



CUYAMACA
· COLLEGE ·

THE CUYAMACA VETERANS CENTER CELEBRATES

LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH

JUNE-JULY 2021



Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer

service members no longer serve with the looming threat of separation from the military for their sexual orientation or gender identity. Still, regardless of the relatively new protections regarding their military service, some fear backlash. Despite discriminatory policies, negative Supreme Court rulings, hate, and violence, 2021 is the year where (again) all those who identify as LGBTQ can freely serve in the U.S. military.

1941

The US Selective Service System includes "homosexual proclivities" as a disqualifying condition for inclusion in the military draft.

1942

Homosexuality was classified as mental disorder and the military begins working with psychiatrists and recruiters to identify and exclude gay men from service.

1957

Captian S.H. Crittenden of the US Navy Board of Inquiry issues a report stating there is "no sound basis for the belief that homosexuals pose a security risk."

1981

The DOD issues Directive 1332.14, stating "homosexuality is incompatible with military service" and that any service member who has engaged in or attempted to engage in homosexual acts will be discharged.

1982

The military enacts a policy explicitly banning gay men and lesbians from military service.

Ban, Repeal, Repeat...

During the presidency of Bill Clinton, there was a push to end the ban on LGBTQ in the military. A push that President Clinton responded to with the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) policy that was signed into law. While this was appeared to be a good middle ground for the President who wanted to appeal to the LGBTQ community and the military leaders who wanted to uphold the ban, the actual LGBTQ community and human rights activists did not agree.

"You were being discharged for saying you were gay or for engaging in sexual behavior with someone of the same gender or if you married or intended to marry someone of the same gender. So the bans were exactly the same. The one in '93 was worse in that it became law as opposed to just regulation."

-Dixon Osburn, SLDN

"When I was in the military they gave me a medal for killing two men and a discharge for loving one."

-Leonard Matlovich

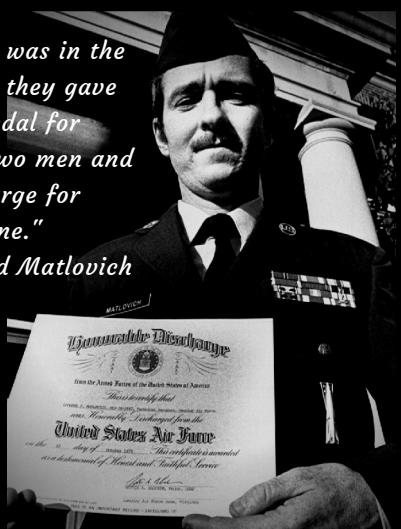
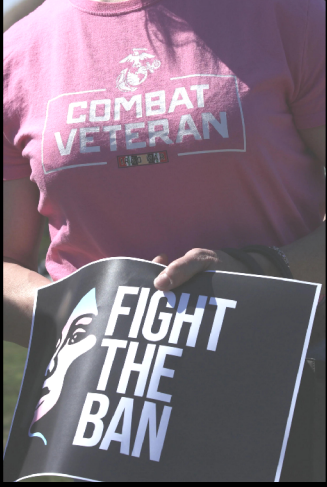


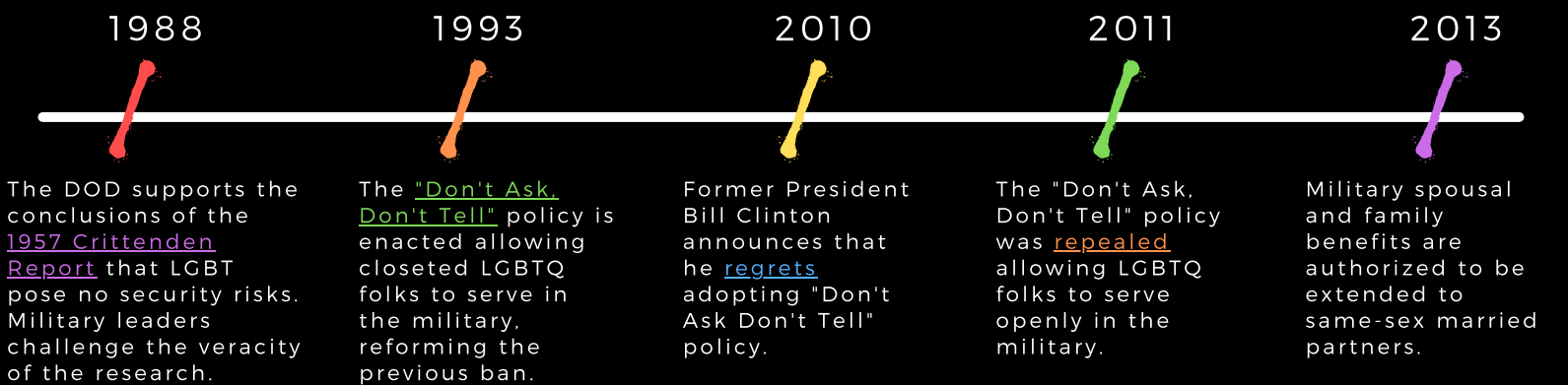
Photo link: Leonard Matlovich

In the decade following the implementation of DADT, the attitude of the US regarding LGBTQ folks in the military changed. The Pew Research Center reported that in 1994, 45% of Americans opposed LGBTQ in the military, but by 2010 that number had dropped to 27%. This was after further gay rights movements, Supreme Court battles and losses, which resulted in Massachusetts and California legalizing gay marriage.

This change in American attitude led to the 2011 repeal of DADT by former President Barack Obama. In September of 2011, the LGBTQ community could finally serve in the military openly without threat of discharge based on sexual orientation. Furthermore, the thousands of service members who were discharged under DADT were offered a re-enrollment.



The battle continued, however, when in 2017 former President Donald Trump attempted, through a series of tweets, to impose a blanket ban on transgender people from joining the military. After 2 years of court battles, the blanket ban was not imposed but a ban reminiscent of DADT was imposed in 2019: openly transgender folks would not be allowed in the military. This ban was short-lived and was repealed in 2021 by now President Joe Biden. For now, all LGBT, open or not, can serve their country.



Staff Sgt. Shane Ortega, USMC



SSgt. Shane Ortega made history during his military service as the first transgender service member to serve openly in the military. The son of 2 veteran parents, and a proud member of the Haudenosaunee-Tuscarora tribe, Ortega knew he was destined for military service. Shane served two tours of duty in the Marine Corps as a woman, and one tour in the Army as a man. Ortega served as a bomb technician, a flight engineer and a machine gun section chief. With over 400 combat missions under his belt in Iraq and Afghanistan, Ortega vowed to fight for the 700,000 transgender service members who came before him, who were forced to chose between serving their country or being true to themselves. SSgt. Ortega went on to co-found SPART*A, continuing his fight for equality,

Lieutenant Pete Buttigieg, US Navy

Lt. Pete Buttigieg, joined the U.S. Navy Reserve and was commissioned as an Ensign of Naval Intelligence in 2009. While serving in Afghanistan, Lt. Buttigieg served as an armed driver, logging more than 100 trips from Bagram Air Base to Kabul. While serving in the military, Lt. Buttigieg was elected Mayor of South Bend, Indiana in 2011, however this did not stop his military career as he was deployed for 7 months during his Mayoral term in 2014. Upon his return from deployment, Lt. Buttigieg came out as a gay man.

Lt. Buttigieg retired his commission in 2017 and in 2019 he announced his presidential candidacy, making him the first ever LGBTQ person to launch a major presidential campaign. He would also become the first openly LGBTQ person to win a presidential caucus or primary, when he won the Iowa caucus.



Staff Sgt. Miriam Ben-Shalom



SSgt. Ben-Shalom was the first gay/lesbian service member to be reinstated to her position after being discharged from the military due to sexual orientation. Beginning her military career in 1974 with the 84th training division of the Army Reserves, SSgt. Ben-Shalom was discharged not for homosexual conduct but for simply stating that she was a lesbian. Ben-Shalom then sued the Army for re-instatement and in 1980 a judge ruled in her favor that the discharge violated her 1st, 5th, and 9th constitutional rights. After years of appeals by the Army, in 1988 Ben-Shalom was finally able to re-enlist. However, the Army would appeal again, and in 1990 she lost her case and was discharged for a final time for sexual orientation. After her discharge, she founded the American Veterans for Equal Rights, continuing her activism for social justice.

2016

2016

2017

2021

2021

Former President Donald Trump tweets he will fight for LGBTQ rights. A fight he would quickly abandon in the following year.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter announces the Pentagon will drop the ban on transgender service members.

Former President Donald Trump reinstates the ban on transgender people serving in the military.

The ban on transgender folks serving in the military was repealed for the second time, allowing those who identify as transgender to serve.

The Cuyamaca Veterans Center commits to being a safe space for our LGBTQ siblings and continues to support LGBTQ service members and veterans.