Scott Galupo

"Fighting for Life" takes no position on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Instead, it spotlights the woefully under praised world of combat medicine – the medics and nurses who treat wounded soldiers, Marines and airmen.

...filmed in and around Baghdad in 2005 and 2006, when conditions there were at their worst...footage is part of a narrative that begins in Bethesda, at the Uniformed

Services University of the Health Sciences, a military-run institution for medical training and biomedical research. Up to 25 percent of active-duty combat medics graduated from USU – and the proportion is even higher for physicians in leadership positions at military hospitals.



**Film Showcases a Local School for Military Physicians**

By Alison McSherry

“Fighting for Life” received a warm welcome at an advance screening in the basement of the Capitol. The screening was co-hosted by Reps. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md) and Sam Johnson (R-Texas).

**Rolling Stone Magazine****November 15, 2007**

Excerpt from interview with Tom Hanks

“I recently saw “Fighting for Life,” about combat medics in Iraq. Some of them are funny. Some are good-looking. Some are modest. Some are filled with hubris. They are all heroes...”

**WAMU Radio****March 3, 2008**

Many Americans have never heard of the Uniformed Services University, located in Bethesda, Maryland. Often called the “West Point” of military medicine, the USU doctors and nurses are subjects of a gripping new documentary which explores the stories of our country’s wounded soldiers trying to return to a ‘normal’ life after their war experiences.

**WUSA Channel 9****March 11, 2008**

“The most important thing is to know that we educate people in aspects of military medicine that they would not get anywhere else to provide the care for our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines in harm’s way,” said University President Charles Rice, a surgeon himself.

“One of the things that we really work hard on is teaching the practice of highest quality medicine, but how to do that in places that are dangerous and in which our resources are much more constrained,” said Navy Captain Trueman Sharp, the school’s chairman of the Department of Military and Emergency Medicine.

The school trains nurses as well. “What makes us unique is that operational focus,” said Col. Bruce Schoneboom, the acting dean of the graduate school of nursing. “My students are career oriented officers. They are all in uniform, whether it’s in the military services, Army, Air Force, Navy, but also Public Health as well. Our graduates are ready to serve the nation, not just in traditional nursing roles, but within that federal system. That makes us unique,” Schoneboom told 9NEWS NOW.

**NBC Channel 4****March 14, 2008**

“We deserve to have a little bit more credit, and people should know that this is an option for them to go to,” said Ensign Lesley Paz. “I kind of wish we could change the motto to something like, ‘USU, the best medical school you wish you could go to.’”

“The stars of the film, I believe, are the casualties, our young people that protect our democracy,” said Dr. Larry Laughlin, the school’s dean of medicine.

