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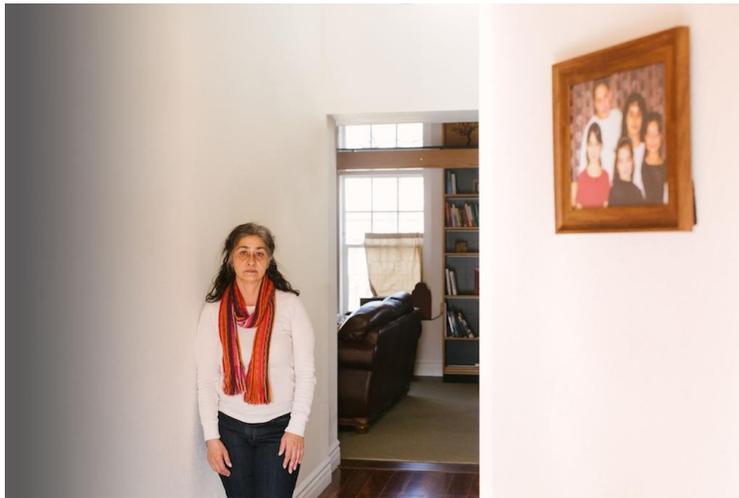
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Press Kit & Images: <http://bit.ly/2qEaVSm>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**A Mother Pursues Justice for Victims and Survivors of Domestic Violence,  
Bringing Her Own Case All the Way to the U.S. Supreme Court  
and an International Human Rights Tribunal in *HOME TRUTH***

**World Premiere at Human Rights Watch Film Festival New York, June 11 and 12**



Jessica Lenahan with a photo of her and her four children Jessie, Rebecca, Katheryn and Leslie. Photo credit: Megan Newton.

**New York, NY - [Home Truth](#)**, a new feature documentary directed by Katia Maguire (producer, “Kingdom of Shadows”) and April Hayes (director, “Respond and Rebuild”), makes its World Premiere June 11 and 12 at [Human Rights Watch Film Festival New York](#). The film follows the story of one woman, who in the wake of unspeakable tragedy and hardship, embarks upon a journey to reclaim her voice and discover her own power to heal herself and others.

In 1999, Colorado mother Jessica Gonzales (now Lenahan) experiences every parent’s worst nightmare when her three young daughters are killed after being abducted by their father in violation of a domestic violence restraining order. Devastated, Jessica files a lawsuit against the police, claiming they did not adequately enforce her restraining order despite her repeated calls for help that night. Determined to make sure her daughters did not die in vain, Jessica pursues her case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and an international human rights tribunal, seeking to strengthen legal rights for domestic violence victims. Meanwhile, her relationship with her one-surviving child, her son Jessie, suffers, as he struggles with the tragedy in his own way. Shot over the course of nine years, *Home Truth* chronicles one family’s pursuit of justice, shedding light on how our society responds to domestic violence and how the trauma from domestic violence tragedies can linger throughout generations.

Through her lead counsel Carrie Bettinger-López, Jessica became the first individual domestic violence survivor to bring a case against the United States before an international human rights tribunal. In 2011, in a landmark decision, the Commission found the United States responsible for

human rights violations against Jessica and her three deceased children. As a human rights and women's rights advocate who has spoken around the world on issues of violence against women, Jessica has received awards from the U.S. Human Rights Network, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and RFK Human Rights. In 2014, Jessica's attorney Carrie was appointed the White House Advisor on Violence Against Women, reporting directly to Vice President Joe Biden, an architect of the Violence Against Women Act.

“When we started filming *Home Truth* nine years ago, one of our guiding principles was our belief in the importance of survivors telling their stories,” said directors Katia Maguire and April Hayes. “Our longitudinal, intimate approach to making the film stemmed from many conversations we had with Jessica. She wanted to show the parts of her life that had been glossed over throughout the legal process and many appearances on the news—she wanted the world to see that surviving abuse and trauma is a complex, nonlinear, elusive process, with both good days and bad days.”

#### **Screens at HRWFFNY:**

\* **Sunday, June 11 at 6:30pm at the IFC Center**, followed by Q&A with directors Katia Maguire & April Hayes, and subject Jessica Lenahan, Carrie Bettinger-López, former White House Advisor on Violence Against Women, and Lenora Lapidus, Director, ACLU Women's Rights Project, Moderated by Amanda Klasing, HRW.

\* **Monday, June 12 at 8:45pm at the Walter Reade Theater at Lincoln Center**, followed by Q&A with directors Katia Maguire & April Hayes, and subject Jessica Lenahan, Carrie Bettinger-López, former White House Advisor on Violence Against Women, and Lenora Lapidus, Director, ACLU Women's Rights Project, Moderated by Amanda Klasing, HRW.

For ticket information, visit: <https://ff.hrw.org/film/home-truth?city=New%20York>

#### **About the Filmmakers:**

##### **Katia Maguire (Director/Producer)**

Katia Maguire is a New York-based director and producer. She recently produced Participant Media's "Kingdom of Shadows" (SXSW, Full Frame, DOC NYC, IDFA 2015), a documentary about the lives of three witnesses to the U.S.-Mexico "drug war" that aired on PBS' *POV* in the fall of 2016. She also produced "The Graduates/Los Graduados," a bilingual series about Latino high school students that broadcast nationally on PBS' *Independent Lens* in 2013. Previously, Katia worked for veteran public television journalist Bill Moyers on his PBS series "Moyers & Company" and "Bill Moyers Journal." She was a senior associate producer on "Women, War & Peace," a five-part PBS series about the role of women in modern conflict, and co-producer on "Quest for Honor," a documentary about violence against women in Iraq that premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. Katia was a 2016 Impact Partners Documentary Producing Fellow and has received fellowships from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Producers Academy, the Union Docs Collaborative Studio and the Flaherty Film Seminar.

##### **April Hayes (Director/Producer)**

April Hayes is a New York-based documentary director, producer, cinematographer and editor. In addition to *Home Truth*, she is currently working on a feature documentary about mass incarceration and the effects of mandatory minimum drug sentences, and a multimedia documentary project with the Equal Justice Initiative on the history of racial terror in America. Her most recent project as a producer is a forthcoming feature documentary directed by five-time Academy Award-nominated director/writer David O. Russell, and she previously worked as Supervising Producer on a forthcoming feature documentary directed by Martin Scorsese, airing

on HBO, about the music industry and cultural landscape of the 1970s. April directed and shot “Respond & Rebuild,” a short documentary about Occupy’s post-Hurricane Sandy relief efforts in the Rockaways that was featured on *Democracy Now!* in 2013, and with Katia Maguire, co-directed the short documentary “God is a Garden” (2015), about an order of environmentalist nuns. For seven years, April was archivist to Bob Dylan, and the in-house producer for his film and video projects.

### **Credits**

Directed, Written and Produced by April Hayes & Katia Maguire  
Executive Producer for ITVS Sally Jo Fifer  
Executive Producer for LPB Sandie Viquez Pedlow  
Edited and Written by Becky Laks  
Original Music by West Dylan Thordson  
Associate Producer Laura Piloni

HOME TRUTH is a co-production of ADEQUATE IMAGES, INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERVICE (ITVS) and LATINO PUBLIC BROADCASTING (LPB) with funding provided by THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING (CPB)

Total running time: 70 minutes

**Official Website:** <http://www.hometruthfilm.com/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/hometruthfilm/>

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