



## Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

### Film Screening: Lifeboat

#### Panel



**Skye Fitzgerald** was recently inducted as an honorary member into SAMS (Syrian American Medical Society) for his work with Syrian refugees and named a Distinguished Alumnus at his alma mater, Eastern Oregon University for documentary work. Designated a Fulbright Research Scholar to produce the film *Bombhunters* (2006), Fitzgerald has since collaborated or received support from the Sundance Institute, the U.S. Institute of Peace, the State Department, the Paul Robeson Fund and Mountainfilm. As a Director of Photography, Fitzgerald has lensed work for major broadcast and cable strands including Dateline NBC, VICE, Mercy Corps, CNN, the Discovery, Travel and History Channels, and most recently an entire season of the new Animal Planet show *Amanda to the Rescue*. In addition to directing *101 Seconds* (a film about the American gun debate - Amazon Prime, iTunes, Comcast Streampix) Fitzgerald directed the recently completed *LIFEBOAT*, a film documenting Search and Rescue operations off the coast of Libya. His last film, *50 Feet from Syria*, focused on doctors working on the Syrian border. The film was voted onto the shortlist for an Oscar.



**Tessa Valk-Mayerick** is an External Relations Officer for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Refugee Agency, in Washington, DC. She manages the agency's outreach to the U.S. Congress, educating Members and their staff about UNHCR's role, capabilities, programs, and impact and calling attention to refugee needs around the world. Tessa has worked for UNHCR since October 2005. She has served in UNHCR field operations in Afghanistan and Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, and has led delegation visits to Lebanon, Jordan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Prior to joining UNHCR, Tessa worked for the Coalition for Government Procurement and for Congressman Peter Deutsch (FL-20) in Washington, D.C. Tessa is a graduate of Queen's University in Canada where she received a bachelor's degree in Political Science.

## Moderator



**Rhodie Margesson** is a Specialist in International Humanitarian Policy in the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division at the Congressional Research Service (CRS). She conducts research and policy analysis on global humanitarian issues, disaster relief, displaced populations, migration, and some aspects of human rights. In addition, she currently teaches in the Global Fellows Program at the University of Maryland and volunteers as a mediator in Washington, DC's Superior Court Family Mediation Program. Rhodie has also served as an election observer with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union in Africa, the Balkans, and the Caucasus and travelled extensively. Previously, she was an Associate with the Program on International Conflict Analysis and Resolution at Harvard University and worked in the conflict resolution field on both domestic and international projects. She has also held research and teaching fellow positions at both the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Rhodie earned a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy and a Ph.D. from the Fletcher School.