

DEOMI NEWS LINKS, 13 NOVEMBER 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

[Appeals Court Rules Harvard Doesn't Discriminate Against Asian American Applicants](#) [Jaclyn Diaz, *NPR*, 12 November 2020]

A federal appeals court in Boston has [ruled](#) Harvard doesn't intentionally discriminate against Asian-American applicants in its admissions process. The panel of judges upheld the federal district court's [decision from last year](#), teeing up a possible case in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. Circuit Judge Sandra L. Lynch, who wrote Thursday's decision, agreed with the lower court that "the statistical evidence did not show that Harvard intentionally discriminated against Asian Americans."

[DOD Fails to Address the Health Care Needs of Female Troops, Advisory Board Claims](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 9 November 2020]

Despite more than three decades of studies and recommendations on military women's health, the Defense Department fails to provide female service members the medical care and equipment needed for their well-being—a deficiency that costs millions and hurts operational readiness, a Pentagon advisory board has concluded. In an exhaustive review of the state of health services and support of active-duty women, members of the Defense Health Board found that previous DOD efforts to bolster gender-specific health care across the services have not led to "sustained improvements."

[Naval Community College: First Major Step to Improve Learning as a National Security Priority](#) [John M. Doyle, *Seapower*, 10 November 2020]

The U.S. Navy Department's Education for Seapower Strategy is on track to roll out its first major project in 2021, a community college to improve intellectual development and military professionalism among enlisted personnel. The U.S. Naval Community College (NCC), aimed at turning enlisted members of the sea services into critical thinkers as well as better warfighters, is preparing to launch a pilot program in January with upwards of 500 Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen. The pilot will work with civilian universities and colleges to deliver distance learning in subjects such as nuclear engineering, cybersecurity, data analytics, ethics and leadership. Eventually, the NCC will offer a common core of Naval/Maritime studies to provide participants with a similar grounding to the standardized naval science courses taught at the U.S. Naval Academy and Naval ROTC programs, according to NCC President Randi Cosentino.

CULTURE

[Defying Trump, 37 Senate Dems urge mandate to rename bases honoring Confederate generals stay in defense bill](#) [Joe Gould, *DefenseNews.com*, 11 November 2020]

Heading into negotiations on the annual defense policy bill next week, leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services committees are under new pressure to buck President Donald Trump's veto

threat and keep a proposed requirement that the Pentagon rename bases honoring Confederate military leaders. With the victory of President-elect Joe Biden, who supports removing the names, the leaders could be tempted to remove the language, since it's the main sticking point and defining issue in the massive \$740.5 billion policy bill. The annual National Defense Authorization Act authorizes weapons procurement and troop pay.

[How the Corps is celebrating its birthday in the time of COVID-19](#) [Philip Athey, *Marine Corps Times*, 11 November 2020]

On Tuesday the Marine Corps turned 245 years old. From Las Vegas to Camp Hansen in Okinawa, Japan, debaucherous celebrations by Marines in dress blues have become legendary (at least in the minds of Marines). But in 2020 with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Corps has put a temporary halt on the revelry, stripping the celebrations to their roots. "For most of us who have had the opportunity to deploy in times of crises, our most precious memories of this birthday have been in austere or hostile locations," Lt. Gen. David Bellon, command of Marine Forces Reserve, wrote in a letter to his command. "Tradition matters, it defines who we are as a Corps. Though far from home we always take the time to remember our birthday," Lt. Gen. H. Stacy Clardy, commanding general of III MEF, said in a video about the ceremony.

[Let Them Grow Beards: UPS Relaxes Rules On Drivers' Facial Hair](#) [Adedayo Akaka, *NPR*, 11 November 2020]

After years of strict rules surrounding its delivery drivers' personal appearance, UPS is loosening up and letting them grow beards. Previously, the delivery company regulated employees' facial hair (no beards for the majority of workers and mustaches limited to above the crease of the lip) and hairstyles (Afros and braids weren't allowed). Piercings were largely restricted to earrings, and tattoos had to be hidden. Now these clear-cut rules have been removed, but styles still have to be suitable for the workplace. "These changes reflect our values and desire to have all UPS employees feel comfortable, genuine and authentic while providing service to our customers and interacting with the general public," the company said in a statement.

[Role of WWII Mexican American, Native American soldiers featured in Netflix's "The Liberator"](#) [Arturo Conde, *NBC News*, 11 November 2020]

As Americans honor veterans nationwide, a new series pays special tribute to a diverse group of WWII soldiers that included Mexican Americans, Native Americans and White Americans from Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, Texas and other parts of the West. "Lots of diverse Americans were fighting to defeat Nazism, and they were also fighting to protect and preserve their idea of America," said the New York Times bestselling author Alex Kershaw, whose book "The Liberator" inspired the new Netflix series. The four-part, live-action animated series tells the story of Col. Felix Sparks and the diverse soldiers he led in the 157th Infantry Regiment. The military unit endured 500 days of fierce combat from the war-torn beaches of Sicily to the gates of the oldest concentration camp in Nazi Germany.

[\[TRAILER\]](#)

[Alaska Tlingits hold memorial ceremony online amid pandemic](#) [Mark Thiessen, *The Associated Press*, 10 November 2020]

When a Tlingit elder dies, leaders from the Alaska Native tribe’s two houses, the Raven and Eagle clans, typically come together along with family and well-wishers for a memorial ceremony featuring displays of traditional tribal regalia. After elder, tribal leader and college professor David Katzeek died last month, the tribe scrambled to find a way to observe their sacred traditions while keeping everyone safe during the pandemic, with coronavirus cases surging in the state. Holding the memorial online had at least one advantage, in that it allowed some 2,000 people to take part from New Mexico to California, according to Sealaska Heritage Institute president Rosita Worl. She said the memorial was an innovative and successful merging of traditional rites with modern technology and the public health and safety requirements demanded by the pandemic. The institute is now using the experience to write guides for others to do the same.

[NATO faces existential threat if it can’t reach younger generations, report warns](#) [Aaron Mehta, DefenseNews.com, 10 November 2020]

In Brussels Monday, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg kicked off an all-day NATO 2030 Youth Summit aimed at injecting interest in the alliance into millennial and Generation Z future leaders. “You—tomorrow’s leaders, both in North America and Europe—have the greatest stake in our security, so NATO 2030 is the chance for you to step up and safeguard your future, your freedom, your Alliance,” Stoltenberg said in his opening comments. But a new report from the Center for European Policy Analysis think tank argues that NATO has not done enough to activate interest in younger European leaders—and that the alliance faces an existential threat if it can’t turn that around.

[‘Everybody We Deal With Is Trained to Kill’—Why Don’t We See Widespread Police Brutality in the Military?](#) [Andrea Scott, *The War Horse*, 6 November 2020]

Amid swirling and often divisive conversations about civilian police brutality and the role of police in American society, another police demographic largely has been left out of the national conversation: military police. While MPs have their own issues to deal with, former service members say civilians could learn from the military’s habit of responding to each call with the understanding that it could involve a co-worker, a friend, a person dealing with a mental health crisis connected to service, or a pushed-to-the-limits family member. In other words, the MPs act as members of a community. This, they say, in addition to differences in military versus civilian police environments, mindset and training, and pride in combat experience is why there are very few stories of military police brutality.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

DISCRIMINATION

[EU unveils first plan to address LGBT rights, discrimination](#) [The Associated Press, 12 November 2020]

The European Union unveiled Thursday its first [strategy](#) for improving the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, intersex and queer people, amid deep concern about widespread discrimination, notably in Poland. The EU’s executive arm, the European Commission, wants to extend the list of crimes in Europe to cover homophobic hate speech, propose new laws to guarantee that same-sex parenthood will be recognized across the 27 member nations, and to

ensure that LGBTQI concerns are better reflected in the bloc's policies. "This is not about ideology. This is not about being men or women. This is about love," Commission Vice-President Vera Jourova said. "This strategy is not against anyone. This does not put anyone on a pedestal. But it is about guaranteeing safety and non-discrimination for everyone."

[Georgia county considers rules outlawing discrimination](#) [The Associated Press, 11 November 2020]

A middle Georgia county is debating whether to pass an anti-discrimination ordinance that would govern businesses. Macon-Bibb County commissioners voted 5-3 to advance the proposal on Tuesday, setting it up for a final vote before the commission next week, news outlets reported. The ordinance would ban discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations based on race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity or military status. Under the ordinance, businesses could not discriminate by withholding any goods, services or accommodations.

[LA Times to pay \\$3M to settle journalist discrimination case](#) [The Associated Press, 10 November 2020]

The Los Angeles Times and Tribune Publishing have agreed to pay \$3 million to settle a lawsuit that said minority journalists and women were paid less than White reporters. Nearly 240 current and former reporters and editors will benefit from the settlement that was granted preliminary approval last month by a judge in San Bernardino County, the Times reported Tuesday. The discrimination lawsuit, filed in June, alleged that the Times violated California's Equal Pay Act and the state's Business and Professions Code. The paper and its former owners denied the allegations and don't acknowledge any wrongdoing in the settlement agreement.

[California students say they're "deeply disappointed" after voters cast ballots against affirmative action](#) [Inyoung Choi, *Business Insider*, 8 November 2020]

*California voted to reject a proposition to bring back affirmative action with 56% in opposition as of Wednesday, [according to the AP](#). Proposition 16 would have allowed public employers and education institutions to "consider race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in order to address diversity," and hence uphold affirmative action in admissions and hiring. Affirmative action, as *Business Insider's* Erin Fuchs previously reported, originated in the 1960s when former President John F. Kennedy used the term to promote diversity and equality in hiring processes in government contractors. If this proposition was passed, it would have effectively repealed the 1996 Proposition 209, which terminated affirmative action in public education and employment. While the majority of states do not ban affirmative action, nine states including California, Florida, Michigan, and most recently Idaho have adopted a ban.*

[Editorial: Religious freedom is no excuse for discrimination against gay couples](#) [LA Times Editorial Board, *The Los Angeles Times*, 6 November 2020] [OPINION]

A Catholic social services agency urged the Supreme Court this week to rule that the agency can participate in the city of Philadelphia's foster care program while refusing to work with same-sex couples. The court should reject the agency's appeal and make it clear that religious freedom may not be used as a license to discriminate.

DIVERSITY

[Harris will be the first female, Black and Asian vice president. But not the first VP of color.](#)

[Gillian Brockell, *The Washington Post*, 12 November 2020]

Vice President-elect Kamala D. Harris is a trailblazer in many ways. She is the first female vice president. The first Black vice president. The first South Asian vice president. And, perhaps, the first vice president to sport Chuck Taylors. But, as some have mistakenly claimed, she is not the first multiracial vice president or the first one of color. That distinction belongs to Charles Curtis, who served as vice president to Herbert Hoover from 1929 to 1933. Curtis's mother was a Native American who belonged to the Kaw Nation, and he was raised on a reservation by his maternal grandparents, where he spoke the Indigenous language and lived in a tepee.

[Historically Black schools announce plan to train doctors](#) [The Associated Press, 11 November 2020]

Tennessee State University and Meharry Medical College on Tuesday announced a partnership aimed at training African American doctors and dentists who will provide essential care to underserved communities. The accelerated program will allow selected students to spend three years in a pre-med program at TSU before going on to Meharry, earning a medical or dental degree in seven years instead of the customary eight. The overriding goal of the program is to increase the number of African American providers who will work in minority communities that have the greatest health care needs. The Dr. Levi Watkins Jr. Institute/TSU/Meharry Accelerated Pathway Program is named after a TSU graduate who was the first surgeon to successfully implant an automatic heart defibrillator in a human patient.

[This Immigrant Soldier Earned the Medal of Honor a Year Before He Became an American](#)

[Richard Sisk, *Military.com*, 11 November 2020]

Not every American hero was an American when they fought in the nation's wars, including Medal of Honor recipient Alfred V. Rascon. As the retired Army lieutenant colonel often says: "Mexican by birth, American by choice." He stands out in the long line of immigrants who have fought for the U.S. before they officially became Americans. In March 1966, Rascon performed "extraordinarily courageous acts" as a combat medic in Vietnam, for which he was recommended for the Medal of Honor. However, at the time, he was awarded the Silver Star. He would not be naturalized as an American citizen until a year later. At the White House on Feb. 8, 2000, then-President Bill Clinton bestowed the nation's highest award for valor on Alfred Velazquez Rascon.

[SECNAV Names Future Expeditionary Sea Base USS John L. Canley](#) [Seapower, 10 November 2020]

Secretary of the Navy Kenneth J. Braithwaite announced Nov. 10 that a future U.S. Navy Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) class ship will honor Medal of Honor Recipient Marine Corps Sergeant Major (Retired) John L. Canley. Canley was awarded the nation's highest honor 50 years after his actions serving as Company Gunnery Sergeant, Company A, First Battalion, First Marines, First Marine Division in the Republic of Vietnam from Jan. 31 to Feb. 6, 1968, during the Battle of Hue City. Canley was originally awarded the Nation's second highest honor, the Navy

Cross, for his action during the Battle of Hue City, but this was upgraded to the Medal of Honor, which was presented Oct. 17, 2018, during a ceremony at the White House.

[“You are my wildest dream”: Sydney Barber will be first Black woman to serve as U.S. Naval Academy brigade commander](#) [Jessica Flores, *USA TODAY*, 9 November 2020]

Midshipman 1st Class Sydney Barber will be the first Black woman to serve as brigade commander at the U.S. Naval Academy, officials announced Monday. Barber will hold the highest leadership position within the brigade for the spring semester, the 16th woman to hold the position since women were allowed to attend the Naval Academy beginning in 1976. The first female brigade commander was then-Midshipman 1st Class Juliane Gallina in 1992. “Earning the title of brigade commander speaks volumes, but the title itself is not nearly as significant as the opportunity it brings to lead a team in doing something I believe will be truly special,” Barber [said in a statement](#). “I am humbled to play a small role in this momentous season of American history.”

[Michèle Flournoy could become the first woman to run the Pentagon. Here’s what would change.](#) [Aaron Mehta, *DefenseNews.com*, 8 November 2020]

President-elect Biden is widely expected to tap Michèle Flournoy to lead the U.S. military. Flournoy’s career at the Pentagon launched under the administration of President Bill Clinton, where she served as principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for strategy and threat reduction, and then deputy assistant secretary of defense for strategy. Later, she spent several years at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank. In 2009 Flournoy was confirmed as undersecretary of defense for policy. There, she helped craft the plans for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and was seen as a major driver of the counterinsurgency strategy.

[The next secretary of defense should be a woman](#) [Lawrence Korb, *Military Times*, 8 November 2020] [OPINION]

In the nearly 75 years since the Department of Defense was created in 1947, Democratic and Republican presidents have appointed 27 people to the top job in the Pentagon, the secretary of defense. However, all the appointees have been males. Consequently, there have been increasing calls for former Vice President Biden, who has been declared the winner of the 2020 presidential election to break the glass ceiling and to select the first female secretary of defense.

[Navy Orders Halt to Diversity Training; Discrimination Study Will Continue](#) [Gina Harkins, *Military.com*, 7 November 2020]

A new Navy- and Marine Corps-wide order on combating race and sex stereotyping won’t halt the work of a naval task force focused on identifying discriminatory policies affecting sailors. Navy Secretary Kenneth Braithwaite issued an administrative message Thursday ordering the Navy Department to suspend all civilian and military personnel training relating to diversity and inclusion. The directive follows a September executive order from President Donald Trump to “combat any offensive and anti-American race and sex stereotyping and scapegoating.” That includes a ban on military training that suggests the U.S. is an “irredeemably racist and sexist country,” according to Trump. Braithwaite said this week that, before the sea services resume diversity training, they must submit requests to the assistant Navy secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs for certification.

MISCELLANEOUS

[“Rosie the Riveter” women to be awarded the Congressional Gold Medal](#) [Abbie Bennett, *ConnectingVets.com*, 12 November 2020]

The women who would later be characterized by the symbol of “Rosie the Riveter” are poised to receive Congress’ highest award Congress passed a bill that now heads to the president’s desk. H.R. 1773 awards the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to “the women in the United States who joined the workforce during World War II, providing the aircraft, vehicles, weaponry, ammunition and other material to win the war, that were referred to as ‘Rosie the Riveter’ in recognition of their contributions to the United States and the inspiration they have provided to ensuing generations.” The medal is the “highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions” of an individual, institution or event that Congress can award, according to the history of the award.

[DOD to Civilian Staff: Wait a Few More Weeks to Break Out the MAGA Hats, Biden Pins](#) [Oriana Pawlyk, *Military.com*, 11 November 2020]

The Pentagon is reminding civilian employees that they must wait until states officially certify election results before they can legally sport “Make America Great Again” or “Biden-Harris” gear. Even as the 2020 election cycle comes to a close, displaying a “sign reading ‘Trump-Pence’ or ‘Biden-Harris’ [is not] permitted until the results of the current election have been certified,” [according to a release](#) from the Defense Department on Tuesday.

[SEE ALSO [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)]

[English soccer chief resigns after offensive public remarks on race, gender](#) [Adela Suliman, *NBC News*, 11 November 2020]

The head of English soccer’s national governing body has stepped down after he made comments offensive to many Black people, women and members of the LGBTQ community during a single appearance before a parliamentary committee. During a car-crash online appearance before lawmakers from the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport parliamentary committee on Tuesday, Greg Clarke, 63, referred to Black soccer players as “colored,” an outdated and offensive term that sparked outrage. Called out for his language during the meeting, Clarke apologized and backpedaled, blaming time spent in the United States where he was “required to use the phrase ‘people of color,’” he said, making him “trip over my words.”

[Lucille Bridges, Mother Of Anti-Segregation Icon Ruby Bridges, Dies At 86](#) [Scott Neuman, *NPR*, 11 November 2020]

Lucille Bridges, who in 1960 braved a gauntlet of threats and racist slurs to escort her daughter to a formerly all-White school in New Orleans in what became a symbol of opposition to segregation, has died at age 86. Civil rights activist Ruby Bridges, who walked up the stairs of William Frantz Elementary School six decades ago to become its first Black student, announced her mother’s death on Instagram late Tuesday. She included a photo showing mother and daughter holding hands as they exited the school, flanked by U.S. marshals. “Today our country lost a hero. Brave, progressive, a champion for change. She helped alter the course of so many lives by setting me out on my path as a six year old little girl. Our nation lost a Mother of the Civil Rights Movement

today. And I lost my mom. I love you and am grateful for you. May you Rest In Peace,” wrote Ruby Bridges, who was memorialized in an iconic painting by Norman Rockwell depicting her, notebook and ruler in hand and accompanied by burly marshals, walking past a wall scrawled with a racial epithet.

[Fate of Iraq War hero Alwyn Cashe’s Medal of Honor now rests with the White House](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 10 November 2020]

Senate lawmakers on Tuesday unanimously approved plans to award the nation’s highest military honor to Iraq War hero Alwyn Cashe. Now the decision is up to the President. Cashe, an Army sergeant first class who died in November 2005 from injuries sustained trying to save his men from a burning Bradley Fighting Vehicle, was previously honored with a Silver Star for his actions. But advocates have long criticized that decision, lamenting paperwork mistakes and bureaucratic regulations that prevented his honor from being upgraded over the last 14 years. If the Medal of Honor is awarded to Cashe, he would become only the seventh individual granted the honor for actions in Iraq, and the first African-American given it for battlefield heroism since the Vietnam War.

[Transition support for servicewomen planning to leave the military](#) [Mark Oswell, *Military Health Systems*, 10 November 2020]

Transitioning from the Department of Defense into the civilian sector is never easy. Out-processing briefs. Check-out lists. Turning in equipment. Clearing quarters. Turnovers. Farewells. Etc... For women who are departing their service this challenge may be even more daunting. According to various studies, women veterans sometimes face greater health-related challenges after military service compared to their male counterparts, including: a higher prevalence of chronic pain, obesity, musculoskeletal issues, and depression. Additionally, fewer women Veterans seek services and support from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compared to men. In July 2018, the VA’s Office of Women’s Health Services (WHS), and the Air Force Women’s Initiative Team, worked together under the auspices of the VA/DoD Women’s Health Work Group, and the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to develop and pilot a [women’s health training program](#) for servicewomen transitioning from the military to the civilian sector.

[“Always do the right thing”](#): Mark Esper issues his last memo to the force [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 9 November 2020]

As former Defense Secretary Mark Esper packed up his Pentagon office Monday, he released a final memo to the department, urging troops and DOD civilians to “always do the right thing.” President Donald Trump fired Esper after months of speculation that the Pentagon’s top official was on thin ice. “While I step aside knowing that there is much more we could accomplish together to advance America’s national security, there is much achieved in the time we had to improve the readiness, capabilities, and professionalism of the joint force, while fundamentally transforming and preparing it for the future,” he wrote.

[FTC says Zoom misled users on its security for meetings](#) [Marcy Gordon, *The Associated Press*, 9 November 2020]

Federal regulators are requiring Zoom to strengthen its security in a proposed settlement of allegations that the video conferencing service misled users about its level of security for meetings. The settlement, approved by the Federal Trade Commission in a 3-2 vote, was announced Monday. A complaint filed by the agency accused Zoom of deceiving users over security since at least 2016. It said the company held on to cryptographic keys that allowed it to access content from its customers' meetings, and secured meetings with a lower level of privacy encryption than it promised customers.

[Decorated Afghan pilot who protected U.S. airmen is in hiding after Pentagon reverses approval to come to U.S.](#) [J.P. Lawrence, *Stars and Stripes*, 7 November 2020]

A helicopter pilot reputed to have killed more Taliban than anyone else in the Afghan air force is in hiding after the Pentagon reversed its decision to approve his move to the United States. In early October, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service and the Defense Department approved Maj. Mohammed Naiem Asadi's request to seek refuge in America, along with his wife and 4-year-old daughter, because they were in "imminent danger of being killed by the Taliban," approval documents and emails shared with Stars and Stripes show. But on Oct. 28, just hours before they were to about to leave, Asadi was told plans had changed. He would learn the Pentagon had withdrawn its endorsement.

MISCONDUCT

[Fort Sill drill sergeant publicly rebuked by 3-star general for inappropriate TikTok](#) [Davis Winkie, *Army Times*, 10 November 2020]

A Fort Sill-based drill sergeant was punished and reprimanded publicly by his brigade commander and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's deputy commanding general, Lt. Gen. Ted Martin, on Tuesday after social media users discovered that he had called his trainees and TRADOC policies "f---ing soft" and "f---ing sickening" in a public TikTok video first shared by Twitter user Lethality Jane. Wallace faces punishment for violating Army command policy regarding online misconduct, said Jessica Tackaberry, a Fort Sill spokesperson.

[Two Fort Carson staff sergeants charged in child prostitution sting](#) [Kyle Rempfer, *Army Times*, 9 November 2020]

An undercover investigation ended with the arrests of two Army staff sergeants assigned to Fort Carson, Colorado, as well as six other men, who are accused of seeking to pay to have sex with children, according Colorado Spring police officers. "In addition to 'Soliciting for Child Prostitution' (a class three felony), the District Attorney also added on the charge of 'Criminal Attempt—Sexual Assault on a Child' (that is a class five felony) for the eight individuals arrested..." Colorado Springs police spokesperson Natasha Kerr said in an email.

["I'm not going to be quiet anymore"—A senior NCO at Fort Hood is taking brutal allegations of toxic leadership public](#) [Haley Britzky, *Task and Purpose*, 6 November 2020]

Amid relentless messaging from senior Army leadership that the service is prioritizing people above all else, a Fort Hood non-commissioned officer says he and his soldiers are living in a starkly different reality. Sgt. 1st Class Cory Wrieden, who is currently serving with the 1st Cavalry

Division at Fort Hood, posted two videos on social media site TikTok last week in which he made allegations of broken leadership that he'd observed over the last year. Those allegations included retaliation against Wrieden for visiting behavioral health services and allowing a warrant officer to remain in their formation virtually unpunished after Wrieden informed leaders that the warrant officer told another soldier to kill himself.

RACISM

[Mississippi Abolishes Jim Crow-Era State Voting System](#) [Emma Coleman, *Route Fifty*, 5 November 2020]

The relic from the state's 1890 constitution, one of several provisions designed to dilute the power of Black voters, was abolished through a ballot initiative that won by a blowout margin. Mississippi voters on Tuesday scrapped the state's electoral college-style system for electing the governor and other statewide positions, rejecting a Jim Crow-era relic that dated back to the 19th century. The state will now elect state officials based on the popular vote. The old system, rejected by 78% of voters, was created with the state's 1890 constitution. That document contained a number of voter suppression measures, like poll taxes and literacy tests that were aimed at limiting the power of Black men enfranchised after the Civil War. Solomon Calhoun, the president of the constitutional convention, made the purpose of the measures clear. "We came here to exclude the Negro," he said. "Nothing short of this will answer."

RELIGION

[What is Diwali, the festival of lights, and how will it be celebrated amid coronavirus?](#) [N'dea Yancey-Bragg, *USA TODAY*, 11 November 2020]

Beginning on Thursday, more than a billion people around the world will began the annual celebration of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights that many consider to be the start of the new year. Typically, the festival is marked by celebrations both at home and in large community gatherings by people of many faiths in both India and the diaspora. In recent years, celebrations have become increasingly mainstream in America with large events in Disneyland and Times Square as well as convention centers across the country. This year, Diwali festivities will likely revert back to more intimate family gatherings coupled with online observances as both countries grapple with the coronavirus pandemic.

SEXISM

["Fabletics" gifts Veterans Day discount on yoga pants, but only for men](#) [Sarah Sicard and J.D. Simkins, *Military Times*, 12 November 2020]

While most choose to spend this day gorging on free food, Fabletics, the workout gear retailer launched by actress Kate Hudson, was betting that veterans would use their hard-earned money on yoga pants—but only applied the deal to those with the XY chromosome. That's right. Fabletics offered a 15 percent discount applicable only to male veterans, who we all know live and breathe for the fresh feel of a brand new pair of ass-sculpting yoga pants. Lisa Smith, an Air Force veteran, contacted the customer service chat function on the Fabletics website for clarification on the

inexplicable deal. Instead, she was met with the underwhelming response that the “promo is only for men.”

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Fort Hood leaders meet with Vanessa Guillen’s family, say gate will be named in her honor](#) [Kyle Rempfer, *Army Times*, 11 November 2020]

The family of Spc. Vanessa Guillen visited Fort Hood, Texas, on Tuesday to see design concepts and survey the proposed site of a memorial gate that will be named in Guillen’s honor, according to the central Texas installation. Guillen’s death sparked a public outcry and triggered a number of investigations, including an independent review of the command climate at Fort Hood that examined claims of discrimination, harassment and assault. Fort Hood also recently announced the start of a year-long effort to stem sexual assault and harassment, extremism, racism and suicides. Not all leaders at the Texas post “properly know their soldiers,” they do not always take appropriate action when needed and do not always hold others accountable, according to an Army release.

[Fired two-star research lab commander charged with sexual assault](#) [Stephen Losey, *Air Force Times*, 10 November 2020]

A charge of sexual assault has been preferred against Maj. Gen. William Cooley, who in January was fired from command of the Air Force Research Laboratory and investigated by the Office of Special Investigations for alleged misconduct. Cooley is accused of making unwanted sexual advances on a civilian woman, who is not a Defense Department employee, while off-duty in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Aug. 12, 2018. If the case proceeds to a court-martial, it would be the first time an Air Force general faced such a trial.

[Marine Corps seeks gag order in case of Virginia Beach corporal whose family says she has PTSD after sexual assault](#) [Katherine Hafner, *The Virginian-Pilot*, (Norfolk, Va.), 10 November 2020]

The Marine Corps is seeking a gag order in the criminal case of a Virginia Beach corporal whose supporters say her actions stem from trauma related to a sexual assault at the hands of a fellow Marine. The Corps is aiming to bar Cpl. Thae Ohu’s attorneys or any other witnesses from speaking with the press. Ohu, 27, an administrative specialist with the Marine Corps Intelligence Schools aboard Dam Neck Naval Base, is being charged with attempted murder, aggravated assault on an intimate partner and a host of other charges after prosecutors say she attacked her then-boyfriend in April. She’s been held at the Navy Consolidated Brig in Chesapeake since June.

[Walter Reed master chief charged with sex crimes](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Navy Times*, 10 November 2020]

A senior enlisted sailor assigned to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Maryland is facing court-martial on several charges involving sexual misconduct, according to legal records obtained by Navy Times. Master Chief Corpsman Gregory F. Fall is charged with a specification under Article 120 for aggravated sexual contact in connection to a June 4, 2019, incident in which he is accused of touching the “breast and buttocks” of another sailor at Walter Reed, and using

“unlawful force” in the process, according to his charge sheet. Fall’s civilian attorney, Antoinette Quinn O’Neill, told Navy Times in an email this week that her client is innocent.

SUICIDE

[Congress passes veteran mental health and suicide prevention bills on eve of Veterans Day](#) [Abbie Bennett, *ConnectingVets.com*, 11 November 2020]

The evening before Veterans Day, the Senate passed more legislation aimed at improving mental health care and services for veterans and troops, sending them to the President’s desk for final approval. The package of bills, the Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care and Treatment (COMPACT) Act includes nine parts intended to help prevent veteran suicides. The latest VA veteran suicide data report from 2019 found that on average, about 17 veterans died by suicide per day in 2017. That number has remained stagnant or worsened in recent years despite increased spending and programs aimed at helping.

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

VETERANS

[Agency Efforts to Provide and Study Prosthetics for Small but Growing Female Veteran Population](#) [GAO.com, 12 November 2020]

Prosthetics for female veterans has been a national research priority for the Veterans Health Administration since 2017. VHA has funded 8 related studies, but officials said recruiting participants is a challenge. Although the female veteran population is growing, it remains small. Women make up just about 3% of the veteran amputee population. Female veterans received other “prosthetics” from VHA—like eyeglasses and wheelchairs—in addition to artificial limbs. Women made up 7.9% of those receiving prosthetic services in FY 2019, and accounted for about \$889 million of the \$15.4 billion cost of prosthetics VHA provided from FYs 2015-19.

[FULL REPORT]

[100-year-old World War II pilot says he still flies every week](#) [Norah O’Donnell, *CBS News*, 11 November 2020]

World War II pilot Harry Moyer says there’s no better place to be on Veterans Day than in the sky. “I don’t want to say it’s ethereal, but it’s very moving to me,” Moyer said. Moyer still flies every week, including on the day he turned 100 years old in October. He may be the oldest active pilot in the world. His family submitted a video to the folks at Guinness World Records as proof—not that Moyer much cares about the record. Moyer started flying in 1942 with the Army Air Corps and served as a combat pilot throughout the war, including a stint with the famed Flying Tigers that defended China from the Japanese. We think it’s amazing he’s still flying but he doesn’t. He said life is about doing what you love and taking risks.

[Helping veterans tell their stories: Retired Green Beret’s storytelling nonprofit hold virtual show to fund new theater](#) [Davis Winkie, *Military Times*, 11 November 2020]

The Heroes Journey, a Tampa, Florida-based nonprofit dedicated to helping veterans creatively tell their stories, is hosting a live-streamed benefit, “Better Ground,” Wednesday to fund the final

renovations for its planned community theater and veterans service center. The Veterans Day event will feature music from veteran groups, intimate storytelling from individual veterans and theatrical performances of scenes from “The Things They Carried,” “All My Sons,” and “Last Out: Elegy of a Green Beret.” The performances feature veteran actors who will explore issues of combat trauma and racism in the military, according to a media release. “Right now, more than ever, we need the combat storytelling of our veterans and military families to honor, connect, and heal our nation,” Scott Mann, the organization’s president, said in a [promotional video](#) for the event. “When you’re in trouble, you have to get to better ground.”

[Thanks or pity? How assumptions about Veterans widen the civil-military gap](#) [Marissa Cruz Lemar, *War on the Rocks*, 11 November 2020] [COMMENTARY]

The texts and notifications start early on Veterans Day. Friends and family send me messages laced with flag emojis and tag me in various patriotic memes on Facebook thanking me for my service. It’s kind, and I always appreciate the thought. But it also feels awkward to be lumped together with all veterans, as if all of our experiences are the same. Every Veterans Day, Americans honor those who have served in our nation’s armed forces. And every year assumptions about veterans reemerge, casting all veterans into a similar mold regarding their motivations and reasons for joining. While this may seem innocuous enough, to make such assumptions only furthers the civil-military divide in American society.

[Veteran Comic Gets Serious About “Mental Hell and Wellness”](#) [James Barber, *Military.com*, 11 November 2020]

[VET Tv](#), the online video channel known for consistently pushing the envelope with its brand of dark and irreverent humor, has taken a break from the usual shenanigans and gotten serious with its new “Mental Health Hell and Wellness” video series. VET Tv is a subscription-only service, but O’Malley and company are making the series available to [stream for free at their website](#). If you’re already a subscriber, you can watch the show on demand in the VET Tv app. Some folks just don’t understand the dark humor that O’Malley’s putting out there, and part of his aim here is to get mental health professionals to co-sign his approach. VET Tv pulls no punches with its approach. The flag-waving, hands-over-heart patriotic crowd may be freaked out by O’Malley’s unvarnished approach to the realities of some military experiences. You’ll know pretty quickly whether VET Tv works for you.

[“War Words” film-adapted play brings veterans’ stories to the screen on Veterans Day](#) [Jared Morgan, *Military Times*, 11 November 2020]

A playwright backed by a national think tank is looking to change the way civilians look at veterans by bridging the divide. The Atlantic Council will host a virtual screening of a film-adapted play featuring veterans’ recollections of their military experiences on Veterans Day. [“Veterans Day 2020”](#) was adapted from the [stage play](#) “War Words,” and will air on Wednesday at 4 p.m. Eastern Time with keynote remarks by Gen. David Petraeus. Organizers hope it will give people who have never served or who may not be acquainted with a veteran the opportunity to hear their stories presented in the prose of the theatre.

[Navy vet celebrates Black vets at North Omaha museum](#) [Steve Liewer, *Omaha World-Herald* (Omaha, Neb.), 8 November 2020]

In time for Veterans Day, curator Eric Ewing set up the Great Plains Black History Museum's military exhibit—the vintage uniforms, the medals, the shadow boxes and folded flags signifying the honorable service of Omaha's African American vets. For Ewing, 58, there is an extra connection to those Omaha men who served their country. Like them, he left Nebraska for a life in the military. He spent 20 years in the Navy, most of it as a hospital corpsman, taking care of the medical needs of sailors in naval hospitals and aboard ships in the Pacific. "I just feel a need to let others know, African Americans have served honorably as well," Ewing said. "Sometimes, it's overlooked."

[Nebraska National Guard vet helped pave way for women in military](#) [Henry Cordes, *Omaha World-Herald* (Omaha, Neb.), 8 November 2020]

Sgt. 1st Class Jenny Bos serves as a truck driving instructor for the Nebraska National Guard, teaching everything from how to properly tie down a load to how to run a convoy operation. Many of her students might be surprised to know their 37-year-old teacher is a combat veteran who earned a Bronze Star with Valor in Iraq. It's not something the modest Bos brings up, either during her part-time Guard work or in her regular job as an elementary school teacher in her adopted home of Columbus.

[1,400 artifacts trace Army lineage back to 1600s at new national museum, opening Vet's Day](#) [Kyle Rempfer, *Army Times*, 7 November 2020]

The 185,000-square-foot [museum](#) at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, opens Nov. 11 with free, timed-entry [tickets](#) available if reserved in advance. The museum, said its director, Tammy Call, traces the U.S. Army's lineage back to the colonial militias that formed in the early 1600s. "We tell the Army's history here through the eyes and voices of soldiers," Call said, pointing to the annotations found inside a Bible carried by one soldier who survived the Bataan Death March. "Those artifacts that have those personal connections to that soldier and tell that story, that's what gives me chills when I walk through."

[A Black Hero in the Jim Crow Navy](#) [Brent Staples, *The New York Times*, 7 November 2020]
[OPINION]

Mess Attendant Doris Miller, known as Dorie, was collecting laundry aboard the battleship U.S.S. West Virginia when the Japanese attacked the American fleet at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. He vaulted to the bridge, where he aided the ship's mortally wounded captain. He fired on Japanese planes with an antiaircraft gun that, as a servant, he had not been trained to use, and pulled men who would otherwise have died from the burning, oil-coated waters of the harbor. He was one of the last sailors to leave the foundering ship. The U.S.S. Doris Miller—scheduled for delivery in 2032—is an unmistakable emblem of racial progress. It attaches the Black messman's name to a class of supercarriers that already honors Presidents Gerald Ford and John Kennedy. It has the dual distinction of being the first carrier named for an enlisted sailor and the first named for an African-American.

[Parade honors 101-year-old Black WWII veteran Romay Davis](#) [Brad Harper, *The Montgomery Advertiser* (Montgomery, Ala.), 4 November 2020]

On Wednesday, a birthday parade made up of city and state officials, volunteers, neighbors and fellow veterans waved to Romay Davis as the 101-year-old Montgomery resident watched, eyes wide over her mask. Davis served in a battalion with a unique challenge during WWII. A shortage of soldiers in the postal unit had led to six-month a backlog of millions of pieces of mail. Once in Europe, she and the other Black women in her unit processed an average of 195,000 pieces of mail each day and cleared that backlog in three months. Army Secretary Mark Esper issued a meritorious unit commendation for her battalion. The document was presented to Davis after the parade and noted the unit's professionalism and dedication to duty, and their impact on "the morale and welfare" of servicemembers across Europe during WWII.

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