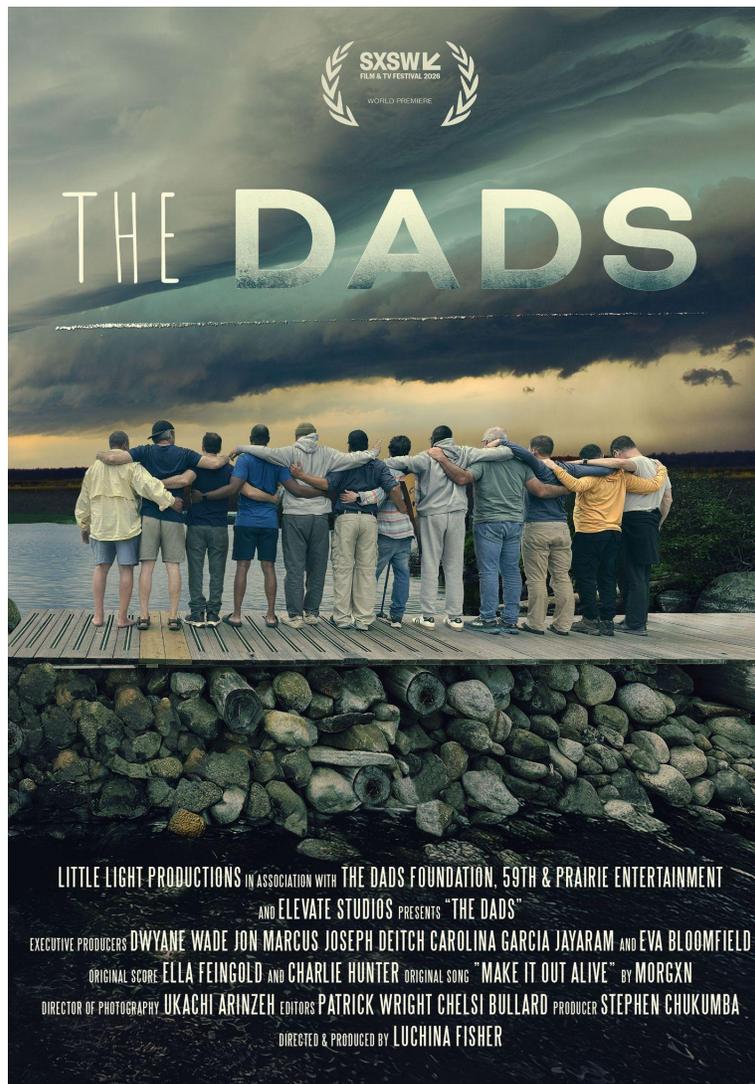


Little Light Productions
in association with
The Dads Foundation
59th & Prairie Entertainment
Elevate Studios

THE DADS
World Premiere at SXSW on March 14th



Directed and Produced by
Luchina Fisher

Producer

Stephen Chukumba

Executive Producers

Dwayne Wade and Jon Marcus

Joseph Deitch

Carolina García Jayaram

Eva Bloomfield

Laura Tanner

Anthony Chukumba

Rick White

Rebecca B White

Run Time

72 min

Press Contact

Ryan Mazie, ryanmaziepr@gmail.com

Logline

As anti-trans legislation and hostility escalate in the United States, a group of dads, building a nascent movement to support their trans and gender expansive kids, are forced to make an impossible choice: stay and fight or flee the country.

Synopsis

Inspired by the Emmy-Award winning short documentary of the same name (Netflix, 2023), *The Dads* chronicles fathers of trans and nonbinary children as they are forced to choose between country and family when a new right-wing administration and conservative Supreme Court take hold in the United States. Filmed over the course of a year spanning retreats in rural Maine and Minnesota, protests, family milestones, a pivotal U.S. Supreme Court decision, and the collapse of gender-affirming care for youth, *The Dads* captures this national reckoning with remarkable intimacy through verite footage and interviews with the film's main protagonists, as documented by Emmy-Award winning director and producer Luchina Fisher and executive producer Dwyane Wade. This is fatherhood as an act of radical love and resistance.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

After my Emmy Award-winning short documentary, also called *The Dads* (Netflix), was released in 2023, the film became the springboard to The Dads Foundation, supporting fathers and male caregivers of trans and gender expansive children. As I was accepting the Daytime Emmy Award in June 2024, some of the dads from the short film were gathered with a new group of fathers for the second Dads Retreat. One of the original participants, Stephen Chukumba, encouraged me to keep filming and came on board as a producer. The result is this timely and urgent feature documentary that explores one of the most pressing civil rights battles of our time – gender identity – through the intimate lens of fatherhood. When we started filming at the second Dads Retreat, the fathers were cautiously optimistic. After the presidential election, the mood shifted dramatically. Several fathers, including those with teenage children, made plans to flee the United States in response to rising sociopolitical threats against trans people and gender affirming healthcare. The film documents the emotional journeys of these trans families as they become “political refugees” and raises critical questions about parents' rights, democracy, and our collective responsibility to vulnerable communities. It also offers a compelling counter-narrative of fatherhood and masculinity, as the dads share their vulnerabilities and question what they've been taught about gender and themselves. In a time of political division, isolation and misinformation, *The Dads* shifts the narrative away from what divides us to what brings us all together: love, connection and community. – Luchina Fisher

STILLS

1. [Key Stills](#)
2. [Poster](#)

MAIN SUBJECTS

- Stephen Chukumba

Stephen Chukumba is a widowed father of four, including his transgender son Hobbes, 19, who is entering college. One of the original dads from the short film, Stephen is now leading a growing movement of fathers supporting trans and gender-expansive youth from his New Jersey home.

[IMAGE](#)

- Ed Diaz

Ed Diaz is a residential general contractor living in San Antonio with his Canadian wife Tim and 13- year-old daughter, Charli. After Trump is re-elected, they make the heartbreaking choice to leave Ed's home state of Texas and their local support system, to move to Canada.

[IMAGE](#)

- Christoph Heinzer

Christoph Heinzer, the son of Swiss-German immigrants, lives in Tucson with wife Hazel and their two nonbinary children, Dylan, 10, and Sierra, 7. They are part of a tight-knit community of trans families living in Arizona.

[IMAGE](#)

- Wayne Maines

Wayne Maines, one of the original dads from the short film, is finally realizing his dream of sharing his love of the outdoors with other dads of trans kids. But he's also facing a national anti-trans backlash that is worse even than what his family faced more than 10 years ago when his daughter Nicole Maines (Supergirl, Yellowjackets) made national headlines after coming out as trans in her Maine elementary school. From his new home in Northern California, Maines vows to do everything he can to help other families and bridge the divide.

[IMAGE](#)

ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS

- AC Goldberg

AC Goldberg is a trans man and professor at Northeastern University, who lives with his wife and two children in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He's the first trans and intersex dad to attend the Dads Retreat.

[IMAGE](#)

- Jose Trujillo

Jose Trujillo, a naturalized citizen born in Mexico, is one of the original dads from the short film and the father of a trans son, Daniel, a 17-year-old high school student. He and his wife Lizette have been outspoken activists since their son was 9.

[IMAGE](#)

- Frank Gonzales

Frank Gonzales, one of the original dads from the short film, is a true sportsman and outdoorsman, who loves playing sports, fishing and hunting with his three children, including his transgender daughter, Libby. Along with his wife Rachel, Frank has been an outspoken activist for trans rights in Texas and nationally - and is now facing a difficult choice of whether to stay or flee.

[IMAGE](#)

THE TEAM

- Luchina Fisher - Director/Producer

Luchina Fisher is the Emmy-Award winning director of “The Dads” (Netflix), which won the 2024 Daytime Emmy Award for Outstanding Short Form Program and GLAAD's Special Recognition Award. Her feature directorial debut, “Mama Gloria”, was nominated for a 2022 GLAAD Media Award and broadcast on PBS. She has also directed several award-winning documentaries, sits on the board of New York Women in Film and Television, and teaches film at Yale and Fairfield University.

[IMAGE](#)

- Stephen Chukumba - Producer

Stephen Chukumba, is the founder and Executive Director of The Dads Foundation, a national organization supporting fathers and male caregivers of gender expansive children. Stephen is raising and amplifying the voices, issues and concerns of fathers of gender-expansive people and their families nationwide.

[IMAGE](#)

- Dwayne Wade - Executive Producer

Dwyane Wade is a former NBA Hall of Fame basketball player, business mogul, father and dedicated social justice activist. He founded the two-time Emmy winning, Oscar- and Tony-nominated production company 59th & Prairie Entertainment.

[IMAGE](#)

PARTNERS

- Little Light Productions:

Founded by Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and former journalist Luchina Fisher, Little Light Productions is an independent film, television and media company committed to bringing a little light to the world through storytelling. Recent credits include the Emmy winning short documentary *The Dads* (Netflix), The Wrap’s Shortlist short documentary *Team Dream* (BET), executive produced by Queen Latifah, and the GLAAD nominated feature documentary *Mama Gloria* (PBS), as well as branded content for P&G, Tommy Hilfiger and more. Little Light’s latest film, *The Dads* feature documentary, will premiere at SXSW in March.

- The Dads Foundation

The Dads Foundation is a national nonprofit dedicated to uplifting and supporting fathers of transgender, nonbinary, and gender-expansive youth.

- 59th & Prairie Entertainment

Founded by Dwyane Wade, 59th & Prairie Entertainment is a two-time Emmy winning, Oscar and Tony nominated culture-shifting production company telling new and untold stories. Named after the street Wade grew up on in the Southside of Chicago, 59th and Prairie Entertainment's recent credits include the Oscar Nominated documentary titled *The Barber of Little Rock*, the Emmy winning documentary *The Dads* (Netflix), The WY Network (digital show and podcast network), the Emmy winning *The Redeem Team* (Netflix) documentary, and two seasons of *The Cube* hosted by Wade on TBS. 59th & Prairie is also producing a live comedy show with NETFLIX during their NETFLIX IS A JOKE FESTIVAL in 2026.

- The Ali Forney Center

The Ali Forney Center (AFC) is the nation's largest and most comprehensive organization dedicated to protecting LGBTQ youth from the harms of homelessness. Each year, AFC serves over 2,200 young people who have been rejected or displaced due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Our programs provide safe housing, mental and medical health services, job readiness training, and education support - all designed to help young people overcome trauma and build lives of their choosing. AFC is proud to empower some of the most vulnerable youth, with the resources and community they need to thrive.



Credits

Director & Producer

Luchina Fisher

Producer

Stephen Chukumba

Executive Producers

Dwyane Wade

Jon Marcus

Executive Producers

Joseph Deitch

Carolina García Jayaram

Eva Bloomfield

Executive Producers

Laura Tanner
Anthony Chukumba
Rick White
Rebecca B White

Editor

Patrick Wright
Chelsi Bullard

Director of Photography

Ukachi Arinzeh

Featuring

(in order of appearance)

Stephen Chukumba
Wayne Maines
David Parr
Frank Gonzales
Ed Diaz
Christoph Heinzer
Jose Trujillo
Alex Polotsky
AC Goldberg
JR Ford
Andy DuMont
Carlos Salazar
Casey Deck
Mike Hoffman
Bill Magness
Chris

Original score

Ella Feingold and Charlie Hunter
Courtesy of SideHustle Records
Recorded at Studio G in Brooklyn, NY
Engineer Joel Hamilton

“Make It Out Alive”

Performed by Morgxn

Written by Morgan Karr, Sam Tinnesz and Michael Reaves

Courtesy of the artist

Additional Cinematography

Pablo Balderas

Amy Bench

Stephen Lewis

Sean Lonergan

Clare Major

Eric Miclette

Ellie Walton

B Camera

Timothy Jude Appleby

Cary Cronenwett

Graham Donohoe

Natassja Ebert

Production Sound

Michael Cottrell

Jeff Deeth

Benjamin W. Didsbury

Bobby Francis

Elisa Francis

Alex Herrera

Doug Kochenbach

Felix Mendoza

Spain Unit

B Unit Director Daresha Kyi

Sound Daniel Torres

Production Assistant Chantal Goudard

Consulting Editor

Toby Shimin

Assistant Editor

Peter Chey

Additional Photos and Footage

Courtesy of Carlos Salazar

Post Production Services

Mayday Post

Colorist and Online Editor

Mike Nuget, CSI

Post Sound Services

Nocturnal Sound

Re-Recording Mixer Eli Cohn

Dialogue Editor Gisela Fullà Silvestre

FX Editor Ben Kruse

Foley Editor Samuel Berliner-Sachs

Archival Producers

Monica Berra

Michael Shorris

Production Coordinator

Darah Gaines Martin

Production Assistants

Erin Lonergan

Jessica Martinez

Kay McDonald

Christina Motel

Jason Mukendi

Kalin Steen

Paul Taft

Graphics

D'Amico Studios

Courtesy of Rainbow Connections and Adelaide Day

Supervisor Jennifer Todd

Art director/ animator Andrea Bitai

Graphic Designer Pier Nicola D'Amico

Poster Design Pier Nicola D'Amico

Trailer Editor

Chelsi Bullard

Clearance Counsel

Seema Tilak, Esq., Create LLP

Bookkeeping

Jitasa

Special Thanks

Charli Diaz

Tim McDiarmid

Dylan Heinzer

Sierra Heinzer

Hazel Heinzer

Daniel Trujillo

Lizette Trujillo

Nicole Maines

Jonas Maines

Hobbes Chukumba

Asha Chukumba

Chima Chukumba

Nokosi Chukumba

Violet Shaw DuMont

Michele Dumont

Nick Witt

Jennifer Richardson

Juniper Witt

Beatriss Witt

Mary Shillue Goldberg
Vanessa Ford
Veronica De Los Santos
Diana Placencia
Vital
Silvia
Don Gillian-Daniel
Stephen Leidy
Justin Massey
Ross Mclean
Ryan Parry
Aaron Richie
Peter Betz
Stephen Liedy
Ross Mclean
Ryan Parry
Aaron Richie
Dennis Shepard

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Augusta Thomson
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Chithra Jeyaram
Meryl O'Connor
Anna Clare Spelman
Bridgette Cyr
Dennis Shepard
Shan Shan Tam
Buckhorn Camps

Bud Utecht
Community Arts Workshop
Katy Wood
Metta Meditation Center
PFLAG
Santa Barbara Transgender Advocacy Network (SBTAN)
Natomas Charter School
Sarah Winter
John Woods
Karen Pollard
Lily Massey
Katee Trinkle
Alexys Cellini
Jim Vetter

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Impact Partner

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