

# DEOMI NEWS LINKS, JUNE 19, 2020

## HIGHLIGHTS

[In landmark case, Supreme Court rules LGBTQ workers are protected from job discrimination](#) [Pete Williams, *NBC News*, 15 June 2020]

*The U.S. Supreme Court [ruled](#) Monday that existing federal law forbids job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or transgender status, a major victory for advocates of gay rights and for the nascent transgender rights movement — and a surprising one from an increasingly conservative court. By a vote of 6-3, the court said Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which makes it illegal for employers to discriminate because of a person’s sex, among other factors, also covers sexual orientation and transgender status. It upheld rulings from lower courts that said sexual orientation discrimination was a form of sex discrimination.*

[Chief Master Sgt. JoAnne S. Bass named Air Force’s 19th Chief Master Sergeant](#) [Charles Pope, *Air Force News Service*, 19 June 2020]

*Chief Master Sgt. JoAnne S. Bass was selected June 19 to become the 19th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, becoming the first woman in history to serve as the highest ranking noncommissioned member of a U.S. military service. Brown, who will become the 22nd Chief of Staff in August, said selecting the correct candidate to serve as chief master sergeant was one of his most critical decisions in advance of his becoming Chief. “I’m honored and humbled to be selected as the 19th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, and follow in the footsteps of some of the best leaders our Air Force has ever known,” Bass said. “The history of the moment isn’t lost on me; I’m just ready to get after it. And I’m extremely grateful for and proud of my family and friends who helped me along the way.”*

[SecDef Proposes Getting Rid of Military Promotion Photos to Eliminate Unconscious Bias](#) [Richard Sisk, *Military.com*, 18 June 2020]

*Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Thursday that the military was committed to rooting out racism in the ranks and serving as an example to the nation of an institution that values diversity and equality. “More often than not, we have led on these issues. However, we are not immune to the forces of bias and prejudice -- whether visible or invisible, conscious or unconscious,” Esper said in a video message to the force. “We know this bias burdens many of our service members, and has direct and indirect impact on the experiences of our minority members, the cultural and ethnic diversity of the force, and representation in our officer ranks.”*

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## CULTURE

[How the US Military Helped Create the Juneteenth Holiday](#) [Blake Stilwell, *Military.com*, 19 June 2020]

*One of the federal government’s first attacks on slavery during the war was an [“Act to Secure Freedom to All Persons Within the Territories of the United States,”](#) passed on June 19, 1862. Exactly three years later, Gen. Gordon Granger would sail into Galveston, Texas, to read the*

*Emancipation Proclamation to the people of Texas. The day would become known as “Juneteenth” and would be celebrated as a holiday -- a second independence day -- for former slaves.*

[Ethnic studies to be required at largest U.S. public college](#) [Cuneyt Dil, *The Associated Press*, 18 June 2020]

*Students at California State University, the nation’s largest four-year public university system, will need to take courses in ethnic studies under legislation advanced Thursday, a move by lawmakers to impose new graduation requirements that the colleges want to set themselves. The ethnic studies bill would require California State University campuses starting in the 2021-2022 academic year to offer courses on race and ethnicity focusing on Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and Latina and Latino Americans. Students would need to take one 3-credit course to graduate. The system enrolls over 481,000 students.*

[U.S. Forces Korea Permits Racial Injustice Protests on Bases](#) [Richard Sisk, *Military.com*, 18 June 2020]

*The demonstrations at Osan and Camp Humphreys were believed to be the first on any military installation worldwide since Floyd’s death. In an emailed statement, Army Col. Lee Peters, chief USFK spokesman, said commanders were “aware of both candlelight vigils and both were coordinated with appropriate authorities prior to execution.” Peters said he was unaware of any others, and Pentagon officials said they also did not know of any. Military analysts said demonstrations by service members on bases in response to the ills of American society are extremely rare.*

[Juneteenth Is a Reminder That Freedom Wasn’t Just Handed Over](#) [OPINION] [Brianna Holt, *The New York Times*, 17 June 2020]

*On June 19, 1865, two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, Union soldiers arrived in Texas to report that the Confederacy had surrendered two months earlier and that enslaved people were now free. In a red state where White-supremacy groups still congregate and Confederate flags fly from the back of trucks, it’s an indication that we are just as Texan as anyone else and our culture has influence in a place that once delayed our emancipation. Texas was the last state to receive the news. In celebration of the long overdue ending of slavery, Black Texans come together every year to remember our ancestors and the harsh treatment they endured for centuries. Juneteenth is a reminder that our freedom was fought for and not just handed over to us. It’s the blueprint for the hundreds of movements that followed to further guarantee that freedom was achieved.*

[As protests rage, changes for Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben’s brand](#) [*The Associated Press*, 17 June 2020]

*The owner of the Uncle Ben’s brand of rice says the brand will “evolve” in response to concerns about racial stereotyping. The announcement Wednesday arrived hours after Quaker Oats said it was retiring its Aunt Jemima brand of syrup and pancake mixes. Caroline Sherman, a spokeswoman for Mars, which owns Uncle Ben’s, says the company is listening to the voices of consumers, especially in the Black community, and recognizes that now is the right time to evolve the brand, including its visual identity.*

[Virginia, New York Declare Juneteenth a State Holiday](#) [Andrea Noble, *Route Fifty*, 17 June 2020]  
*Governors in both states are giving state workers a paid day off as they propose legislation to commemorate the emancipation of slaves. Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam said making the day a state-sponsored holiday elevates its importance to all residents. “It says to Black communities, this is not just your history, this is everyone’s shared history and we recognize it together,” Northam said. The decision is notable for Virginia in particular, once home to the capital of the Confederacy, where state lawmakers this year did away with a 116-year-old state holiday that honored rebel generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson.*

[SEE ALSO]

[History of the Modern Juneteenth Movement](#)  
[Juneteenth: A day of joy and pain - and now national action](#)

[Virginia Cavaliers alter new logos to remove references to university’s slavery history](#) [Des Bieler, *The Washington Post*, 16 June 2020]  
*The University of Virginia announced Monday it was altering logos [introduced in April](#) to remove references to the school’s history of slavery. The new logos included tweaks to the Cavaliers’ well-known image of crossed sabres, with the school saying in April that the handles of the swords were redesigned to “mimic the serpentine walls” on its grounds in Charlottesville. As some then pointed out, those walls were designed by university founder Thomas Jefferson to hide the sight of and mute the sounds of slaves made to carry out a variety of tasks at the school. Athletic Director Carla Williams said Monday that after the new logos were released she was “made aware of the negative connotation between the serpentine walls and slavery.”*

[Five Women Veterans Who Deserve to Have Army Bases Named After Them \[OPINION\]](#) [Erin Blakemore, *Smithsonianmag.com*, 15 June 2020]  
*Though women only became full, permanent members of the U.S. Armed Forces in 1948, they have been part of the Army since its earliest days. Women have always served alongside American men at war, whether as cooks or laundresses, nurses or spies, or even disguised as soldiers. But it took generations for women to win the right to officially serve their country, and women waited until 2013 for acknowledgment of their right to serve in combat roles. Today, 181,000 women serve in the Army, and women make up 18 percent of the Army and 36 percent of its civilian workforce. Whether the names of Confederate generals are removed or not, here are five women with names worthy of one day gracing Army installations.*

[U.S. Forces Korea Bans Display of Confederate Flag on Bases, Vehicles](#) [Richard Sisk, *Military.com*, 15 June 2020]  
*U.S. troops in South Korea have been barred from displaying the Confederate flag on bases or bumper stickers in the latest move by the military to prevent racial division in the force. In a [Twitter post](#) Monday, Army Gen. Robert B. “Abe” Abrams, commander of U.S. Forces Korea, said the Confederate battle flag “has the power to inflame racial division. We cannot have that division among us.” Effective immediately, he stated, “The Confederate Battle Flag or its depiction within USFK installation workplaces, common-access areas, public areas, building exteriors, personal clothing or vehicle bumper stickers is NOT authorized.”*

[Mississippi faces reckoning on Confederate emblem in flag](#) [Emily Wagster Pettus, *The Associated Press*, 13 June 2020]

*The young activists who launched a protest movement after George Floyd's death are bringing fresh energy to a long-simmering debate about the Confederate battle emblem that White supremacists embedded within the Mississippi state flag more than 125 years ago. The mere mention of removing the Confederate emblem from the Mississippi flag stirs anger in its defenders, who tell people to leave the state if they don't like it. Mississippi, with a 38% Black population, still has dozens of rebel soldier statues outside courthouses. It's also the only state with a flag that includes the Confederate battle emblem — a red field with a blue X dotted by 13 white stars.*

[Meet Lena Richard, the Celebrity Chef Who Broke Barriers in the Jim Crow South](#) [Lily Katzman, *Smithsonianmag.com*, 12 June 2020]

*In 1949, nearly a year after New Orleans' WDSU-TV went live for the first time, Lena Richard, an African American Creole chef and entrepreneur, brought her freshly prepared dishes to a family-style kitchen TV set and took to the screen to film her self-titled cooking show—the first of its kind for an African American. The show, titled “Lena Richard's New Orleans Cook Book” was one of the earliest offerings on the station, and became so popular that WDSU-TV began airing her show twice weekly on Tuesdays and Thursdays. While the program welcomed a racially mixed audience, the majority were White middle- and upper-class women, who leaned on Richard's culinary expertise for all things Creole.*

[Democratic leaders' kneeling was fine. The kente cloth was not. \[OPINION\]](#) [Nana Efua Mumford, *The Washington Post*, 11 June 2020]

*My traditional cloth is not a prop. On Monday, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (Calif.), Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer (N.Y.) and other members of the Democratic congressional leadership knelt for eight minutes and 46 seconds in tribute to the death of George Floyd. The kneeling was an appropriate gesture, but wearing African kente stoles, at that moment, was not.*

## **DISCRIMINATION**

[Retired DEA agents say agency has legacy of discrimination](#) [Kim Mustian, *The Associated Press*, 18 June 2020]

*Dozens of retired Black narcotics agents say their former agency, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, has discriminated against its African-American employees for decades. “This is a culture,” said Karl Colder, who previously oversaw the DEA's Washington field division, served on the agency's diversity committee and was one of 76 former agents involved in drafting the statement. “You still don't have African Americans in positions to really monitor and ensure things are equal.” The former agents pointed to a court ruling last year that said the DEA has failed to even the playing field for Black agents seeking promotions. The little-noticed ruling put the DEA on the hook for millions of dollars in back pay and attorneys' fees in a civil rights lawsuit dating to 1977 — just four years after the agency's founding. It also extended judicial oversight of DEA's promotion practices and drew fresh attention to the lack of diversity within its senior leadership.*

[Military not covered by Supreme Court ruling against gay, transgender discrimination](#) [Caitlin M. Kenney, *Stars and Stripes*, 16 June 2020]

*The landmark Supreme Court ruling Monday that a prohibition against sex discrimination also extends to gay and transgender people does not affect service members or Pentagon policy. However, lawyers and LGBTQ advocates believe the ruling could impact current lawsuits challenging Pentagon policy by making its ban harder to defend. Courts previously have ruled that Title VII does not apply to uniformed military personnel, Rachel VanLandingham, a law professor at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles and a former Air Force judge advocate, said in an email. “It’s a judicial exemption ostensibly based on military discipline that Congress hasn’t bothered to correct,” she wrote.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[LGBT service members are allowed to be out and proud, but a fear of repercussions persists](#)

[Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 15 June 2020]

*Half a decade after the repeal of don’t ask, don’t tell, most lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender service members still felt reluctant to be open about their sexuality with their colleagues and chain of command, according to a [study](#) released in late May. The journal *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, found that 59 percent of respondents did not feel comfortable being out at work, either because of career repercussions or because of the burden of being a token responsible for educating their peers. “Most participants noted a reluctance to disclose their LGBT identity due to the fear that they could be negatively affected, despite repeal of anti-LGBT policies,” the study found. “These fears were not necessarily motivated by specific incidents, but rather a ‘sixth sense’ that it may not yet be safe to disclose LGBT identity in the military workplace.”*

[Supreme Court Ruling Cements, Expands Longstanding Protections for LGBTQ Feds](#) [Eric Katz, Govexec, 15 June 2020]

*Federal agencies commonly use their own perception to have not discriminated on the basis of sex to argue they have not done so, an argument federal employment law experts now say will be difficult if not impossible due to the *Bostock* ruling. Discrimination cases in the federal sector make their way through internal EEO complaints and employees around government can encounter a disparate patchwork of protections for LGBTQ employees from one agency to another. “What you had were words on a paper that may or may not have protected the LGBT-plus community,” Dan Meyer, managing partner at Tully Rinckey and a former senior executive in the intelligence community, said of existing protections in the federal workforce. Meyer predicted that with LGBTQ federal employees holding a firmer right to sue or bring cases before the EEOC, agencies will act more carefully to prevent discrimination.*

## **DIVERSITY**

[The State Department’s struggle to promote diversity](#) [Jessie Bur, *Federal Times*, 19 June 2020]

*The State Department has made concerted efforts and noticeable improvements in expanding the racial and ethnic diversity of its workforce, but minority employees are still disproportionately more likely to be passed over for promotion than their non-minority counterparts. According to testimony from two former, high-ranking State Department Employees at a June 17 House Committee on Foreign Affairs hearing, that lack of promotional potential stems in large part from a system that does not reward leaders that prioritize diversity and remove leaders that are hostile to it.*

[For First Time in Decades, Female Soldier Completes Final Phase of Special Forces Training](#)

[Matthew Cox, *Military.com*, 18 June 2020]

*A female National Guard soldier has successfully completed the final stage of the Army's Special Forces Qualification Course (Q Course), but she's not a Green Beret yet. The soldier finished the grueling three-week evaluation known as Robin Sage this week, but she is still in the final counseling phase, in which she and other students receive evaluations from course staff, Lt. Col. Loren Bymer, spokesman for U.S. Army Special Operations Command, told Military.com on Thursday. The current female candidate is not the only woman, however, to have made it this far in Green Beret training. Then-Capt. Kathleen Wilder previously made it through the Q Course in the 1980s, but was not allowed to graduate with the rest of the students, Bymer said.*

[Ed Dwight Jr. Was Set to Become America's First Black Astronaut \[VIDEO\]](#) [*The Smithsonian Channel*, 17 June 2020]

*Edward Dwight Jr. was an ace combat pilot with a top aeronautics degree and 2,000 flying hours under his belt. In 1962, he was announced as a candidate to become America's first Black astronaut.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Global Pride event to unite groups after canceled parades](#) [*Sarah Mills, Reuters*, 17 June 2020]

*After the cancellation of hundreds of Pride parades due to the COVID-19 pandemic, national Pride networks have set up a new digital Global Pride day on June 27 to unite people all over the world in celebration and support. More than 500 Pride organisations submitted more than 1,000 pieces of content for Global Pride, and a volunteer production team are turning it into a 24-hour stream.*

*"What makes Global Pride very unique is that this is the first Pride of its kind where we are really focused on bringing the entire LGBT global community together," said Natalie Thompson, a chair of the Global Pride event.*

[Improved Body Armor for Female Airmen Coming This Fall](#) [*Brian W. Everstine, Air Force Magazine*, 17 June 2020]

*The Air Force recently awarded a contract to begin production of body armor specifically designed for women, as part of a service-wide push for inclusion and gear better suited for female Airmen. The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center Female Fitment Program Office recently awarded the contract to TSSi of Harrisonburg, Va., after an evaluation of possible gear that included both laboratory and field assessments, according to an [Air Force Materiel Command release](#).*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[The Military Needs More Diversity in its Legal Community, Expert Says](#) [*Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com*, 17 June 2020]

*Speaking to the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel, Don Christensen, president of Protect Our Defenders and a retired Air Force colonel, said he is concerned with the lack of African American representation in top JAG positions. Last month, Protect our Defenders published a new study, "[Federal Lawsuit Reveals Air Force Cover Up: Racial Disparities in Military Justice Part II](#)," which followed its report from 2017. The studies found that Black troops "are twice as likely to be investigated compared to White servicemembers in each branch."*

[VA, CFPB Solicit Partners to Conduct Diversity-Focused Training](#) [Brandi Vincent, *Nextgov*, 17 June 2020]

*As peaceful protests sparked by George Floyd's death in police custody continue in cities across the nation and companies increasingly commit to confronting and combating racism within their organizations, at least two federal agencies are looking to garner diversity-focused insights and training. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on Monday solicited contractors to lead a diversity and inclusion training across in-person and virtual modalities, and the Veterans Affairs Department also recently released opportunities for an instructor-led diversity training for its Dublin, Georgia-based medical center and for diversity, equity and inclusion-focused consulting services for a psychology section within its San Francisco VA Health Care System.*

["Star Trek's" Lt. Uhura Was a NASA Recruiter. And It Worked Like a Charm](#) [Blake Stilwell, *Military.com*, 16 June 2020]

*The bridge of the Enterprise was filled with cultural, racial -- and alien -- diversity, working together toward a common goal. Japanese-American actor George Takei was the ship's helmsman, Hikaru Sulu. Russian Pavel Chekov, played by Walter Koenig, was the navigator. Uhura (Nichelle Nichols) was depicted as one of the ship's most capable and necessary bridge officers, not as a maid or other Black stereotype. The show itself was created by Gene Roddenberry, who had served as an Army Air Forces B-17 pilot during World War II and then as a Los Angeles Police Department officer. He named the vessel in the show "Enterprise" for the ship that turned the tide of the war for the Allies in the Pacific. When NASA first approached the actress, she gave the space agency one caveat. "I am going to bring you so many qualified women and minority astronaut applicants for this position that if you don't choose one, everybody in the newspapers across the country will know about it."*

[Latest Crop of West Point Graduates Includes First Observant Sikh Cadet](#) [Annie Karni, *The New York Times*, 12 June 2020]

*Anmol Narang, 23, a newly minted second lieutenant, became the first observant Sikh to graduate from the United States Military Academy, a milestone that comes as racism appears to be on the rise within the military's ranks and as Sikhs still face discrimination in some of its branches. While Lieutenant Narang is the first observant Sikh to graduate from the academy, she is not the first Sikh cadet to do so. During his time as a West Point cadet, Simratpal Singh cut his hair short and kept his beard shorn. Having to do so caused him "significant shame," according to a [lawsuit he filed against the Defense Department](#) in 2016, after he had become an Army captain. He was seeking an accommodation so he could practice his religion and serve in the military. Captain Singh was ultimately granted permission to serve while wearing a turban and a beard, a victory that paved the way for future Sikh service members to be granted religious exemptions.*

[Meet the first all-female Air Force weather team overseeing the next SpaceX launch](#) [Michael Sheetz, *CNBC*, 12 June 2020]

*For the first time, all six members of the 45th's Space Wing's launch weather team are female. The Air Force team has made critical decisions for hundreds of rocket launches, always with at least one man among their ranks. But for the next SpaceX launch scheduled for Saturday morning, these six women will decide if the weather is clear: Major Emily Graves, Captain Nancy Zimmerman, Airman first class Hannah Mulcahey, Arlena Moses, Melody Lovin and Jessica Williams.*

[More than 60% of Recent Federal Employee Hires Left Within Two Years](#) [Eric Katz, *Govexec*, 12 June 2020]

*About 60% of federal employees hired in recent years left their jobs within two years, according to a [new report](#) that focused on hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities. The disabled population within federal government followed a similar path between fiscal years 2011 and 2017, the Government Accountability Office found, with roughly 60% also leaving within two years. This means while agencies have improved their hiring rates of disabled individuals, they have failed to ensure those employees stick around.*

## HUMAN RELATIONS

[How microaggressions cause lasting pain](#) [Bryan Lufkin, *BBC News*, 18 June 2020]

*To a female CEO: “Can I speak with your boss?” To a man who’s a nurse: “Wow, you don’t see many male nurses.” To an LGBTQ intern: “Huh, you don’t sound gay.” To a non-White colleague – in a mostly White office: “So, where are you from? ...No, I mean, where are you really from?” To a mixed-raced person: “What are you?” Welcome to the world of microaggressions: brief queries, comments or actions sprinkled throughout day-to-day life that make others – particularly those in marginalised groups – feel bad about themselves. A slow accumulation of these microaggressions can lead to low self-esteem, feelings of alienation and eventually even mental health issues, researchers warn. They can also create a toxic work environment.*

[How should the Army evaluate leadership? \[COMMENTARY\]](#) [Carlos De Castro, *Army Times*, 12 June 2020]

*Few organizations are as engrossed by the topic of leadership as the Army. In part, this is due to the belief that leadership is seen as the silver bullet which will solve all future nightmare scenarios in times of war. And, in a way, it very well may be true. However, in spite of the many initiatives, changes to policies, and sensing sessions enacted over the last few years with the intent of keeping the best and brightest in service, there remains a critical blind spot which hinders the wholistic development and retention of future leaders: the assessment of superiors by their subordinates.*

## MISCELLANEOUS

[Supporting military children with the services they need, but lost in the pandemic](#)

[\[COMMENTARY\]](#) [Katya Roth-Douquet, *Military Times*, 18 June 2020]

*Without full access to proper health services for children with autism, military families face extreme challenges while they work to increase their child’s language and communication skills, improve their attention, and mitigate behavioral challenges. As part of the COVID-19 Military Support Initiative (CMSI) tracking the impacts of COVID-19 on military families across the nation, a weekly [Pain Points Poll](#) conducted by Blue Star Families and the Association of Defense Communities (ADC) found that one in every five active-duty families with school-aged children reported they have a child with special needs who have lost access to the support services that their school provides.*

[World War II Forces Sweetheart Singer Vera Lynn Dies at 103](#) [Danica Kirka, *The Associated Press*, 18 June 2020]

*Dame Vera Lynn, the endearingly popular “Forces’ Sweetheart” who serenaded British troops during World War II, has died at 103. During the war and long after, Lynn got crowds singing, smiling and crying with sentimental favorites such as “We’ll Meet Again,” and “The White Cliffs of Dover.” Lynn hosted a wildly popular BBC radio show during the war called “Sincerely Yours” in which she sent messages to British troops abroad and performed the songs they requested. During ceremonies last year to mark the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings, she recorded a message that was played to a ballroom full of veterans on a ship sailing to France to mark the event. Tears flowed as Lynn spoke. When she was done, thunderous applause rattled the windows.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[SECDEF has beef with the military’s entrance exam](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 17 June 2020]

*At a time when less than 30 percent of American youth are qualified to join the military — and less than 1 percent are even interested — the Pentagon’s top official wants to know whether decades-old accessions standards are still serving the force well. Those include the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, a standardized test that measures language, math and other skills, as well as a long list of medical conditions that wholesale bar some prospective recruits from joining up. “I think we disqualify very capable people for not very compelling reasons,” Defense Secretary Mark Esper told Air Force officials Tuesday during a trip to Lackland Air Force Base to visit the service’s basic military training.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[CDC: Patients With Pre-Existing Conditions 12 Times More Likely to Die From Coronavirus](#) Kate Elizabeth Queram, *Route Fifty*, 16 June 2020]

*The coronavirus is particularly deadly for people with pre-existing conditions and continues to disproportionately affect people of color, according to [data](#) from the CDC. Coronavirus patients with underlying health conditions were hospitalized six times more often than otherwise healthy patients during the first four months of the pandemic, and they were 12 times more likely to die, according to federal health data released Monday. The data, reported by state and territorial health departments and compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, covers more than 1.7 million cases of Covid-19 and 103,700 deaths, all between Jan. 22 and May 30. The information shows the disproportionate effect the virus continues to have on different groups, including Black and Latino people, the elderly and those with pre-existing medical conditions.*

[As space concerns mount at Arlington National Cemetery, officials move to expand historic site](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 15 June 2020]

*Department of Justice officials on Monday filed paperwork to grab the land, currently owned by Arlington County, through eminent domain powers. Army officials (who oversee the cemetery) estimate the move will provide about 49 acres of space for up to 60,000 additional burial sites in coming years. Monday also marked the 156th anniversary of the cemetery, established in 1864 in the wake of the Civil War. Over its existence, the site has evolved into one of the most hallowed military locations in America, housing grave sites of casualties from every military conflict.*

[Depression and anxiety spiked among Black Americans after George Floyd’s death](#) [Alyssa Fowers and William Wan, *The Washington Post*, 12 June 2020]

*Americans were already struggling with historic levels of mental health problems amid the coronavirus pandemic. Then came the video of George Floyd’s death at the hands of police. Within a week, anxiety and depression among African Americans shot to higher rates than experienced by any other racial or ethnic group, with 41 percent screening positive for at least one of those symptoms, data from the Census Bureau shows. The findings — from a [survey](#) launched by the federal government originally intended to study the effects of the novel coronavirus — indicate that the recent unrest, demonstrations and debate have exacted a disproportionate emotional and mental toll on Black and Asian Americans, even as rates of anxiety and depression remain relatively flat among White Americans and decreased among Latin Americans.*

[Face Masks “Significantly Reduce” Spread of Covid-19, Study Finds](#) [Bill Lucia, *Route Fifty*, 12 June 2020]

*The widespread use of face masks by the public could significantly slow the spread of the coronavirus, prevent recurring waves of outbreaks and allow for less stringent restrictions on economic activity and other facets of daily life, according to new academic research. Researchers at the universities of Cambridge and Greenwich in the U.K. used two mathematical models to examine the possible benefits of face masks in taming the virus. “The effect is greatest when 100% of the public wear face masks. It follows that the adoption of this simple technology ought to be re-evaluated in countries where face mask use is not being encouraged,” they added in [a paper published this week](#) by the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society A*.*

## **MISCONDUCT**

[Marines Warned to Stay Away from Protests That Could Turn Violent](#) [Gina Harkins, *Military.com*, 18 June 2020]

*As protesters continue taking to the streets to push for police reform and an end to racism in the U.S., Marines are getting reminders about what type of participation is -- and isn’t -- allowed while in uniform. Headquarters Marine Corps this month issued a four-page info paper on protest activities for service members. Marines are ordered to steer clear of protests that could turn violent and are told not to publicly demonstrate support for partisan candidates or parties.*

[Report: Airman suspected of killing deputy wrote violent extremist messages in blood](#) [Stephen Losey, *Air Force Times*, 12 June 2020]

*Staff Sgt. Steven Carrillo, the Travis Air Force Base security forces airman charged with murdering a California sheriff’s deputy and multiple other crimes last Saturday, wrote phrases associated with a far-right extremist movement in blood on a car before his arrest, [NBC News reported](#) Thursday. Citing prosecutors from Santa Cruz County, NBC reported that Carrillo wrote the words “boog” and “I became unreasonable” in blood on the hood of a car shortly before he was arrested. NBC said “boog” is short for “boogaloo,” which is a term for an online anti-government movement that seeks to provoke a second civil war in America.*

## **RACISM**

[Former VA employee alleges racial discrimination, calls for change](#) [Cortlynn Stark, *The Kansas City Star*, 19 June 2020]

*The last straw for Charmayne “Charlie” Brown was the lack of communication. That came after she filed 18 complaints of racial discrimination against the Kansas City Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Brown is part of a group of about 50 Black current and former employees who have experienced racial discrimination at the Kansas City VA and are making a stand. Over the last three months, other employees have told The Star their stories, several asking that their names not be used for fear of retaliation. But they all described one thing: systemic discrimination against Black employees.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Naval Academy opens investigation into racist tweets from midshipman’s account](#) [Heather Mongilio, *The Capital Gazette*, Annapolis, Md., 17 June 2020]

*The Naval Academy has initiated an investigation into racist tweets made by an account identified as a midshipman 1st class. Members of the Naval Academy community, and others outside of it, began sharing screenshots Monday of racist tweets made from an account identified as belonging to Midshipman 1st Class Chase Standage of California, The Capital reported on Wednesday morning. The tweets, mostly from June, include statements, such as saying Breonna Taylor, who was killed by police, deserved her death.*

[Fed Chair Powell says strong job market can reduce U.S. racial inequality](#) [Reuters, 16 June 2020]

*The best way the Federal Reserve can help reduce racial inequality is to return the U.S. labor market to its pre-coronavirus strength, U.S. Fed Chair Jerome Powell said on Tuesday, as he sidestepped questions over whether the Fed itself contributes to the problem. The unrest has sharpened the public focus on economic plight of Black and Latino families, who on average continue to earn less, have higher unemployment, and are harder hit when economic shocks like the coronavirus hit. In May, while White unemployment fell, Black unemployment rose.*

[Frustrated advocates say racial biases within military justice system remain despite repeated alarms](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 16 June 2020]

*The military’s top legal officers conceded on Tuesday that racial disparities still exist within the military justice system, and said that improvements need to be made. But lawmakers and advocates say that overdue acknowledgement isn’t enough. Members of the House Armed Services Committee on Tuesday voiced concerns that despite numerous indications in recent years that minority Black service members are more likely treated unfairly in the military justice system, service leaders have done little to research or address the discrepancy.*

[USAF Racial Bias Study to Look at Discipline, Differences in Mentorship](#)

[Brian W. Everstine, *Air Force Magazine*, 16 June 2020]

*The Air Force’s Inspector General has kicked off a review of the service’s judicial punishments and career advancements in light of ongoing public attention on racism. The Air Force’s Judge Advocate General Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Rockwell told the House Armed Services military personnel subcommittee on June 16 that the service has data on courts martial and non-judicial punishment showing that Black Airmen with less than five years of service receive non-judicial-punishments and courts martial at a higher rate. The Air Force IG has created a Senior Leader Advisory Group to conduct interviews, group discussions, and anonymous surveys to identify discrimination in how the service both punishes and advances Airmen. Rockwell said the goal is to complete the review by the end of*

*the calendar year, and its results will be public. The most important part of the review is “reaching down into what people feel on the ground,” he said.*

[The Burden of a Black Naval Officer \[COMMENTARY\]](#) [LCDR Desmond Walker, USN, U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, Vol. 146/6/1,408, June 2020]

*In 23 years of naval service, I have learned that candid and open discussions that welcome dissenting or different opinions can be an effective catalyst for change; it is no different for racial injustice. If the Navy truly believes that inclusion and diversity are critical to warfighting readiness, now is the time for real progress, building on the foundation laid by Admiral Elmo Russell “Bud” Zumwalt Jr., 19th Chief of Naval Operations.*

[REPRINT](#)

[The Challenge Before Us: A Historical Reflection on 1969 and 2020 \[OPINION\]](#)

[Margaret A. Weitekamp, *Smithsonianmag.com*, 15 June 2020]

*The successful docking of a commercially-built and -operated space capsule with the International Space Station (ISS) marked a culmination of NASA’s Commercial Crew Development (CCDev) program, which originated in 2010 under the Obama administration. On the same day, cities across this nation experienced widespread protests sparked by profound racial disparities. The confluence of events drew comparisons to 1968 and 1969, when successful flights to the Moon occurred in the midst of a similarly fraught moment. Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie Bunch has challenged our storied scholarly institution to offer historical context in challenging times. As quoted in the *Washington Post*, he declared, “I want people to see that we are as much about today and tomorrow as we are about yesterday.” His [statement](#) released on May 31, 2020, expressed the desire that “this moment becomes the impetus for our nation to address racism and social inequities in earnest.”*

[Family of Rayshard Brooks demands justice after Atlanta police fatally shoot him in the back](#)

[Reuters, 15 June 2020]

*The family of Rayshard Brooks, a Black man whose death reignited protests in Atlanta over the weekend, on Monday called for “drastic change” in policing and justice for their relative who died after a police officer shot him twice in the back. The death of 27-year-old Brooks, which the Fulton County Medical Examiner’s office ruled a homicide, was the latest police killing of a Black man to fuel nationwide outrage against police brutality and racial injustice.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Racism Is a Public Health Crisis, Say Cities and Counties](#) [Christine Vestal, *Stateline*, 15 June 2020]

*Being Black is bad for your health. And pervasive racism is the cause. That’s the conclusion of [multiple public health studies](#) over more than three decades. “We do know that health inequities at their very core are due to racism,” said Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association. “There’s no doubt about that.” More recently, research has shown that racial health disparities don’t just affect poor African Americans, but they also cross class lines, Benjamin said. “As a Black man, my status, my suit and tie don’t protect me.” The data is stark: Black women are up to [four times](#) more likely to die of pregnancy related complications than White women. Black men are more than twice as likely to be killed by police as White men. And the [average life expectancy](#) of African Americans is four years lower than the rest of the U.S.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[This week in Congress: Racial problems in the military get a closer look](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 15 June 2020]

*A House Armed Services Committee panel will take up the issue of racial injustice within the military this week as committee leaders continue to push for top Pentagon leaders to testify on the Defense Department's response to ongoing nationwide racial demonstrations. Committee officials are still waiting to hear whether Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley will testify in coming days on the use of military forces by the White House to respond in recent weeks to protests prompted by the death of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man who prosecutors say was murdered by a White Minneapolis police officer during an arrest last month.*

[A Black man now heads the Air Force. It's progress, but military brass remains starkly White.](#) [OPINION] [*The Washington Post*, 12 June 2020]

*Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr., who was unanimously confirmed by the Senate this week as Air Force chief of staff -- thereby becoming the first African American service chief in U.S. history -- has already demonstrated why his promotion was so important, and so overdue. In a June 5 [video address](#) about his reaction to the police killing of George Floyd, Gen. Brown spelled out how his "own experiences" in the military "didn't always sing of liberty and equality." Gen. Brown's statement offered a corrective to a nearly all-White Pentagon leadership that, until very recently, complacently regarded the armed forces as ahead of the rest of the country in addressing racial inequality. It ought to inspire reflection and debate about how the military can address the persistent racism and structural problems that have led to a stunning lack of diversity in its senior ranks.*

## RELIGION

[Just How Secular Should America Be?](#) [OPINION] [Russell Moore, *The New York Times*, 18 June 2020]

*While some secularists may feel that religious conservatives are ascendant, many religious conservatives feel embattled, and not without cause. The last decade has featured debates on everything from wedding cakes to requirements for nuns to provide contraception. The question many have now is whether religious institutions will now be required to abandon their views on marriage and sexuality, or else cease carrying out their missions altogether? Like it or not, millions of people hold views that some consider wrongheaded or ridiculous. Any attempt to bulldoze over such convictions would invite a kind of constitutional apocalypse — and would harm not just so-called religious conservatives, but those who oppose them.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Muslims join to demand police reforms, back Black-led groups](#) [Mariam Fam, *The Associated Press*, 15 June 2020]

*In the wake of George Floyd's death in police custody, dozens of American Muslim organizations have come together to call for reform to policing practices, and to support Black-led organizations. "The victimization of unarmed Black Muslims has a long and troubling history," said a coalition statement signed by more than 90 civil rights, advocacy, community and faith organizations. "As American Muslims, we will draw on our diversity, our strength, and our resilience to demand these reforms because Black lives matter."*

## SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Army Reserve commander suspended amid investigation](#) [Todd Richmond, *The Associated Press*, 17 June 2020]

*The U.S. Army Reserve suspended the commander of an Illinois-based unit Tuesday as part of an ongoing investigation into allegations that unit officers mishandled sexual misconduct complaints and retaliated against a whistleblower. Lt. Gen. Charles Luckey, commanding general of the Army Reserve Command, announced in a statement that he has suspended the 416th Theater Engineering Command's commander. The statement didn't identify the commander by name, but the unit's website lists Maj. Gen. Miyako Schanely as its leader. Luckey said in his statement that such suspensions are routine during ongoing investigations. He added, however, that a "number of potentially adverse findings" have been tied to 416th officers. He did not elaborate or name the officers, saying only that the officers will be entitled to free legal representation as they draft their responses.*

[Missing soldier's regiment forms internal investigation into sexual harassment allegations](#)

[Kyle Rempfer, *Army Times*, 17 June 2020]

*The 3rd Cavalry Regiment on Fort Hood, Texas, is conducting its own investigation into allegations that Pfc. Vanessa Guillen, 20, faced sexual harassment from a sergeant prior to her April 22 disappearance, according to a Texas congresswoman lobbying for answers. Rep. Sylvia García said during a press conference Tuesday with Guillen's family that she has been in touch with Col. Ralph Overland, 3rd Cavalry Regiment commander. Guillen's family has said that the missing soldier complained to her mother about an Army sergeant who was sexually harassing her and following her on runs prior to her disappearance.*

[Tinder, Sailor, Hooker, Pimp: The U.S. Navy's sex trafficking scandal in Bahrain](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Military Times*, 16 June 2020]

**Warning: this report contains explicit language.**

*It all started on WhatsApp. The first in a cascade of U.S. Navy investigations into sailors accused of trafficking, housing and pimping female prostitutes in the Middle East can be traced back to June 2017 and a string of sex-charged encrypted text messages between a sailor in Bahrain and a Thai prostitute he met on the island. But the woman, Lin Raiwest, was more than just another prostitute. Court records show she also was known as a "mamasan," a pimp who managed her own stable of prostitutes that she trafficked, protected and profited from.*

[Arkansas court overturns National Guard officer conviction](#) [*The Associated Press*, 12 June 2020]

*The Arkansas Supreme Court overturned a military court conviction of a national guard officer accused of sexual assault, arguing lack of jurisdiction because the man wasn't on active duty when the alleged assault happened. The high court on Thursday ruled 6-1 that the military tribunal did not have jurisdiction to hear the case against Chief Warrant Officer 4 Adam Childers, who was court-martialed over an alleged sexual assault in 2016 in Norman, Oklahoma. Childers pleaded guilty to charges of cruelty and maltreatment and of failure to obey order or regulation at court-martial in 2018. In his plea deal, prosecutors agreed to drop the sexual misconduct charges. He was dismissed from the National Guard and confined for 180 days during his appeal, his attorney Nathan Freeburg said.*

## SUICIDE

[Long-awaited report on veterans suicide calls for public awareness campaign, better research tools](#)

[Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 17 June 2020]

*After 15 months of work, the White House's task force on preventing veterans suicide will unveil plans for more federal coordination with community providers on mental health outreach, promotion of "safe storage" programs for firearms owners and a public awareness campaign that mental health problems need not be fatal. Mental health advocates for years have pushed for limiting troubled veterans' access to guns in an effort to eliminate the potential of impulsive and deadly decisions, but gun rights groups have pushed back on those ideas as an infringement of veterans constitutional rights. The plan also calls for VA officials to "streamline access to innovative suicide prevention programs and interventions by expanding the network of qualified healthcare providers." Details of that work — and whether it could run into existing fights over private-care access for veterans health care — were not immediately available.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Seeking the Military Suicide Solution Podcast, Episode 22: Dr. Karin A. Orvis, director of the Pentagon's Defense Suicide Prevention Office](#) [*Military Times*, 15 June 2020]

*Dr. Karin A. Orvis, a member of the Senior Executive Service, is the director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. In this capacity, Orvis is responsible for policy, oversight, and advocacy of the U.S. Department of Defense suicide prevention programs. Her current portfolio spans the full spectrum of suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention efforts including policy, program development and evaluation, data surveillance, research, and outreach and engagement.*

[\[LISTEN\]](#)

## VETERANS

[In an era of fostering inclusivity, the Department of Veterans Affairs fails again](#) [COMMENTARY]

[Tara Heidger, *Military Times*, 17 June 2020]

*Women are the fastest growing group of veterans and there are currently nearly half a million who use at least one form of VA benefits. Instead of using this knowledge to create a more gender-inclusive VA, the Secretary has decided it is more important to honor the words of a long-deceased president than the service of those he is charged to serve. This is not the first time the VA has failed women. VA hospitals have been reported to be threatening and dangerous environments for women service members and recognition for female needs ranging from infertility to safety are long overdue. Women veterans are less likely than men to seek care at VA, and advocates say that's due at least in part to gender and sexual harassment by male veterans at VA hospitals and clinics. Instead of rectifying the problems from within the department, it seems it is digging in its heels to continue to make women feel as if they are unvalued pieces of the war-fighting machine.*

[Edith White, World War II "code girl" and Norfolk Academy librarian who fought Massive Resistance, dies at 96](#) [Katherine Hafner, *The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, Va.)*, 15 June 2020]

*Edith was 20 and in her senior year when she received a summons from the Navy, which had been seeking women with good math and language skills for its new WAVES unit -- Women Accepted for*

*Volunteer Emergency Service. WAVES twice earned commendations for breaking Japanese codes that led to American victories in the Pacific. After meeting her husband shortly after the war, Edie White moved to Norfolk, where she lived for over six decades and became a force in local education, literary, arts and civil rights scenes. She helped fight Virginia's Massive Resistance to school integration, brushing aside the torrent of threats that followed.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[WWII Marine POW, who survived Corregidor and "hell ship" voyage, dies from COVID-19](#) [Steve Liewer, *The Omaha World-Herald*, (Omaha, Neb.), 14 June 2020]

*Not many Marines survived more hell than Warren Jorgenson. The veteran from Bennington witnessed the attack on Manila at the outset of World War II. He was wounded just before the fall of Corregidor, endured a "hell ship" journey to Japan and spent three years as a prisoner of war. "Jorg," as friends called him, lost a high school sweetheart who married another man, thinking Jorg had died in the war. He married three times before they finally reconnected. On June 1, the Marine sergeant died after a month-long battle with COVID-19. He was 99.*

[VA Wants Female Veterans to Enroll in a Genetic Study](#) [Jim Absher, *Military.com*, 12 June 2020]

*The Department of Veterans Affairs is looking for a few good women veterans to enroll in a genetic study designed to help develop gender-based medicines and treatments. Historically, women have been underrepresented in medical and biological research, leading to knowledge gaps that can result in misdiagnoses and other shortcomings of care. The aim of the MVP is to tailor medical care to the individual and learn what underlying differences exist in different populations. [The Million Veteran Program \(MVP\)](#), which began in 2011, is one of the largest programs on genetics and health in the world. It studies how military exposures, lifestyle and genetics affect a person's health. Currently, there are more than 830,000 veterans enrolled. Of those 830,000 veterans, only 80,000 are women.*