

DEOMI NEWS LINKS, May 15, 2020

SPOTLIGHT: Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, May 2020

[President Donald J. Trump Proclamation on Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, May 2020](#)

[Issued on: 29 April 2020]

Throughout our Nation's history, Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander descent have made significant contributions to every aspect of our society, from business and politics to literature and the arts. Their accomplishments have enriched our Nation and stand as a testament to the power of the American Dream. During Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, we celebrate the indelible mark these individuals have left on our culture and pay tribute to the myriad ways in which they continue to strengthen our Nation.

[Asian Art Museum Virtually Celebrates Asian Pacific American Heritage Month By Forging New Digital Partnerships](#) [Stephan Rabimov, *Forbes*, 10 May 2020]

Since 1978, the United States marks the month of May as Asian and Pacific American Heritage (APAH) Month: a new annual tradition was born to recognize the historical contributions and cultural influences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans. For the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, APAH 2020 was supposed to be the culmination of the museum's multiyear, multimillion-dollar transformation and expansion, but due to the coronavirus pandemic the in-person celebrations are now postponed to later in the year. However, traditions have a way to persevere despite all odds. To celebrate APAH during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Asian Art Museum, turned online to shine its digital spotlight on the achievements and cultural impact of a wide-ranging community of creators.

[Daniel Dae Kim on "Asian-Americans": Ugly History, Relevant Again](#) [Brandon Yu, *The New York Times*, 10 May 2020]

In late March, the actor Daniel Dae Kim posted a video on Instagram revealing that he had tested positive for Covid-19. Kim, though, was largely uninterested in talking about himself during a recent Zoom call. Instead, he wanted to discuss "[Asian-Americans](#)," the new documentary series he narrates with the actress Tamlyn Tomita. Premiering Monday on PBS, the five-part special is the most ambitious documentary project ever to chronicle the history of the Asian-American community. It is arriving with an unanticipated relevance, amid the surge of racism toward Asian-Americans during the pandemic.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

CULTURE

[Cubicle comeback? Pandemic will reshape office life for good](#) [Kelvin Chan, *The Associated Press*, 12 May 2020]

When workers around the world eventually return to their desks, they'll find many changes due to the pandemic. For a start, fewer people will go back to their offices as the coronavirus crisis makes

working from home more accepted, health concerns linger and companies weigh up rent savings and productivity benefits. For the rest, changes will begin with the commute as workers arrive in staggered shifts to avoid rush hour crowds. Staff might take turns working alternate days in the office to reduce crowding. Floor markings or digital sensors could remind people to stand apart and cubicles might even make a comeback.

[Inside historic Black bookstores' fight for survival against the COVID-19 pandemic](#) [Jessica Guynn, USA Today, 11 May 2020]

Inside Marcus Books, the nation's oldest Black-owned bookstore, no one lingers anymore over shelves lined with a diasporic collection of African and African American history, culture, music and literature. Blanche Richardson, whose parents founded Marcus Books 60 years ago, works alone in the store, putting on a protective mask for curbside deliveries. "The pandemic exacerbated the plight of the few remaining Black bookstores across the country," Richardson told USA TODAY.

DISCRIMINATION

[A Life On and Off the Navajo Nation-The reservation has some of the most coronavirus cases per capita in the country. \[OPINION\]](#) [Wahleah Johns, *The New York Times*, 13 May 2020]

Today the Navajo Nation is one of the worst hot spots in the country for Covid-19. Hundreds of miles of roads are unpaved, so it can take up to three hours to get a sick person to help. It's difficult to self-isolate because families live in one-room homes called hogans. Up to 40 percent of Navajo households don't have running water, making it hard to wash hands. Cellphone service and Wi-Fi are limited, so it's difficult to keep in touch and to get information about the epidemic.

[This New York pastor says his parish lost 44 people to coronavirus](#) [Catherine E. Shoichet and Daniel Burke, CNN, 13 May 2020]

The list sits on the Rev. Fabian Arias' desk, beneath the N95 mask he plans to wear to the next funeral he's presiding over. There are dozens of names on it, and he fears soon there will be more. Of the deaths in the parish that church officials have logged, Arias says the majority — nearly 90% — are Latino. And many, he says, are undocumented immigrants. "The virus installs itself more in the most vulnerable places, and so it infects the most vulnerable people. This is the problem. The virus does not discriminate," he says. "We are the ones who as a society are discriminating."

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Aimee Stephens, transgender woman at center of Supreme Court case, dies at 59](#) [Tim Fitzsimons, NBC News, 12 May 2020]

Aimee Stephens, the Detroit-area funeral home worker whose firing led to a [Supreme Court case](#) that could decide the employment rights of millions of transgender and gender-nonconforming people, died Tuesday, according to the American Civil Liberties Union, which was working on her case. She was 59. Stephens had kidney disease for several years and required lengthy dialysis treatments. According to a GoFundMe set up last week to fundraise for her end-of-life costs, being fired from her job in 2013 contributed to "several years of lost income" that her family has been unable to recoup.

[LGBTQ people face higher unemployment amid coronavirus pandemic, survey finds](#) [Julie Moreau, *NBC News*, 12 May 2020]

*Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer Americans are more likely to become unemployed as a result of the coronavirus epidemic than their non-LGBTQ counterparts, according to a [poll by the national LGBTQ advocacy group Human Rights Campaign and PSB Research](#). “It is unfortunate, but not surprising, to see how COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting vulnerable populations, including the LGBTQ community,” Elizabeth Bibi, the campaign’s senior communications adviser, told *NBC News*. “Understanding the impact this virus is having on our community is crucial so that we can be best prepared to weather this crisis and work together on how to recover.”*

[In Japan, pandemic brings outbreaks of bullying, ostracism](#) [Mari Yamaguchi, *The Associated Press*, 11 May 2020]

The coronavirus in Japan has brought not just an epidemic of infections, but also an onslaught of bullying and discrimination against the sick, their families and health workers. A government campaign to raise awareness seems to be helping, at least for medical workers. But it’s made only limited headway in countering the harassment and shunning that may be discouraging people from seeking testing and care and hindering the battle against the pandemic.

[Tracing South Korea’s latest virus outbreak shoves LGBTQ community into unwelcome spotlight](#) [Min Yoo Kim, *The Washington Post*, 11 May 2020]

South Korea is in a race to contain a new coronavirus outbreak in a Seoul party district, prompting a return of social distancing just as the country was easing restrictions. Tracing who was there, however, runs up against the feelings of a gay community that prefers anonymity. The infection tally from the Itaewon clubs and bars is expected to grow as officials track down thousands of visitors there during the holiday week. What complicates this search is that many among those clubgoers may not want to be identified because of the stigma attached to the Itaewon establishments catering to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer clientele.

[USAF rejects Wisconsin Guard sergeant’s reprisal allegations](#) [Todd Richmond, *The Associated Press*, 11 May 2020]

U.S. Air Force investigators have rejected a Wisconsin National Guard sergeant’s allegations that his commanders retaliated against him and tried to force him out of the service after he complained about sexual assaults in his unit. The Secretary of the Air Force Inspector General’s office notified Master Sgt. Jay Ellis last Wednesday that investigators deemed his allegations unsubstantiated. It concluded that the actions were taken months after Ellis raised the sexual assault complaints, some of his commanders weren’t aware of the complaints and that the ones who were followed protocol.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

DIVERSITY

[AFSOC “Moving Away” from Selecting Operators Based on Physical Performance](#) [Matthew Cox, *Military.com*, 13 May 2020]

The commander of Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) said Wednesday that the selection process for operators in the future will be less about assessing physical prowess, instead placing more emphasis on algorithms and analytics. “So, it’s not really as much about how quickly

you can do a ruck march with a 30-pound ruck and how many pull-ups and push-ups you can do. It's really more about the attributes that you possess," he said.

[SEE ALSO [1](#), [2](#)]

[New Report Offers Companies Concrete Guidance to Increase Diversity and Inclusion as Economy Recovers](#) [*Business Wire*, 13 May 2020]

A new report, authored by highly respected academic experts at some of the world's top universities—including Stanford and Harvard—alongside prominent business leaders, offers concrete strategies to help companies get there. "[What Works? Evidence-Based Ideas to Increase Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace](#)" provides human resources professionals, diversity officers, front-line managers and interested employees a new set of tools to make their organizations more diverse, thriving environments.

[Princeton names its first Black valedictorian in the university's history](#) [Alaa Elassar, *CNN*, 11 May 2020]

Princeton University has announced its first Black valedictorian in its 274-year history. Nicholas Johnson, who was named valedictorian of Princeton's Class of 2020, called the achievement especially significant, given Princeton's struggle in recent years, like numerous other prestigious universities, to confront its troubled history with slavery.

[SEE ALSO [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)]

HUMAN RELATIONS

[Check on an Extrovert Today](#) [Ann Friedman, *The New York Times*, 14 May 2020]

Introverts have ruled the social-media era. Before isolation became the norm, my feed was full of knowing jokes about how good it feels to cancel plans and ignore phone calls, how horrible it is to endure small talk. Of course, neither introverts nor extroverts are OK right now. As millions of people face a third month of sheltering at home, it's become clear that confinement is no paradise even for those who love solitude. This is a deeply anxious and mournful period marred by upended social realities, including those hours upon hours of obligatory video chatting — an introvert's nightmare. Plus, this is a moment when people need to ask for social support, and [research shows](#) introverts are not as good at reaching out to others for help.

[The Social-Distancing Shamers Are Watching](#) [Amanda Hess, *The New York Times*, 11 May 2020]

The internet has long been identified as a breeding ground for public shame, but the coronavirus has advanced the game. If some benefit of the doubt between strangers still existed in online discourse, this mysterious, highly communicable and deadly illness has annihilated it.

MISCELLANEOUS

[A Coronavirus Order Requiring Businesses to Track Customers Is Challenged in Court](#) [Andrea Noble, *Route Fifty*, 13 May 2020]

Public health officials believe contact tracing will be essential to prevent the spread of coronavirus as states reopen their economies. But measures enacted this month by one Kansas county to bolster

contract tracing efforts face a legal challenge that asserts they are unconstitutional and violate the privacy rights of businesses and their patrons.

[German lawmakers investigate whether double taxation of U.S. troops, civilians violates SOFA](#)

[John Vandiver and Marcus Kloeckner, *Stars and Stripes*, 11 May 2020]

Regional lawmakers in Germany are investigating why a finance office near Ramstein Air Base has stepped up efforts to collect income tax from American troops and military civilians, possibly breaching an international treaty that governs U.S. forces in the country. Marlies Kohnle-Gros, a state parliamentarian in Rheinland-Pfalz, and fellow Christian Democratic Union lawmaker Marcus Klein are investigating whether there has been an official change in policy regarding how German tax offices treat U.S. personnel. They've also asked how many U.S. military members have been targeted for taxation and how much money has been seized over the past five years, they said in an interview last week.

[REPRINT]

[Top conservative calls on Pentagon to lift COVID-19 enlistment restrictions](#) [Juliegrace Brufke, *The Hill*, 11 May 2020]

House Freedom Caucus Chairman Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.) called on the Pentagon to reverse recent guidelines that prohibit the enlistment of coronavirus survivors who were previously hospitalized. In a letter Monday to Defense Secretary Mark Esper, Biggs argued that banning coronavirus survivors from serving could have negative repercussions in the long run. He noted the guidelines have already been changed once, with the initial guidelines restricting anyone who tested positive from enlisting, not just those who were hospitalized.

[SEE ALSO]

MISCONDUCT

[Survivors of Military Domestic Violence Asked to Share Their Stories with Congress](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 11 May 2020]

The Government Accountability Office [is seeking input](#) from survivors of domestic violence in military relationships, including service members, spouses or partners who experienced abuse any time in the past six years. The information is for a report to Congress on the military services' efforts to prevent and respond to domestic violence in the ranks. The investigation was ordered last year by members of the House Armed Services Committee after several military spouses testified that their appeals to military commands following incidents of abuse went ignored.

RACISM

[Ahmaud Arbery case puts spotlight on community's race legacy](#) [Russ Bynum and Aaron Morrison, *The Associated Press*, 13 May 2020]

The people who call Brunswick, Georgia, home say it's not the monstrous place it might appear to be in the wake of the slaying of Ahmaud Arbery after a pursuit by two armed White men. Yes, it is one of Georgia's poorest cities where much of the Black working population has struggled to find opportunities for advancement and where one Black resident says he walks on tip toes to avoid racist insults. But it's also a city with a Black mayor and one where longtime residents say Black

and White people — all the way back to the civil rights movement — have long worked together to solve thorny questions about racial equality.

[Georgia Attorney General Asks For DOJ Probe Into Handling Of Ahmaud Arbery Case](#)

[Marie Andruszewicz, NPR, 10 May 2020]

Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr asked the Department of Justice on Sunday to conduct an investigation into the handling of the Ahmaud Arbery case. Arbery, a 25-year-old Black man, was shot and killed in February while jogging through a neighborhood in Glynn County, Ga. His death sparked a national outcry and demands for justice after a cellphone video of the shooting began circulating online last week.

[SEE ALSO [1](#), [2](#)]

[Indiana legislator accused of racist Facebook post, again](#) [The Associated Press, 13 May 2020]

A White Indiana state lawmaker who was accused of posting something racist on Facebook last year is defending himself again after he posted a meme that showed Black children in diapers dancing with the caption, “We gon’ get free money!” This isn’t the first time Lucas has been accused of posting something racist online. Last year, he posted a picture of a gallows with two nooses under a WISH-TV Facebook story about a Black man pleading guilty to rape.

[“Sleeping While Black”: Louisville Police Kill Unarmed Black Woman](#) [Amina Elahi, NPR, 13 May 2020]

Attorneys for the family of Breonna Taylor call her shooting death by Louisville police an “execution.” Taylor was asleep in her apartment in March when police burst into her home to serve a search warrant. The case is gaining national attention, and this week civil rights and personal injury attorney Ben Crump announced he had been hired by Taylor’s family. “You can’t walk while Black. With Ahmaud, you can’t jog while Black. Driving while Black,” Crump said during a news conference. “But Breonna Taylor was sleeping while Black in the sanctity of her own home.”

[SEE ALSO]

[America’s oldest living WWII veteran faced hostility abroad—and at home](#) [Chelsea Brasted, National Geographic, 11 May 2020]

At 110, Lawrence Brooks is the oldest known U.S. veteran of World War II. Brooks is proud of his military service, even though his memories of it are complicated. Black soldiers fighting in the war could not escape the racism, discrimination, and hostility at home. When Brooks was stationed with the U.S. Army in Australia, he was an African-American man in a time well before the Civil Rights Movement would at least codify something like equality in his home country. “I was treated so much better in Australia than I was by my own White people,” Brooks says. “I wondered about that. That’s what worried me so much. Why?”

[The Marine Corps: Always faithful — to White men](#) [COMMENTARY] [Thomas Hobbs, Marine Corps Times, 9 May 2020]

Americans of color are dying from COVID-19 at a disproportionate rate to White Americans due to the accumulated effects of institutional racism at the federal and state levels. The racist outcomes of deeply entrenched policy exist in the Marine Corps, as well. My goal is to illustrate those effects and to introduce a possible solution using the Marine Corps’ method for assigning occupational

specialties to officers as a vehicle. I am a Marine in my heart for life, and my criticism comes from a place of love. The Marine Corps should lead the way for our nation with its ethics and moral courage. Here is an opportunity to do so.

RELIGION

[Officials release edited coronavirus reopening guidance](#) [Mike Stobbe and Jason Dearen, *The Associated Press*, 15 May 2020]

U.S. health officials on Thursday released some of their long-delayed [guidance](#) that schools, businesses and other organizations can use as states reopen from coronavirus shutdowns. The CDC originally also authored a document for churches and other religious facilities, but that wasn't posted Thursday. The agency declined to say why. The faith-related guidance was taken out after the White House raised concerns about the recommended restrictions, according to government emails obtained by The Associated Press and a person inside the agency who didn't have permission to talk with reporters and spoke on condition of anonymity.

[Breaking the Ramadan Fast in Quarantine](#) [Amelia Nierenberg, *The New York Times*, 13 May 2020]

For many Muslim families, Ramadan is one of the most social months of the year. In the United States, mosques host large meals, catered by local restaurants or prepared by members of the community. In homes, extended families come together — grandparents, grandchildren, aunts and cousins — and add all the extra leaves to expand their tables. Friends gather to pray, to share, to taste. It is a month of meals eaten with intention, ending in a joyous celebration: Eid al-Fitr, which begins the evening of May 23. During the pandemic, the suhoor meals before sunrise and the evening iftars that break the daylong fast have taken on a new cast. Families sometimes eat together over video calls with relatives. The celebration can feel more intimate, more immediate. The 30 meals eaten night after night become opportunities to reflect privately on faith and history.

[After surviving wars, pestilence, religions use technology to beat pandemic](#) [Angela Moore, *Reuters*, 12 May 2020]

The world's three leading religions have survived famines, plagues, pestilence and wars. Now, in the 21st century shutdown, New York-area Jewish, Islamic and Christian clerics are turning to technology to help their followers through the coronavirus. Worshipers have taken to online connections as the dangers of the virus and uncertainty of self-isolation deepen their spirituality and strengthen their faith, the clerics said. "I think from a spiritual standpoint, it's very empowering," said Sheikh Osamah Salhia, Imam at the Islamic Center of Passaic County in Clifton, New Jersey.

[How the Buddha Got His Face](#) [Aatish Taseer, *The New York Times*, 11 May 2020]

For the first six centuries after his death, the Buddha was never depicted in human form. He was only ever represented aniconically by a sacred synecdoche — his footprints, for example; or a parasol, an auspicious mark of kingship and spirituality; or the Wisdom Tree, also known as the Bodhi Tree, under which he gained enlightenment. How did the image of the Buddha enter the world of men? How does one give a human face to god, especially to he who was never meant to be a god nor ever said one word about god? How, in rendering such a man in human form, does one counterintuitively end up creating an object of deification? And what is the power of such an object?

[Supreme Court tackles clash of Catholic schools, ex-teachers](#) [Jessica Gresko, *The Associated Press*, 11 May 2020]

A case about the appropriate separation between church and state is taking center stage at the Supreme Court, which is hearing arguments by telephone for a second week because of the coronavirus pandemic.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[New report finds nonreligious people face stigma and discrimination](#) [Alejandra Molina, *Religious News Service*, 4 May 2020]

A new study, dubbed “[Reality Check: Being Nonreligious in America](#),” has found that nonreligious people face discrimination and stigma, conceal their nonreligious identities, and largely see themselves as atheists and humanists. The report, produced by the nonprofit [American Atheists](#) — a national civil rights organization that seeks to achieve religious equality for all Americans — is the culmination of a survey of nearly 34,000 nonreligious people living in the United States. More than three-quarters of participants identify “very much” with the terms nonreligious (79.6%), atheist (79.4%) and secular (75.1%). Others strongly identify with the terms freethinker (64.9%), humanist (64.6%) and skeptic (61.4%).

SEXISM

[The Women’s Jail at Rikers Island Is Named for My Grandmother. She Would Not Be Proud.](#)

[\[OPINION\]](#) [Suzanne Singer, *The New York Times*, 12 May 2020]

In 1988, my family and I were honored when New York City named the new women’s jail on Rikers Island for my grandmother, Rose M. Singer, a longtime jail reform activist. The Rose M. Singer Center was supposed to be a beacon to the world, a place where women caught up in the criminal justice system would be treated humanely and kept safe. The jail has not lived up to that vision, however. Instead, it has devolved into a torture chamber, where women are routinely abused, housed in unsanitary conditions, and denied medical and mental health services. They are treated as less than human, not as our grandmothers, mothers, daughters and sisters. (Editor’s note: Suzanne Singer is rabbi at Temple Beth El in Riverside, Calif.)

[USWNT could settle to take care of itself. It’s fighting for something bigger.](#) [Sally Jenkins, *The Washington Post*, 11 May 2020]

The U.S. women’s World Cup champions don’t have any quit or settle in them, but unless they get the relief they deserve from an appeals court, they will face too many opponents in their fight for equal pay. They can beat sexism, and they can beat the world. But they can’t beat sexism and a global pandemic and a bad referee all at the same time. A bad referee is what they got in their pay discrimination case. Late last Friday, they asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit to review Judge R. Gary Klausner’s nonsensical decision to toss their pay inequity claims against U.S. Soccer, and the panel should agree. Klausner allowed the women’s allegations of inferior treatment in matters such as travel and support to go forward. But he illogically refused to allow their paycheck claims to be so much as heard.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Former West Virginia VA doctor charged with sexually abusing several patients](#) [Rose L. Thayer, *Stars and Stripes*, 13 May 2020]

A former Department of Veterans Affairs doctor working in West Virginia received a seven-count indictment from a federal grand jury Tuesday on charges that he sexually assaulted veterans who sought treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic pain and anxiety, according to the Justice Department. Dr. Jonathan Yates, 51, is charged with five counts of depriving veterans of their civil rights and two counts of abusive sexual contact stemming from his 14-month stint at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Beckley, W.V., according to the Justice Department. The charges are based on a criminal complaint against Yates filed Feb. 20 in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[A Few Bad Men: How the Marine Corps fails to punish senior officer misconduct, time and again](#) [Paul Szoldra, *Task & Purpose*, 11 May 2020]

Editor's note: This story includes graphic descriptions of rape.

It was November 2019 when Cooper, a Marine captain, alleged that Col. Lawrence "Larry" Miller had sexually harassed her repeatedly after she had joined his staff the year before. Miller, 52, often told sexually-charged stories in the office, she claimed, and had blamed her for her own rape moments after she reported it to him. After she submitted a sworn statement, things moved rather quickly: Miller was transferred, an investigation was opened, Cooper and others were interviewed. It was over by January of this year, though Cooper didn't learn the results until March. This article, which is based on interviews with Marine Corps officials, military justice experts, and the official military investigation into Miller obtained through a public records request, largely tells the story of one of many military investigations. Still, the months-long probe and its aftermath serve as a microcosm of the Marine Corps' fraught history with women in its ranks, and the service's tendency to conceal senior officer misconduct rather than weed it out.

[Tennessee appeals judges say it's OK to make creepy videos of women without their consent](#) [Jamie Satterfield, *Knoxville News Sentinel*, (Knoxville, Tenn.) 10 May 2020]

Three judges – all men – wrote three separate but nearly identical [opinions](#) concluding it's not a crime in Tennessee to film fully clothed women without their consent if they're in public. The issue arose in the case of an admitted sexual deviant who was convicted of unlawful photography and admitted he stalked women in retail stores and filmed their "private areas" for sexual gratification. In three separate opinions, the [judges] reach the same conclusion: No one has a right to expect privacy in the digital age.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Athlete sues University of Michigan over sexual assault](#) [The Associated Press, 8 May 2020]

A University of Michigan track and field female athlete is suing the university in federal court, accusing school officials of failing to protect her from a teammate she alleges sexually assaulted and stalked her. The lawsuit filed Thursday is the latest legal action against the UM athletic department related to sexual misconduct. Hundreds of former athletes and others have settled sexual abuse allegations against the now-deceased Dr. Robert Anderson who worked at the university for decades.

SUICIDE

[This former Air Force colonel survived two suicide attempts. He wants you to know life doesn't have to hurt so much](#) [David Roza, *Task & Purpose*, 14 May 2020]

Robert Swanson shouldn't be alive right now. At 57 years old, the former Air Force colonel has tried to kill himself twice: once with muscle relaxants and hypothermia, and the second time with anti-depressants and car engine fumes. After the first attempt, which saw Swanson near-frozen in the snow in the mountains of Utah, doctors told him that he probably would never walk again because they would have to remove his feet. But not only did Swanson survive both his suicide attempts, he also kept his feet and his ability to walk. And then he learned to thrive and enjoy life in a way he never had before.

[Seeking the Military Suicide Solution Podcast, Episode 18: Psych Hub's Keita Franklin](#) [*Military Times*, 12 May 2020]

Dr. Keita Franklin is [Psych Hub](#)'s chief clinical officer. In this capacity, she oversees the development and production of all clinical content for Psych Hub's ever-expanding repository of educational videos and informational materials. A nationally recognized expert, Franklin, ensures all clinical content is on the cutting edge of the intersection between health care and information technology. Key to Psych Hub's goal of revolutionizing how mental health care education and training is delivered, Franklin leads the Psych Hub clinical team, ensuring all products are evidence-based and trauma-informed.

[\[LISTEN\]](#)

[VA Exploring Options for a Grand Challenge to Prevent Suicide](#) [Brandi Vincent, *Govexec*, 11 May 2020]

The Veterans Affairs Department is gauging who can help produce and manage a multi-phase, multi-year grand challenge competition that would encompass the creation of a comprehensive digital ecosystem for evidence-based solutions to help prevent veteran suicide, according to a recent [request for information](#). Plans to launch a suicide-prevention contest had been brewing for a bit, but the agency's Chief Innovation Officer Michael Akinyele told Nextgov Friday that circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic compelled VA to accelerate that process. He offered a glimpse into the potential competition and final digital platform that the agency ultimately hopes to help catalyze.

VETERANS

[Medal of Honor recipient, former Green Beret Ronald Shurer, dies at 41](#) [Kyle Rempfer, *Army Times*, 14 May 2020]

Medal of Honor recipient and Army Special Forces veteran former Staff Sgt. Ronald J. Shurer died Thursday, according to the unit he served under in Afghanistan. Prior to his passing, Shurer, 41, was undergoing treatment for lung cancer at Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C. He said Wednesday that he would soon be taken off a ventilator, an often difficult and sometimes dangerous medical procedure. Shurer was awarded the Medal of Honor in October 2018 for his actions as a Green Beret medic with 3rd Special Forces Group during the Battle of Shok Valley in northeastern Afghanistan a decade earlier.

[Hilton Carter, one of last remaining Tuskegee Airmen, laid to rest](#) [Dean Narciso, *The Columbus Dispatch*, (Columbus, Ohio), 13 May 2020]

As a teenager, Carter flew in the Pacific Theater during World War II, where he became an original member of the Tuskegee Airmen, a famed group of Black fighter pilots. There are only two now living in Columbus. Carter faced obstacles but remained committed to justice, Keaton said. “With all the racism he had to overcome, he did not let that overcome him. He set out to change things and make life better for his family.”

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Nazi swastikas at veterans cemeteries prompt outrage, but VA calls them protected history](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 12 May 2020]

Veterans Affairs officials are rejecting calls to remove gravestones bearing Nazi swastikas at a pair of federal veterans cemeteries, saying they have a duty to preserve the historic markers. But officials from the Military Religious Freedom Foundation called the continued presence of the offensive symbols alongside the resting place of American veterans “shocking and inexcusable” and are demanding a public apology from VA leaders.

[African American and Hispanic veterans may face bigger risk from coronavirus, VA warns](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 11 May 2020]

Veterans Affairs officials are warning African American and Hispanic veterans that they may face a greater health risk from the coronavirus outbreak as the total number of positive cases in the department’s health system topped 11,000 over the weekend. That total includes veterans who use VA health care, VA employees being treated within the system, troops and military family members referred from Defense Department doctors, and civilian patients transferred to VA from overwhelmed local systems.

[This Navy grad was a pilot. Now she’s a nurse on the front lines of coronavirus at Anne Arundel Medical Center.](#) [Nathan Ruiz, *The Baltimore Sun*, 11 May 2020]

Elizabeth Bailey is a Naval Academy grad and former Navy helicopter pilot who is now a registered nurse at Anne Arundel Medical Center. Bailey says her military training has helped her “to deal with the unknown, the uncharted territory which is this pandemic. And it’s helped me lead people through this successfully.”

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Veterans groups, govt brace for surge in mental health needs](#) [Sarah Blake, Claudia Lauer and Hope Yen, *The Associated Press*, 11 May 2020]

The VA and its partner mental health providers have kept thousands of veterans in treatment during the coronavirus pandemic through telehealth appointments. But as job losses and increased social isolation take an extended toll, some veterans’ advocates worry the already understaffed VA medical facilities can’t keep up and that telehealth isn’t enough.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)