

# DEOMI NEWS LINKS, JULY 17, 2020

## HIGHLIGHTS

[Esper directs services to review racial bias in grooming standards, training and more](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 15 July 2020]

*A team devoted to rooting out racial injustice in the military has come back with its first recommendations. Among them are reviewing whether grooming standards are racially biased, Defense Secretary Mark Esper announced Wednesday, in addition to reviewing Equal Opportunity programs, creating training for leadership to discuss issues of racial justice within their formations and adding bias into existing programs for bystander intervention training. “Diversity and inclusivity in the ranks are not merely aspirations, they are fundamental necessities to our readiness and our mission success,” Esper wrote in a memo.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Federal Employees May Wear or Display Black Lives Matter Paraphernalia at Work](#) [Courtney Bubl , *GovExec*, 16 July 2020]

*Federal employees are permitted to wear or display Black Lives Matter paraphernalia in the workplace, as it is not an “inherently partisan” movement, according to the independent agency that oversees the Hatch Act prohibiting civil servants from participating in political activity while on the job. The Office of Special Counsel released updated guidance on Wednesday on how the Hatch Act applies to the Black Lives Matter movement, as first reported by Federal News Network. The movement started in 2013 and has gained renewed prominence in the wake of nationwide protests for racial justice after police in Minneapolis killed George Floyd in May.*

[This officer is the Navy’s first known Black female tactical jet pilot](#) [Diana Stancy Correll, *Navy Times*, 10 July 2020]

*Navy Lt. j.g. Madeline Swegle has become the Navy’s “first known” Black female tactical jet pilot, according to the service. The Navy said Swegle completed the undergraduate Tactical Air (Strike) pilot training syllabus Tuesday, paving the way for her to fly aircraft like the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, the F-35C Joint Strike Fighter or the EA-18G Growler. Swegle, a 2017 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, is currently assigned to the Redhawks of Training Squadron (VT) 21 at Naval Air Station Kingsville in Texas. The Navy said she will earn her wings at a ceremony July 31.*

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## CULTURE

[“Yes we exist” - Black fans eye NASCAR’s work to diversify](#) [Dan Gelston, *The Associated Press*, 17 July 2020]

*Kevin Johnson became enamored with NASCAR as a kid through clips on “Wide World of Sports,” decades before billion-dollar broadcast deals when auto racing shared precious air time with barrel jumping and demolition derby. The 61-year-old Johnson, who has retired to Miami, shares his passion for the sport with a Black NASCAR Fans group on Facebook. The group’s bio says: “Yes we exist.” The fans share favorite race memories, photos of their collectibles and, yes, stories of the*

*historically uneasy relationship NASCAR has had with the Black community. Johnson has been called racist slurs at the track, felt queasy at the sight of the Confederate flag and often wondered if the good-ol'-boy Southern attitudes seeped in the sport would ever fade.*

[Diversity of LGBTQ characters in film declines, study finds](#) [Jake Coyle, *The Associated Press*, 16 July 2020]

*Last year saw record representation of LGBTQ characters in the 118 films released by major studios, according to a new [study by GLAAD](#). But for the third straight year, the racial diversity of LGBTQ characters has waned and transgender characters again went unseen. GLAAD called the decrease in non-White LGBTQ characters “concerning.” In 2019, 34% of LGBTQ characters were people of color. That’s down from 42% in 2018 and 57% in 2017. “GLAAD is calling on the studios to ensure that within two years at least half of their LGBTQ characters are people of color,” said the advocacy group that tracks representation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the media.*

[The Return of Jane Elliott](#) [Brianna Holt, *The New York Times*, 15 July 2020]

*The day after the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968, the schoolteacher Jane Elliott scrapped her lesson plan — teaching her third graders the Sioux prayer about not judging another person until you have “walked a mile in his moccasins” — for an experiential learning exercise. She split the children at her all-White school in Riceville, Iowa, into two groups based on their eye color: brown-eyed students in one, blue-eyed students and anyone else in the other. The members of both groups received treatment based on that one arbitrary quality, the pigmentation of their irises. “Racism is ignorance based on being miseducated. Racism is a result of being indoctrinated instead of educated,” Ms. Elliott said by phone from her home in Iowa in early July. “I don’t sugarcoat racism.”*

[This is how America feels about feminism in 2020](#) [Alia E. Dastigar, *USA Today*, 15 July 2020]

*Feminism is sometimes referred to as the other “f” word, a term so loaded its meaning is often obscured by the intense emotions around it. This was reflected in a Pew Research Center survey released this month, which found that while nearly 80% of Americans [support gender equality](#) — and feminism is defined as “the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes” by Merriam-Webster — only 61% of women and 40% of men say [“feminist” describes them](#) very or .somewhat well*

[“White Fragility” Is Everywhere. But Does Antiracism Training Work?](#) [Daniel Bergner, *The New York Times Magazine*, 15 July 2020]

*In early June, Robin DiAngelo addressed 184 Democratic members of Congress who had gathered, by conference call, for what the party leadership had named a “Democratic Caucus family discussion on race.” The invitation to speak to the caucus was just one in a deluge for DiAngelo. Before Floyd’s killing, she was a leading figure in the field of antiracism training or, as she sometimes describes it, antiracism consciousness raising. In 2018, when she published her manifesto, “White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism,” Michael Eric Dyson provided the foreword. She is “wise and withering,” he wrote, “in her relentless assault on what Langston Hughes termed ‘the ways of White folks.’”*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Bias against African American English speakers is a pillar of systemic racism \[OPINION\]](#) [Shareese King and Kathleen D. Kinzler, *The Los Angeles Times*, 14 July 2020]

*In the national conversation taking place about systemic racism in the United States, one important element should not be overlooked: linguistic prejudice. African American English, like other dialects used in the U.S., is a legitimate form of speech with a deep history and culture. Yet centuries of bias against speakers of AAE continue to have profound effects on employment, education, the criminal system and social mobility. To attack systemic racism, we have to confront this prejudice. Of course, some of the greatest examples of American oratory and literature have roots in AAE, also known as African American Vernacular English. The works of Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison are infused with AAE. Its significance cannot be understated when examining the speeches of orators like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and President Obama. In American music, it has moved beyond African American communities to influence all genres, from blues to hip-hop.*

[Naya Rivera: Remembered as inspirational Latina who redefined Afro-Latinx representation](#) [Nicole Acevedo, *NBC News*, 14 July 2020]

*Latino celebrities such as Demi Lovato, Steven Canals and others are remembering “Glee” actress Naya Rivera for inspiring Latina women throughout her career as well as redefining queer and Afro-Latino representation on TV. A body presumed to be Rivera’s was found at Lake Piru in California on Monday, five days after she went missing during a boating trip with her son, authorities said. Rivera, who was 33, rose to stardom after playing Santana Lopez on Fox’s hit musical comedy-drama “Glee,” starting in 2009. “I’ll never be able to articulate the importance of seeing Naya, a Black Puerto Rican, portraying a queer Afro-Latina on prime-time TV,” Canals, the co-creator of FX’s “Pose,” who is also a Black Puerto Rican, tweeted. “I’m heartbroken over all the stories that will remain untold.”*

[Professional Bull Riders: American rodeo and its history of Black athletes](#) [Mike Henson, *BBC News*, 14 July 2020]

*Ezekiel Mitchell pauses for a moment when asked to describe his toughest opponent. “I would have to say Sweet Pro’s Bruiser,” he tells *BBC Sport*. “The power and sheer athleticism of him, he’s able to do things some bulls just can’t. If you’re just a millisecond too late, he’s put you on the ground.” At 23 years old, he’s already encountered forces less obvious, but no less powerful than Sweet Pro’s Bruiser in his life and career so far. The odds didn’t use to be so stark. When the American Civil War ended in 1865, many of Texas’ slave-owning settlers returned home from fighting for the Confederacy to be confronted by a newly freed Black workforce, knowledgeable in ranching. But in the American imagination, a cowboy was a White man.*

[Seeing Native Americans Nowhere, and Everywhere](#) [Jennifer Schuessler, *The New York Times*, 14 July 2020]

*On Monday, the N.F.L. team in Washington announced that it would be retiring the name “Redskins” and its feather-topped Indian head logo, abruptly reversing its staunch defense of a name long considered as a racial slur. But there’s one unexpected place where the team’s logo will be preserved, at least through 2027: in the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington. The point? To illuminate the paradox that Native American names, symbols and stories are ubiquitous in American life, even if actual Indians are largely invisible. And they aren’t just ubiquitous, the show argues, but central to American identity.*

[Washington's NFL Team Could Be Renamed the "Red Tails." Real Tuskegee Airmen Have Mixed Feelings About That](#) [Sean Gregory, *Time*, 14 July 2020]

*As fans and other observers mull the possibilities for that new name, the "Red Tails" idea has gained some favor: in a [Yahoo poll](#), 28% of the respondents said they favored "RedTails," which was top vote-getter over Warriors, Hogs, Generals and others. Among the surviving Airmen, however, the renaming doesn't enjoy universal support. "I am not sure they are worthy of the Red Tail name," Lt. Col. James Harvey, 97, writes in an email. "They don't win that many games plus a lot of the players have a... Poor attitude. But, it is not my call. Just the way I feel at this point in time." When reached by *TIME*, two other surviving Tuskegee Airmen—Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson, 98, and Lt. Col. George Hardy, 95—said they were still forming their opinion on the matter. A third, Brigadier General Charles McGee, 100, declined to comment.*

[Trans People "Have Always Been There," Says "Disclosure" Producer Laverne Cox](#) [Noel King, *NPR*, 13 July 2020]

*"Disclosure" is a new documentary on Netflix about the history of transgender representation in Hollywood. "People traversing gender expectations was a part of cinema as early as 1914, there was a film that featured a sex change," says actress Laverne Cox, who is the executive producer and a prominent voice in this eye-opening documentary. Trans people have always been seen, but we've not always been represented, right? And in the being seen and being visible, we've often been misrepresented.*

[U.S. Forces Japan Bans Display of Confederate Flag](#) [Richard Sisk, *Military.com*, 13 July 2020]

*U.S. Forces Japan has joined U.S. Forces Korea in banning the display of the Confederate flag, the latest move by the military aimed at preventing racial division in the ranks. "The Confederate Battle Flag does not represent the values of U.S. Forces assigned to serve in Japan," Air Force Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider, commander of U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ), said Monday in announcing the ban. His order followed similar action taken June 14 by Army Gen. Robert Abrams, Commander of U.S. Forces Korea.*

[SEE ALSO]

[Washington's NFL team drops "Redskins" name after 87 years](#) [Steven Whyno, *The Associated Press*, 13 July 2020]

*The Washington NFL franchise announced Monday it is dropping the "Redskins" name and Indian head logo, bowing to recent pressure from sponsors and decades of criticism that they are offensive to Native Americans. A new name must still be selected for one of the oldest and most storied teams in the National Football League, and it was unclear how soon that will happen. But for now, arguably the most polarizing name in North American professional sports is gone at a time of reckoning over racial injustice, iconography and racism in the U.S.*

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

[Air Force drops dress-code criterion of "faddish" for being too subjective](#) [Wyatt Olson, *Stars and Stripes*, 10 July 2020]

*The Air Force on Friday announced revisions to its personal appearance requirements in an effort to create a more inclusive and racially sensitive culture for airmen. The changes to the Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel instructions include "the removal of subjective*

language and other rules that may have been creating unintentional or unfair barriers for Air and Space Force uniformed members,” the service said in a [statement](#).

[Army Was Reviewing More Than Confederate Base Names, Officials Reveal](#) [Katie Bo Williams, *Defense One*, 8 July 2020]

*Rather than targeting just the flag or the base names, the idea was to take a commission-style approach that would look at anything that might be divisive and address not only the symbol, but the cultural forces behind it. The expectation and hope was that as the review progressed, other long-buried issues would become apparent. Among the potential friction points that arose during brainstorming sessions were Army National Guard units with nicknames honoring Confederate leaders, according to two defense officials. Prominent retired military leaders have also spoken out in favor of removing Confederate paraphernalia, including changing base names.*

## **DISCRIMINATION**

[The Supreme Court ruling on Oklahoma was welcome, but Indigenous people deserve more \[OPINION\]](#) [Nick Estes, *NBC News*, 12 July 2020]

*The U.S. legal system from the Supreme Court on down delivered a suite of rulings over the past week that have reaffirmed Indigenous land rights and environmental protections. From the Virginias to the Dakotas, they pushed back on the industrial development that would have further imperiled tribal lands and the environment. These are welcome legal victories. But taken together, they only serve to highlight that Indigenous people can't merely rely on the courts of the conqueror. Because courts can only protect our land, not expand it, much more is needed. To realize a complete vision of Indigenous sovereignty and environmental justice takes people power — the kind that energized the 2016 Standing Rock protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline but that in fact goes back much further.*

## **DIVERSITY**

[First female commander of 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field says “there are no barriers”](#) [Jim Thompson, *Northwest Florida Daily News*, (Fort Walton Beach, Fla.), 16 July 2020]

*As if taking command of the most-deployed wing in the Air Force wasn't enough of a challenge, Col. Jocelyn Schermerhorn comes into the role as the COVID-19 pandemic intrudes on the wing's operations, and as the Air Force, in the wake of the George Floyd shooting, grapples with issues of race and diversity. And, yeah, she's the first female commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing (1st SOW), too — although she's quick to point out her path to wing commander was blazed by other women who have moved through the service's command echelons. Her gender, Schermerhorn said in a Wednesday roundtable with local media, is "a fact, but not one that defines who I am as a leader."* [\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Diversity job openings fell nearly 60 percent amid covid-19. Then came the Black Lives Matter protests.](#) [Jenna McGregor, *The Washington Post*, 15 July 2020]

*American companies cut back sharply on hiring for jobs related to diversity and inclusion when the coronavirus pandemic struck in mid-March, with openings falling twice as fast as for other listings, according to data from one of the country's biggest career sites. Postings for job titles such as*

“chief diversity officer,” “diversity and inclusion recruiter” or “D&I program manager” fell nearly 60 percent between early March and early June, according to the careers site [Glassdoor](#), which plans to publish the report Wednesday. That’s a sharper drop than for overall human resources jobs, which fell 49 percent, or job openings overall, which fell 28 percent. But as corporate America offered new commitments to work for inclusion amid the national reckoning on racial injustice that erupted after the killing of George Floyd in police custody, the same category of job openings rebounded.

[Nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ people live in the South. Here’s how LGBTQ activists of color are transforming the area.](#) [Susan Miller, *USA Today*, 14 July 2020]

For the LGBTQ community, the South is known as a region that often hangs an unwelcome sign on its door. A [report out Tuesday](#) reveals an eye-opening fact: Nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ people, or 32%, call the South their home. And the area is transforming, led by LGBTQ Southerners of color who are devising unique ways to build communities and uplift lives. The report by the [Movement Advancement Project](#), the Campaign for Southern Equality and the [Equality Federation](#) documents the striking numbers – 93% of LGBTQ Southerners live in states with low or negative equality rankings – with the work of groups navigating around rigid policies, entrenched attitudes and scant statewide protections.

[Want More Diversity? Some Experts Say Reward C.E.O.s for It](#) [Peter Eavis, *The New York Times*, 14 July 2020]

When Charles E. Jones, the chief executive of a large Ohio-based utility, realized that his senior executives weren’t fully behind his push to hire and promote people of color and women, he decided to do something to get their attention. In 2018, Mr. Jones linked 10 percent of annual bonuses for himself and other top executives at his company, FirstEnergy, to diversity goals, and increased the number to 15 percent the next year. The issue has gained new salience in recent weeks as businesses across the United States have declared support for Black Lives Matter, pledged to hire more people of color and ditched decades-old brands like Aunt Jemima that were built on racist imagery.

[The Pentagon has a plan to include more women in national security. Here’s what that means — and why it matters \[OPINION\]](#) [Jeannette Gaudry Haynie and Kyleanne Hunter, *Task & Purpose*, 10 July 2020]

What if, as a nation, we possessed the means to build and employ a more effective military? The Department of Defense has this capability through the [Women, Peace, and Security \(WPS\) Act of 2017](#). The Act is based on a body of research that demonstrates the disproportionate [impacts](#) that conflict has on women and girls, the unique and valuable perspectives that [women and girls bring](#) to the conduct and resolution of conflict, and how these perspectives must be meaningfully included through the planning, conduct, and resolution of conflict for more effective and lasting security to result.

[U.S. Marine sergeant makes history](#) [Lance Cpl. Christy Yost, *DVIDS*, 15 June 2020]

A U.S. Marine made history recently when she became the first ever female to graduate the Scout Swimmer Course, a highly demanding course designed to teach Marines specialized amphibious abilities. Sgt. Alyssa Triplett, a radio operator with Expeditionary Warfare Training Group Pacific based at Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, California, graduated the course May 15, 2020,

*officially becoming the first female to successfully complete the three week course designed to make Marines capable of conducting boat raids.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

## MISCELLANEOUS

[Rev. C.T. Vivian, key civil rights leader, has died at 95](#) [Desiree Seals, *The Associated Press*, 17 July 2020]

*The Rev. C.T. Vivian, a civil rights veteran who worked alongside the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and later led the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, has died. His civil rights work stretched back more than six decades, to his first sit-in demonstrations in the 1940s in Peoria, Ill. He met King soon after the budding civil rights leader's victory in the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott. Vivian helped organize the Freedom Rides to integrate buses across the South and trained waves of activists in non-violent protest. It was Vivian's bold challenge of a segregationist sheriff while trying to register Black voters in Selma, Alabama, that sparked hundreds, then thousands, to march across the Edmund Pettus bridge.*

[Coronavirus pandemic threatens accurate census count for Native American tribes](#) [Erik Ortiz, *NBC News*, 15 July 2020]

*COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, has battered the Navajo Nation, which as of Tuesday had recorded 8,290 positive cases and 401 deaths. The tribe's leaders have instituted strict public health orders and curfews to help curtail the spike. In turn, the once-in-a-century public health crisis is complicating the once-in-a-decade population count. Tribal areas have among the lowest participation numbers. The Navajo Nation has a 7.1 percent self-response rate; in 2010, its final self-response rate was 29.4 percent, according to the Census Bureau. American Indians and Alaska Natives living on Native American reservations have historically been among the hardest to count. In 2010, they were undercounted by nearly 5 percent, or about 30,000 people, according to a [report in February](#) by geographer Jason Jurjevich, an associate professor at the University of Arizona.*

## RACISM

[Aboriginal Australians "still suffering effects of colonial past"](#) [Shaimaa Khalil, *BBC News*, 16 July 2020]

*Keenan, a 33-year-old Aboriginal Australian, tries to keep young people away from prison and help them navigate the often-tense relationship with the police. "The only time the blue uniform comes into our community is to take away a loved one," he says. I asked him how he feels when he sees a policeman. "Fear!", he answers almost immediately. He says the justice system has unfairly targeted young Aboriginal people like him for years and that this hasn't changed. More than half the children sentenced to juvenile detention in Australia are Aboriginal. And an indigenous teenage boy is more likely to go to jail than to university. "The over-incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today is a direct legacy of colonisation in Australia," says Roxanne Moore, executive officer for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services.*

[Retired Diplomats Urge State Dept. to Address Mistreatment of Minority Foreign Service Officers At the U.S. Border](#) [Courtney Bublé, *GovExec*, 14 July 2020]

*The American Academy of Diplomats*, an association of former foreign service officials that works to strengthen American diplomacy, [wrote](#) to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Monday that the issue is not new. However, the association is pushing the department to take action as the country is in a moment of reckoning for its “long-standing racial issues,” following recent nationwide protests. The department concurred that all employees deserve to be treated with respect by other federal officials and said it’s committed to promoting diversity. “Problems include [Customs and Border Protection] officers not accepting standard diplomatic documents; placing Black and Hispanic officers in secondary examination without cause; and repeated hostile questioning and delays,” the letter stated.

[“Sailors Using the N-Word”: Navy Leaders Hear Painful Cases of Racism](#) [Gina Harkins, *Military.com*, 14 July 2020]

One officer was told to stop speaking Spanish on a ship. Another faced snide comments about her cornrows. A third had a superior speak only to her chief, ignoring her years of professional expertise. Those are just some of the candid examples of discrimination sailors and officers said they’ve faced in their careers. The group shared the experiences with members of a new Navy task force charged with identifying racist or sexist policies. “I think that we should assume that there are barriers everywhere for minorities,” Lt. Destini Henderson, a Black naval flight officer, told the task force Monday. Henderson, who said she took heat over the way her hair looked at the Naval Academy, was one of about 10 Navy personnel asked to participate in the first virtual meeting of the newly formed [Task Force One Navy](#).

[CDC Employees Call Out Agency’s “Toxic Culture Of Racial Aggressions”](#) [Selena Simmons-Duffin and Pien Huang, *NPR*, 13 July 2020]

More than 1,000 current employees at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have signed a [letter](#) calling for the federal agency to address “ongoing and recurring acts of racism and discrimination” against Black employees, *NPR* has learned. In the letter, addressed to CDC Director Robert Redfield and dated June 30, the authors put their call for change in the context of the coronavirus pandemic’s disproportionate impact on Black people and the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and Rayshard Brooks. In the letter, the authors point to a variety of “well-meaning, yet under-funded” efforts to diversify the agency’s workforce over the past several decades and assert that none of them have made much difference. They note that Black employees represent only [10% of senior leadership](#) and 6% of the CDC’s 2019 class of the [Epidemic Intelligence Service](#), a fellowship program described as “the training ground for tomorrow’s leaders within the agency.”

[A century after a race massacre, Tulsa finally digs for suspected mass graves](#) [DeNeen L. Brown, *The Washington Post*, 13 July 2020]

Nearly a century after a [brutal race massacre](#) left as many as 300 Black people dead, this city began to dig Monday for suspected mass graves from the violence. A team of scientists, archaeologists and forensics anthropologists began preparing an 8-foot-by-10-foot hole at the city-owned Oaklawn Cemetery, where ground penetrating radar last year detected [anomalies consistent with mass graves](#). Although the scientists said their radar findings are promising, the only way to determine

*precisely what lies beneath the ground is to dig. The excavation was delayed for three months by the coronavirus pandemic.*

[Congressional committees call off hearing on handling of race-based allegations at the Coast Guard Academy after they say Coast Guard refuses to testify](#) [Julia Bergman, *The Day*, (New London, Conn.), 13 July 2020]

*The handling of race-based allegations at the Coast Guard Academy will be the subject of a congressional hearing this week. The heads of the two committees convening the July 16 hearing said the commandant of the Coast Guard, Rear Adm. Karl Schultz, has refused to testify, a decision they criticized publicly in a statement last week. Lt. Cmdr. Brittany Panetta, a Coast Guard spokeswoman, said in a statement Friday that the service is “eager” to testify “at a time and venue that aligns with established executive branch and committee procedures regarding hearing notice, quorum, and question-and-answer period.”*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[“How many women of color have to cry?”: Top feminist organizations are plagued by racism, 20 former staffers say](#) [Caroline Kitchener, *The Lily*, 13 July 2020]

*Women of color have struggled to find that same sense of belonging at NOW (National Organization for Women). In the 54 years since the organization was founded, few women of color have risen to its highest ranks. The organization’s leadership has always been dominated by White women, said Katherine Turk, a professor of history and gender at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who writes about NOW in her forthcoming book, “A Dangerous Sisterhood.” Ten of NOW’s 11 presidents have been White women. Twelve of its current 17 board members are White. Former employees say staffers of color are concentrated in lower level positions, with White leadership shaping organizational priorities that feel largely irrelevant to women who are not White, straight, cisgender, highly educated and upper-middle class. Employees of color were often made to feel like “tokens,” many said, rolled out to show diversity but derided and dismissed within the confines of the office.*

[N.J. police chief accused of making bigoted, sexist comments steps down](#) [Janelle Griffith, *NBC News*, 13 July 2020]

*A New Jersey police chief accused of making derogatory comments about the nation’s first Sikh attorney general and the state’s first Asian American county prosecutor is stepping down, the Union County Prosecutor’s Office said in a statement Monday. Fanwood Police Chief Richard Trigo told the prosecutor’s office and borough council late Friday that he would be stepping down effective Monday, the statement said. “If the comments in the recording were, in fact, made by Chief Trigo, this is yet one more reason why we need to continue building a culture of accountability in policing in New Jersey,” Attorney General Grewal said in a statement. “Clearly, others were in the room when these comments were purportedly made by a law enforcement executive, and they did nothing.”*

[The consequences of implicit bias at Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training \[COMMENTARY\]](#) [Nathan Dial, *Air Force Times*, 12 July 2020]

*Over 14 years in the Air Force, I finished with top 15 percent marks in every academic and professional room except one, pilot training. I was an average or slightly below average student*

*pilot. Although I met the standard, I was nearly railroaded out of pilot training because I said “I do not want to be a fighter pilot” in a room full of fighter pilots. Because I misread the room, the institution provided the opportunity for disturbed instructors to retaliate under the guise of inadequate performance.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[A racial reckoning arrived at West Point, where being Black is a “beautifully painful experience”](#)

[Alex Horton, *The Washington Post*, 10 July 2020]

*The police killing of George Floyd has triggered a wave of reckoning over racism and identity coast to coast, including at the U.S. Military Academy, among the most isolated and traditions-bound institutions in the country. Black alumni have described racist encounters with their classmates loud and subtle, from the chow hall to the parade field. But a [letter to administrators](#) from recent top graduates underscores the entrenched racism that minority cadets endured to become part of the Long Gray Line. Several cadets in the Class of 2020 said they were called the n-word, according to a letter signed by nine recent graduates, some of whom are Black and all held leadership positions. “I was told that I was going to rob someone because I was Black,” one unnamed cadet said.*

## RELIGION

[Multiracial Congregations May Not Bridge Racial Divide](#) [Tom Gjelten, *NPR*, 17 July 2020]

*Twenty years ago, a sociologist at Rice University, Michael Emerson, directed a study of efforts by White evangelical Christians to address racial inequality. His provocative conclusion, summarized in his book [Divided By Faith](#), co-authored with Christian Smith, was that evangelicals “likely do more to perpetuate the racial divide than to tear it down,” largely because they tended to worship in racially segregated congregations and viewed racial prejudice as an individual, not a societal, problem. Emerson then proposed an answer to the problem he had highlighted: If Christians of different racial backgrounds began worshipping together, he suggested, racial reconciliation could follow. In a 2004 book, [United By Faith](#), a sequel to his earlier book, Emerson and a team of collaborators called for a new church movement.*

[Unhappy with Pentagon’s religious liberty guidance, lawmakers demand meeting with SECDEF](#)

[Kent Miller, *Military Times*, 15 July 2020]

*A group of 20 conservative lawmakers have demanded a meeting with top Defense Department officials, judge advocates and military chaplains by July 31 “to discuss the steps that need to be taken to protect the religious freedom of our servicemembers.” The representatives on May 14 sent a [letter](#) to Defense Secretary Mark Esper, copying Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy, urging them to protect religious liberty and “ensure that the ongoing pandemic is not exploited by nefarious organizations bent on removing faith from the U.S. military.” The lawmakers cited three recent [MRFF](#) complaints that were met with corrective actions by base commanders in two cases and an investigation in the third.*

## SEXISM

[Effort underway in Guard for women soldiers to avoid choice between pregnancy and military career](#)

[Zach England, *Military Times*, 13 July 2020]

*When a soldier becomes pregnant in the Army she is given the option to leave the military under honorable conditions or become non-deployable for the duration of her pregnancy. During pregnancy, soldiers cannot continue physical training or handle chemicals and firearms and have to work half-days in their third trimester under current policy. Policies like these are present across branches and impact any female service member of child-bearing age who is or wants to become pregnant while in the military. The policies can delay promotions or disqualify troops medically for schools required for a new rank or job. To confront this issue, the Washington Army National Guard has partnered with the [National Security Innovation Network](#) to start a “Navigating Pregnancy and Promotion” information gathering challenge that launched June 24 and will run through July 22.*

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT**

[Senator demands “immediate” review of treatment of women and minorities in the military following Vanessa Guillen killing](#) [Haley Britzky, *Task & Purpose*, 16 July 2020]

*Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) has requested an “immediate” review of the U.S. military’s treatment of women and minorities in the ranks, joining a chorus of voices putting pressure on the Pentagon in the aftermath of the killing of Army Spc. Vanessa Guillén. In the wake of the disappearance and alleged murder of Spc. Vanessa Guillén from Fort Hood, dozens of lawmakers are calling on other U.S. agencies to investigate the Army’s handling of Guillén’s case, and the Army’s sexual assault prevention program. Though Army investigators say they haven’t yet found evidence that Guillén was being sexually harassed, the soldier’s family said that she told them she was, but that she wasn’t comfortable reporting it.*

[Watchdog, lawmakers blast VA’s sexual harassment policies as inadequate](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 15 July 2020]

*Following a new [report](#) highlighting that more than one-quarter of women working as Veterans Affairs employees experienced sexual harassment, congressional leaders on Wednesday demanded immediate changes in department policies to ensure that such claims are investigated and addressed instead of being overlooked. According to federal survey data from 2014 to 2016 — the latest year the survey was conducted — 26 percent of women who worked at VA reported some form of sexual harassment, and 14 percent of male employees said they were subject to similar unwelcome workplace behavior. Government-wide, the number of women reporting workplace sexual harassment was 21 percent. Among men, it was 9 percent.*

[The long quest to stop a “Sugar Daddy” judge accused of preying on women](#) [John Shiffman and Michael Berens, *Reuters*, 14 July 2020]

*She was 30 years old, jobless and facing a custody fight for two young children. To keep her kids, she needed a lawyer – someone cheap and willing to see her quickly. “‘You need yourself a Sugar Daddy,’ is exactly what he said,” the woman said in the confidential testimony. “He was very persistent on it and knew that I was pretty much broke.” The woman told authorities that she covered part of her legal fees by having sex with Parker, and that Parker paid her at least \$3,000 for more sex over the next two years. Typically, allegations that a lawyer had sex with a client or exchanged services for sex would be handled by local police or state ethics officials. But Parker’s case was complicated: He wasn’t just a lawyer. He was also a part-time judge for the Carroll County District Court.*

[Woman pleads not guilty to charges in Texas soldier's death](#) [Acacia Coronado, *The Associated Press*, 14 July 2020]

*Cecily Aguilar of Killeen, near Fort Hood, entered the pleas Tuesday in federal court in Waco to three conspiracy charges in the death of Army Spc. Vanessa Guillén, 20. Aguilar remains in the Bell County Jail in Belton, Texas, while awaiting trial. Aguilar has since tried to delete her Google accounts and flee the country, said Natalie Khawam, Guillén's family's attorney. She said they will continue to build a whistleblower case for the slain soldier and asked anyone with information on Aguilar to come forward. Khawam said she and the Guillén family will be meeting with President Donald Trump on July 29, the day before the #IAmVanessaGuillen Bill is presented to Congress. The measure would address procedures for reporting sexual harassment and assault in the military.*

[Family wants military to help a Marine cope with a sex assault. Instead, she's in a Chesapeake brig.](#) [Katherine Hafner, *The Virginian-Pilot*, (Norfolk, Va.), 13 July 2020]

*Corporal Thae Ohu has struggled in the five years since she says she was sexually assaulted by a fellow Marine. The assault changed her, and her mental health progressively worsened, according to her sister Pan Phyu and letters written by Ohu and others. She attempted suicide earlier this year. Ohu's family, friends and advocates specializing in military sexual assault are pushing for her release. They say she's being deprived of adequate medical treatment inside the Navy Consolidated Brig in Chesapeake, where she's been held in pretrial confinement since June 19.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Scandal erupts at prestigious British university, after students accuse several members of U.S.-style frat house of sexual assault](#) [Ron Picheta, *CNN*, 13 July 2020]

*One of the world's oldest universities is embroiled in scandal after dozens of women alleged they were sexually assaulted or raped on its campus, with several claiming they were attacked by members of a controversial U.S.-style fraternity. The University of St Andrews in Scotland has said it will work with police to investigate scores of claims, made anonymously on an [Instagram page](#) entitled "St Andrews Survivors." The feed includes more than 20 allegations of rape, and several more allegations of sexual assault, physical assault and coercion by students at the prestigious university. Many of the allegations centered on one fraternity, the St Andrews chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi -- a popular U.S.-based student group that has also faced several allegations and police investigations into sexual misconduct at some of its United States chapters.*

[She was a pioneering Coast Guard rescue swimmer. A tsunami of sexual harassment followed](#) [Kevin G. Hall, *The Miami Herald*, 13 July 2020]

*Sara Faulkner had the "it" factor as the first woman to graduate from the Coast Guard's helicopter rescue swimmer school in North Carolina and join its elite group of swimmers. The South Florida woman's against-the-odds story met a bitter end, she says, after sexual harassment saddled her with PTSD and forced the 20-year service member into retirement. Two women had trained at the Navy's rescue swimmer program, but Faulkner was the first to pass the testing program in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Only three other women have done so since her feat in 2000. Once sent to do the job she loved, rescuing people from helicopter drops, Faulkner said she endured groping, licking, butt smacking, leering and crude sexual innuendos meant to humiliate her in front of colleagues.*

[What can stop sexual harassment in the U.S. military?](#) [Stephanie Bonnes, *The Washington Post*, 13 July 2020]

*Before U.S. Army Spc. Vanessa Guillén disappeared from a Texas military base on April 22, she told her family that she was being sexually harassed but was too afraid to report it. The military stepped up its investigation into Guillén's disappearance, leading to the discovery and identification of her remains in early July, and has finally acknowledged that she may have been harassed, although it maintains that the harassment was not sexual and was not carried out by the primary suspect in her death. [My research](#) suggests that this is related to a deep problem in the military with sexual harassment — reflecting a military bureaucracy that does little to assist victims of harassment and abuse.*

[How Army culture dismisses its female service members \[COMMENTARY\]](#) [Kaitlyn Abbott, *Army Times*, 12 July 2020]

*Consent in the general population is the understanding of an enthusiastic “yes” response — which is not the equivalent to not saying “no.” As professionals, both military and civilian alike, the idea of consent must be understood that it is a multifaceted issue. Consent and power dynamics go hand-in-hand; there is no true consent with someone of a significantly different rank or position. If an NCO and a junior enlisted soldier have a “consenting” relationship — the NCO is guilty of abusing a power dynamic for sexual gratification.*

[Naval Academy Midshipman's Sexual Assault Trial Comes as Military Undergoes its Own #MeToo Movement](#) [Heather Mongilio, *The Capital*, (Annapolis Md.), 12 July 2020]

*As government attorneys, and sometimes the defense, questioned a potential member for an eight-member panel, they almost always turned to one question. “Do you believe women who say they have been sexually assaulted?” Asking the question made sense. The attorneys were questioning each potential member to see if they could sit on the member panel -- the court-martial version of a jury -- in the trial of Midshipman 3rd Class Nixon Keago. Keago is charged with sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, obstruction of justice and burglary.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Fort Hood's command climate is under review amid investigation into killing of Spc. Vanessa Guillen](#) [Meghann Myers, *Army Times*, 10 July 2020]

*As FBI and Army Criminal Investigation Command authorities continue to investigate the circumstances concerning the April 22 disappearance and subsequent killing of a young, female soldier, big Army is taking a broader look at the community where it happened. Fort Hood, Texas, will be the subject of an independent command climate review, Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy told reporters Friday, to be headed up by Army Under Secretary James McPherson. “The purpose of this independent review is to examine whether the command climate and culture at Fort Hood and the military community surrounding Fort Hood respects Army values — including respect, inclusiveness and workplaces free from sexual harassment and a commitment to diversity,” McPherson said.*

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

**SUICIDE**

[Survey finds 40% of U.S. LGBTQ youth considered suicide in past year](#) [Maria Caspani, *Reuters*, 15 July 2020]

*Forty percent of young LGBTQ people in the United States say they have seriously considered suicide over the past 12 months, according to a [survey released on Wednesday](#), while the figure climbs to more than 50% for transgender and non-binary youth surveyed. Nearly half (46%) of the 40,000 respondents said they wanted psychological or emotional counseling from a professional but were unable to receive it over the course of the past 12 months. For young queer individuals, being forced to isolate with unsupportive families might pose a further obstacle. Forty percent of LGBTQ youth reported in the survey that they were unable to receive care due to concerns over parental support.*

[Fund efforts to combat COVID-19-driven suicide, overdose \[OPINION\]](#) [Andy Keller and Anthony M. Hassan, *Stars and Stripes*, 10 July 2020]

*Politicians continue to present a false choice between two health pandemics unleashed by COVID-19, arguing that we must either fight the virus or stem the mental health fallout triggered by record unemployment and strict lockdowns. The mental health and addiction front has been visible for months. A [Cohen Veterans Network survey](#) in April found that nine in 10 Americans believed the pandemic made access to mental health care more important. Later in April, the [Meadows Institute](#) projected that — based on what happened following the 2008 recession — for every 5% increase in unemployment, America could lose 4,000 more people to suicide and 4,800 to overdose each year. A deeper recession on par with the Great Depression — which seems more possible if the virus again spirals out of control — could lead to 40,000 in combined lives lost.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

## **VETERANS**

[DVBIC collaboration leads to improved sleep recommendations](#) [*The Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center*, 13 July 2020]

*Sleep disturbances are a widely reported symptom among service members and veterans diagnosed with concussion, also known as mild traumatic brain injury. Nearly 12 percent of service members were diagnosed with at least one sleep disorder in 2018, the latest figures available from the DOD Health of the Force. The most commonly diagnosed sleep disorders were sleep apnea and insomnia. At a recent TBI symposium at the National Institutes of Health, University of Maryland School of Medicine clinical psychology professor and sleep disorder specialist Emerson Wickwire explained that conditions following a TBI such as headaches, dizziness and poor balance can be affected by sleep disturbances and “if providers knew more about sleep, it would have a huge impact on TBI care.” Wickwire served as a member of DVBIC’s expert working group that developed the clinical recommendations.*

[Original “Rosie the Riveter” makes masks to promote, honor WWII work](#) [Peg Quann, *Erie Times-News*, (Erie, Pa.), 12 July 2020]

*At age 94, Mae Krier is back on the front lines -- hard at work, helping her country. One of the nation’s original “Rosie the Riveters” employed by Boeing in Seattle during World War II, she built B-17 and B-29 bombers to help support the war effort decades ago. Now she’s fighting a different war, as her still nimble fingers turn out face masks to prevent spread of the deadly coronavirus.*

*“People say to me, “You helped win WWII and now you are helping our country win this battle over this virus. These are nice things to hear,” Krier said.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[DOD Knew K2 Troops Were Exposed to Cancer-Causing Toxins; VA Continues to Deny Care](#)

[Steve Beynon, *Stars and Stripes*, 9 July 2020]

*Recently declassified Defense Department documents show the Pentagon knew troops were exposed to multiple toxins and hazards that have led to hundreds of cancer cases and dozens of dead veterans after deploying to Uzbekistan in the early days of the War on Terror. The Department of Veterans Affairs is denying most of them care and disability. On Thursday, the House Subcommittee on National Security released previously classified documents provided by the military in 2001, 2002 and 2004 that reveal a mountain of evidence that service members were exposed to voluminous health risks including cancer-risking toxins.*