



an inspiring true story

TRAVIS a soldier's story



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KELSEY MILLS TRAVIS MILLS AND CHLOE MILLS
an inspiring true story

TRAVIS
a soldier's story


FOTOLANTHROPY

PRODUCED BY KATIE NORRIS

DIRECTED BY JONATHON LINK

TRAVIS

a soldier's story



Filmmakers' Statement

"Creating this film that documents Travis's inspiring true story of resiliency, courage and perseverance has been a life-changing experience for our whole team. Travis, Kelsey and the soldiers have given us a gift by bravely sharing their experiences of Travis's darkest hour and the struggles along the road to recovery. Travis's "never give up" attitude has challenged me personally to live each day intentionally and with gratitude."

-Producer, Katie Norris.





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Synopsis

Travis: A Soldier's Story is an award-winning documentary about the inspiring true story of United States Army Staff Sergeant Travis Mills of the 82nd Airborne. Travis lost portions of both arms and legs as the result of an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) on April 10, 2012 while on patrol during his third tour of duty in Afghanistan.

Travis is one of just five quadruple-amputees from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to survive their injuries. Featuring powerful interviews and emotional reenactments from Travis and Kelsey Mills, and fellow soldiers who witnessed the events of April 10th, *Travis: A Soldier's Story* is an intimate look into the life of a wounded soldier as he faces the unimaginable physical and emotional challenges of this life-altering injury.

Travis's story sheds light on the daily inward and outward struggles of our wounded veterans and the difficult rehabilitation processes they face; Travis's openness and incredible perseverance will challenge us to look at the way we deal with our own personal trials in life.



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The Filmmakers

Katie Norris (Producer)

Katie Jenkins Norris is the founder of the non-profit organization Fotolanthropy, a giving-based movement of photographers and filmmakers working together to capture inspiring true stories of families or individuals that have faced hard times. Katie, her team and FOTOcrew members across the country are creating a movement of giving-back to every-day heroes that inspire us all. Katie and her team have produced the following films: Baby James (an 8-month-old baby boy who lost his life to brain cancer), Beauty out of Ashes (a brave family that lost their home to the wildfires in Bastrop, TX), The Road Ahead (a new father diagnosed with stage 4 lymphoma), Unexpected Joy (an inspiring family with a special needs child), Each Day Counts (a baby boy diagnosed with SMA), Gloriously Ruined (a heartfelt adoption story), Dance in the Rain (a teen girl with an inoperable brain tumor), and Fotolanthropy's first feature documentary Travis: A Soldier's Story. Visit www.vimeo.com/fotolanthropy and www.youtube.com/fotolanthropy.

Katie founded and designed the socially responsible product, the Fotostrap: The Camera Strap that Gives Back. The Fotostrap is a fashionable camera strap manufactured in the USA and donates 10% of each sale to Fotolanthropy. Katie is also the Principal Photographer for Katie Norris Portrait Arts.

Katie's giving-based brands, Fotostrap and Fotolanthropy, have received local and national notoriety when she appeared on two Fox News' Small Business Spotlight segments. Calling the straps "beautiful" and the idea "a great concept," Fox host endorsements gave her a boost and widespread exposure.

Jonathon Link (Director, Cinematographer & Editor)

With over 16 years of experience in film production and broadcasting, and a passion for films that inspire and challenge viewers, Jonathon's film work has taken him all over the world.

After studying film and broadcasting at Evangel University in Springfield, MO and North Central University in Minneapolis, Jon went on to work at – and eventually assume ownership of – Element Media in Milwaukee. At Element, Jon worked on a variety of commercial and non-profit projects, including several short documentary films for Milwaukee-based sports attorney and philanthropist Craig McKenzie. These projects took Jon to Russia, Greece, Italy, Belgium and France, documenting the lives and careers of several international athletes, as well as Mr. McKenzie's work with youth and adolescent cancer patients in the Milwaukee area.

In 2008, Jon served as Editor, Edit Supervisor and Graphic Designer for Drug Wars – Silver or Lead, a graphic documentary depicting the violent drug wars waged in Mexican border cities such as Ciudad Juarez and Nuevo Laredo. The film was an official selection of the USA Film Festival, Bayou City Inspirational Film Festival and West Hollywood International Film Festival.

In 2009, Jon and two colleagues founded Four Story Creative in Dallas, TX. Their work includes Last Stop, winner of the Best Short Film award at the 2011 LifeTree Film Festival, as well as the music video "The One You Need" for recording artists Shane and Shane. They also traveled to Port-au-Prince following the devastating earthquakes in Haiti to document missionary organization YWAM's work in the recovery and rebuilding efforts.

Jon is currently involved as the director of cinematography for a number of short film projects, and also owns Jonathon Link Studio. He has filmed and produced several short films with Fotolanthropy, as well as work on fine art wedding and family films in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Reece Norris (Executive Producer)

From 2008 to 2012, Reece served as the president of Innovative Infusions, LLC, a multi-site healthcare service company based in Texas. During his tenure, Innovative Infusions experienced exponential revenue growth after he led a company-wide restructuring and business model transition.

In late 2012, Innovative Infusions was successfully sold to a strategic buyer, and Reece remains actively involved in day-to-day operations. Reece also co-founded DripSync, a fully-integrated software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution for the infusion industry. The software company was successfully sold in December 2012, and he maintains an advisory role with the business.

Prior to his experience in healthcare and software development, Reece was a corporate attorney at Thompson & Knight LLP in their Dallas, Texas office. Before joining Thompson & Knight LLP, Reece clerked for United States District Judge Ed Kinkeade. Reece received his BBA in Finance and Entrepreneurship from Baylor University and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas Law School. Reece resides in Dallas, Texas with his wife, Katie.



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Bryce Hyland (Assistant Editor)

Bryce currently oversees all media production at the Oaks Fellowship, a 3,000 member church in Red Oak, Texas. Bryce and Jonathon Link have worked together on numerous short film projects for the Oaks, and Bryce's particular passion for storytelling was invaluable in taking *Travis: A Soldier's Story* from a short-film interview to a feature documentary. Bryce's daughter, Ellie, also makes her "film debut" in *Travis* as a younger Chloe.

Zach Olson

(Production Assistant and Audio Engineer)

Zach has been involved with various film, photography, and music projects in the Dallas/Fort Worth area for the last 8 years. He recently served as assistant to recording artist and "The Voice" contestant Anthony Evans, traveling around the US and abroad. He has worked with Jonathon Link on multiple short stories, commercials and other films. Zach also has his own photography and videography company Z&S Photography, where he specializes in weddings, events, and non-profit work. He is married to his beautiful wife Stacy who is an educator, and they are expecting their first child.

Sutherland Carter

(Production Assistant and Audio Engineer)

Sutherland began his acting career in 2010 in the Dallas Fort Worth metroplex doing local independent films as well as a couple of national commercials. He didn't know that acting would replace his career in public relations but within a couple of months, he fully committed to the idea of being a professional actor. He now resides in Los Angeles and chasing his dream.

Jesse Keller (Original Score)

Australian born and raised, Jesse Keller is one half of Minneapolis based husband-wife duo The Prams as well as having supported such artists like Shane & Shane, Phil Wickham, and Starfield as live sound engineer in the Dallas Fort Worth area. As a singer songwriter and recording school graduate, he is a sort of "Jack of all trades". Fueled by his love for music he continues to work hard at establishing himself as a songwriter, performer, and film/TV composer.

Crew

Travis: A Soldier's Story is produced by non-profit Fotolanthropy, a movement of photographers and cinematographers committed to sharing the inspiring true stories of individuals and families facing difficult life circumstances. The crew behind this film is a special collective of creative artists who volunteered to donate their time to this project – including pre-production planning, production, filming, editing and scoring. All funds raised toward the film were used exclusively for production equipment and travel expenses.

Credits

Producer

Director

Written by

Dir. of Photography

Music by

Katie Norris

Jonathon Link

Jonathon Link & R.J. Hanson

Jonathon Link

Jesse Keller

Cast

Travis: A Soldier's Story is told exclusively through interviews and reenactments from Travis Mills, his wife Kelsey and fellow soldiers. Josh Buck (who is also Kelsey's brother), combat medics SGT Daniel Bateson and SGT Alexander Voyce and Ryan Theriot and Brandon Fessey (who were also injured in the explosion) all give gripping interviews, as well as brave appearances as themselves in dramatic recreations of the events of April 10th. This film gives audience members the unique, intimate opportunity to not only hear the stories of those who were actually there, but also experience the events with those same individuals.

Staff Sergeant Travis Mills

Retired United States Army Staff Sergeant Travis Mills of the 82nd Airborne is a wounded warrior, motivational speaker, actor, and an advocate for veterans and amputees. Despite losing portions of both arms and legs from an IED while on active duty in Afghanistan, Travis continues to overcome life's challenges, breaking physical barriers and defying odds. Thanks to his incredible will to live, the heroic actions of the men in his unit, the prayers of thousands, and all the healthcare providers at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Travis remains on the road to recovery.

In September 2013, Travis founded the Travis Mills Foundation, a nonprofit to assist wounded and injured veterans. Travis and the foundation are actively involved with several veterans' organizations including Veterans Family Camp in Belgrade, Maine. Travis also founded the Travis Mills Group, LLC where he consults with and speaks to companies and organizations nationwide inspiring all to overcome life's challenges and adversity.

Appearing as themselves:

Travis Mills

Chloe Mills

Brandon Fessey

Ryan Theriot

Craig Buck

Kelsey Mills

Josh Buck

Daniel Bateson

Alexander Voyce

Tammy Buck

Travis's Body Double

Younger Chloe

Doctor

Nurse #1

Nurse #2

Nurse #3

First Sergeant

Jeff Hamilton

Ellie Hyland

Brian Massey

Melissa Jenkins

Kyle Jenkins

R. J. Hanson

Steve Mokate





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The Movement

This film would not be possible without our incredible supporters, sponsors and volunteer crew. Travis's story was initially intended to be a typical Fotolanthropy short-film. But soon after interviewing Travis and Kelsey Mills at Fort Bragg, the Fotolanthropy team felt Travis's personality and his story were meant for so much more.

Not only did we want to expand our film with Travis, we wanted to exhaust all options at our disposal to do so with cinematic excellence. In December we took to the crowd-funding site Kickstarter in hopes of raising funds for further production, and in just three weeks we successfully raised \$16,700. Check out the Kickstarter video [here](#). Funds were used to access the RED Epic M and cinema-grade lenses, as well as studio space and lighting, props and wardrobe and travel. Additional funds were also raised through the sale of Fotostrap: The Camera Strap That Gives Back--a fashionable line of high-end camera straps whose sales help raise funds for Fotolanthropy. Fotostrap created an exclusive camouflage strap called 'The Travis' and all proceeds from the sale of this camera strap go directly towards *Travis: A Soldier's Story*.

Just weeks out from filming the documentary, Veterans Airlift Command generously offered to fly in several soldiers who were with Travis on April 10th – Josh Buck (Travis's good friend and Kelsey's brother), combat medics SGT Daniel Bateson and SGT Alexander Voyce, and fellow soldiers Ryan Theriot and Brandon Fessey. This gracious donation allowed us to expand the scope of *Travis: A Soldier's Story* even further by not only allowing us to film reenactments of critical story elements, but also interview these soldiers about their experiences.

Because of Travis's rehabilitation and work schedule, as well as work schedules of the other soldiers, all filming had to be completed in an extremely short time-frame – just 3-and-a-half days. With just a little over two weeks to secure equipment, shoot locations, props and wardrobe, and plan out our film schedule, we quickly assembled an amazing group of fellow creative artists who donated their time to help make this opportunity possible.

Travis: A Soldier's Story is an incredible combination of a national community of support, servant-hearted artists and a soldier's willingness to share his story. We are so grateful to Travis's incredible support community who embraced our idea; to the creative artists who volunteered countless hours of time to this project; to Josh, Daniel, Alex, Ryan and Brandon for their willingness and grace in sharing their stories and recreating these events; and the Mills and their extended families for sharing with us, assisting us and trusting us with their story.

Veteran's Day Nationwide Screenings

Travis: A Soldier's Story has now screened in over 30 cities, including NYC, the U.S. Capitol, Dallas, Chicago, Miami and more!
Join the movement today by calling your local theater to screen
Travis: A Soldier's Story on Veterans Day November 11, 2014.



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Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Fotolanthropy?

Fotolanthropy is a nationwide non-profit organization that documents inspiring true stories of people who have overcome adversity through photography, film and philanthropy.

2. How did Fotolanthropy learn of Travis's story?

Producer and Founder of Fotolanthropy, Katie Norris saw Travis Mills' picture on Facebook. Katie was so moved by the picture that she picked up the phone and called to see if Fotolanthropy could help by capturing his story.

3. How many tours of duty did Travis Mills serve?

Travis was on his third tour of duty when he was hit by the IED on April 10, 2012.

4. Are the soldier's in the film actors?

No, this documentary includes the real soldiers that experienced April 10th together: Daniel Bateson, Alex Voyce, Brandon Fessey, Ryan Theriot and Josh Buck. We are honored to have these brave soldiers in the film.

5. How many states has the film screened in?

Thanks to the support of communities across the country, *Travis: A Soldier's Story* has screened in over 30 cities including Dallas, Miami, NYC, Washington DC, San Diego, Newport and Chicago.

6. Does Travis attend every screening?

Travis attends the red carpet screenings, and if he is not available, he enjoys Skyping into the screenings to participate in a Q&A with the guests.

7. Where can people learn more about Travis Mills and his Foundation?

www.travismills.org

8. How do I host a screening in my city?

Please visit our site www.travisthemovie.com and click "Host a screening," and the Travis team will set you up with the tools you need.

9. How can I support Travis: A Soldier's Story?

- Make a donation on our website (proceeds benefit Travis Mills, Fotolanthropy and the movement of screening *Travis: A Soldier's Story*)
- Host a red carpet or Tugg screening
- Share your experience of *Travis: A Soldier's Story* on our social media outlets by using #travisthemovie
- Become a sponsor! Email info@travisthemovie.com for more information

10. What is the Veteran's Day Screenings?

Help spread the word! This Veteran's day (11.11.2014) *Travis: A Soldier's Story* will be playing on screens across the country.

11. How do I schedule an interview with a cast or film team member?

Please email us at info@travisthemovie.com



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Notable Facts about *Travis: A Soldier's Story*

Travis: A Soldier's Story raised \$16,700 on Kickstarter and was created entirely with a \$25,000 budget.

The scene of Travis rocking his daughter, Chloe, to sleep is the last footage of Travis holding Chloe.

Due to Travis's rehab schedule, there was limited time to film, so the documentary was filmed almost entirely in just 5 days!

The scene of Travis swinging his daughter, Chloe, was the first time he was physically able to do so.

The documentary was filmed on the Red Epic Cinema Camera.

Remarkably, Travis completed his rehab at Walter Reed Medical Hospital in just 19 months.

The soldiers in the film were the real soldiers who were with Travis on April 10, 2012.

Travis is now sharing his inspiring story across the country as a motivational speaker. Learn more at www.travismills.org

The home footage in the film was captured by Kelsey Mills and documents the first moments of Travis walking, running and breaking new barriers.

The documentary screened at the U.S. Capitol in November of 2013 for our nation's leaders.



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58 min | Color | USA | 2013



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