



PIONEERS IN SKIRTS

a movie about ambition

DIRECTED BY ASHLEY MARIA & WRITTEN BY LEA-ANN W. BERST AND ASHLEY MARIA. DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ELIZABETH YARWOOD. EDITED BY TIFFANY HOPE, ASHLEY MARIA, AND CRYSTAL LENTZ. MUSIC BY JORDAN BALAGOT.
GRAPHICS BY TOM BLOCZYNSKI. SOUND BY DEVON KELLEY AND AMY R. REED. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS LEA-ANN W. BERST, BRAD FELD, SARA LYNNE WRIGHT, DAVID J. BERST, AND ASHLEY MARIA.

www.PIONEERSINSKIRTS.COM

Logline

As ambitious women are forced to maneuver a work-world built for company men, Ashley wastes no time planning her escape while clearing a path for the women coming up fast behind her.

Movie Trailer



Synopsis

Pioneers in Skirts® is an entertaining examination of gender parity in the workplace from the perspective of a female filmmaker who was frustrated with her own problems in the film industry.

Not finding many answers within her profession, she decides to expand her search to include other industries and society in general.

For 4 years, she traveled the U.S. to investigate solutions: speaking to fellow pioneering women and girls and interviewing topic experts. By the end of her journey she finds out how we ALL can address the stereotyping and sexism that can chip away at a woman, hurt her potential, and make her feel like she must re-think her dreams.

“It’s such an important film, especially today. Everybody can see their role in the problem.” Charlotte, NC test screener feedback





96% of the stories that you see in theaters today are told by men.

Director Statement

What does a filmmaker do if she wants to overcome an issue she's having in her life? Well, she makes a movie about it.

Soon after I started my directing career in Los Angeles, I knew I needed to make an honest film that investigated the shocking experiences I was having. I wasn't prepared for what was happening and quickly realized this was a very big issue for women everywhere – not just in the film industry. It was much bigger than me.

The issue? The sexism and stereotyping that can prevent women from reaching their full potential.

Pioneers in Skirts grew into an overarching search for strategies to advance gender parity. My hope is for the film to be utilized to help create a world where ambitious women & girls won't have to combat bias in their lives, and companies can achieve diverse and inclusive work cultures.

After 4 years of following pioneering women and gathering the facts, I am excited for the impact this film will have – not just for women or the film industry – but for cultures wanting to play a role in dramatically changing the outcome for women today, and the next generation.

I'm proud to share that, after targeted test screening results from around the country, Pioneers in Skirts has proven to motivate viewers to re-evaluate the world around them and their place in it. Viewers share that they now empathize with women and what they are confronted with on a daily basis, and they leave the film wanting to take steps toward change. They want to make a difference. We ALL can play a role in pioneering change! ~ Ashley Maria

Elevating Meaningful Conversations

The power of embracing differences and understanding the inner reality of others can be the glue that holds a great workplace together and lifts up underrepresented voices.

Pioneers in Skirts' character-driven story empowers viewers to experience what the lack of inclusion really feels like.

Pioneers in Skirts will enter distribution in the coming months. When it does, the film will screen around the world at **film festivals**, **companies** who want to build a more inclusive culture in the workplace, **communities** with solution-focused gender equity movements of their own, and **schools** who want to strengthen the dialogue about diversity and inclusion.

The Team

Pioneers in Skirts is a film from a daughter-mother team dedicated to fast-tracking the cultural change we need in order to achieve gender parity in the workplace.



Ashley & Lea-Ann on the robotic competition movie set.

Ashley Maria
Director, Producer, Co-Writer

Ashley Maria is a filmmaker based in Los Angeles, California.

Winner of the coveted *Directors Guild of America (DGA) award*, she was also featured by the DGA Women's Steering Committee as a director who represents *The Future of Women in Film*.

When she's not running her own production, Ashley is a directing instructor at UCLA and AFI's Young Women in Film program.

With years of studio and independent production experience under their belts, Ashley and her female colleagues started to notice they were consistently turned down for jobs because of being inexperienced "woman-directors."

That's when Ashley picked up her camera to share her story; revealing the career obstacles she and many other women still have to deal with today.

Thanks to her journey making *Pioneers in Skirts*, Ashley was selected as a *North American Delegate* to attend the United Nation's Commission on the Status of Women – the principal global policy-making body dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of women.

Find out more about Ashley at ashley-maria.com, and view her filmmaking credits at her [IMDb page](#).

Lea-Ann W. Berst Producer, Co-Writer, Activation

Lea-Ann W. Berst is a producer, writer, and activation marketer. She is known in the industry for doing what it takes to get the job done (driving the getaway car if needed!) and raising film-making funds through mutually beneficial sponsorships.

After 30 years of climbing the corporate ladder and fighting for everything she had achieved in her career, Lea-Ann was shocked to hear her daughter, Ashley, had to fight just as hard. Years of championing her daughter to be and do anything wasn't working! Lea-Ann set her business aside to join her daughter to reveal the career obstacles she and many other women still have to deal with today.

Lea-Ann is currently focused on building partnerships and tactics designed to deepen and advance the impact the film will have on our culture.

Find out more about Lea-Ann at sleddogg.com, and view her filmmaking credits by at her [IMDb page](#).



Ashley & Lea-Ann and crew on the Joan Darling / Norman Lear movie set.



Ashley on the Hollywood Roundtable movie set.

TITLE
Pioneers in Skirts®

RUNNING TIME
59:00 min

COUNTRY
United States

TRAILER
vimeo.com/178290183

OUR NEWS!
pioneersinskirts.com/newsroom

PRESS INFO
pioneersinskirts.com/newsroom/press-kit

SEE HOW YOU CAN WATCH THE FILM: www.pioneersinskirts.com/watch-the-movie

SEE WHO IS IN THE FILM: www.pioneersinskirts.com/featuring

<p>Facebook: PioneersinSkirts</p> <p>Twitter: @PioneersnSkirts</p> <p>Instagram: PioneersinSkirts</p> <p>IMDb: Pioneers in Skirts</p> <p>Contact: pioneersinskirts@gmail.com (323) 577-9084</p>	<p>Recent News & Reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Endorsement from M3AAWG Association" • "A Movie Commentary from Dr. Hope Hills" • "Combating Bias in the Workplace" • "Director Ashley Maria UN Delegate at CSW63" • "Meaningful Change" • "Commitment to Equality and Diversity"
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