

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 2 APRIL 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

[Army changing how sexual harassment is investigated](#) [Scott Maucione, *Federal News Network*, 29 March 2021]

The Army is changing the way sexual harassment is handled within units in response to a blockbuster report that found soldiers did not trust their commanders when it came to assault and harassment on one of the service's largest bases. The [new policy](#) put out by Army Forces Command—which encompasses all active-duty soldiers—takes sexual harassment complaint investigations outside of the brigade where the harassment took place and appoints an investigating officer from another brigade to look into the matter. The action is one of the 70 recommendations made by the Ft. Hood Independent Review Committee, which states, “Investigations of sexual harassment must be handled by a 15-6 Investigating Officer from a different brigade or brigade equivalent than the subject, who are trained by and work closely with a legal advisor to conduct a thorough and complete investigation.”

[DOD Revises Transgender Policies to Align With White House](#) [Terry Moon Cronk, *DOD News*, 31 March 2021]

Today is International Transgender Day of Visibility, and the Defense Department proudly recognizes transgender and gender non-conforming people and their continued struggle for equality, security and dignity, Pentagon Press Secretary John F. Kirby said. The revised policies in these instructions restore the DOD's original 2016 policies regarding transgender service. Specifically, they prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity or an individual's identification as transgender. They also provide a means to access into the military in one's self-identify gender, provided all appropriate standards are met. The policies will be effective in 30 days to give the military services time to update service-level policies and provide guidance to commanders, service members, medical professionals and other communities of practice as appropriate during this period, Kirby added.

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

[Military plans survey on compliance with sexual harassment, assault policies](#) [Christen McCurdy, *United Press International*, 1 April 2021]

A [press release](#) issued Thursday announced that every command, both active and reserve, will conduct a Defense Organizational Climate Survey to identify high-risk installations. The deadline to complete the survey is April 30 for active-duty commands and May 30 for the reserve. The survey coincides with the [20th anniversary of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month](#), which the Department of Defense is observing with the theme “Protecting Our People Protects Our Mission,” said a separate press release from the service. The service is also publicizing its resources for survivors, which include networks Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates and Unit SAPR VAs as well as the 24-hour Department of Defense Safe Helpline.

[SEE ALSO]

CULTURE

[Akim Aliu: “We have to make sure this sport is for everybody”](#) [Ryan Dobney, *BBC Sport*, 28 March 2021]

Akim Aliu is a professional ice hockey player on a mission to change the sport. Being exposed to racism at an early age took its toll on Aliu, and high-profile incidents during his career left him with the view “ice hockey is not for everyone”. “I feel like the game has given me a lot, but it has also blackballed me,” the 31-year-old former National Hockey League player tells BBC Sport. “I didn’t get a lot of opportunities because of the colour of my skin, because of the way I looked. Aliu was born in Nigeria to a Nigerian father and Ukrainian mother. He grew up in Ukraine before the family moved to Canada when he was seven. “I grew up seeing my mom being the only White lady in the village in Africa where I was born and where my dad is from,” he says. “My dad would get strip-searched and beaten up by hooligans in Russia for being Black... at a young age, it takes its toll on you so you start to look at life a little differently.”

[Amanda Gorman used poetry to overcome her speech impediment](#) [Monica Humphries, *Insider*, 30 March 2021]

Amanda Gorman has a superpower, and it’s her voice. While many discovered the 23-year-old’s talent when she recited a poem at President Joe Biden’s inauguration, Gorman has been strengthening her superpower for years. Gorman grew up with a speech impediment that makes “r” words challenging to say. In an interview with CBS This Morning, Gorman opened up about the role poetry played in overcoming her speech impediment. “It gave me the practice and the strength to the point that I could do something like an inaugural poem,” she told CBS This Morning. “At first, what that meant in my poetry was that I would actually erase ‘r’ words from my text, so I wouldn’t have to say them aloud,” she told CBS This Morning.

[Black women are mostly missing from Capitol art. This lawmaker has a suggestion](#) [Chris Cioffi, *Roll Call*, 30 March 2021]

Rosa Parks sits alone among the hundreds of artworks dotting the Capitol. The civil rights icon is the only Black woman currently memorialized in a full-length statue. Boosting representation is an “immediate need,” according to Rep. Yvette D. Clarke, who wants to see another trailblazer installed at the Capitol—Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress.

“Honoring Shirley Chisholm with a statue in the halls of the Capitol does more than memorialize her life. It proves to the millions of Black girls and women in this country that if they achieve, if they strive for greatness, if they better their country and this world, they too may be honored eternally in the United States Capitol,” said Clarke in the statement. Georgia Sen. Raphael Warnock introduced a companion bill in the Senate.

[“Captain Underpants” spin-off pulled for “passive racism”](#) [Mark Kennedy, *The Associated Press*, 29 March 2021]

A graphic novel for children that was a spin-off of the wildly popular “Captain Underpants” series is being pulled from library and book store shelves after its publisher said it “perpetuates passive racism.” The book under scrutiny is 2010’s “The Adventures of Ook and Gluk” by Dav Pilkey, who has apologized, saying it “contains harmful racial stereotypes” and is “wrong and

harmful to my Asian readers.” The book follows about a pair of friends who travel from 500,001 B.C. to 2222, where they meet a martial arts instructor who teaches them kung fu and they learn principles found in Chinese philosophy. Scholastic said it had removed the book from its websites, stopped processing orders for it and sought a return of all inventory. “We will take steps to inform schools and libraries who may still have this title in circulation of our decision to withdraw it from publication,” the publisher said in a [statement](#).

[Eddie Murphy inducted into NAACP Image Awards Hall of Fame](#) [Jonathan Landrum, Jr., *The Associated Press*, 27 March 2021]

Eddie Murphy was inducted into the NAACP Image Awards Hall of Fame at the organization’s show that highlighted works by entertainers and athletes of color. He was presented the award by his longtime friend and “Coming 2 America” co-star Arsenio Hall. “I’ve been making movies for 40 years now ... 40 years. This is the perfect thing to commemorate that and be brought into the hall of fame,” he said. “Thank you very much. I’m very moved.” The hall of fame induction is bestowed on an individual who is viewed as a pioneer in their respective field and whose influence shaped the “profession for generations to come.” Previous inductees include Oprah Winfrey, Stevie Wonder, Spike Lee, Ray Charles and Sidney Poitier. The most recent honorees to be inducted were Cheryl Boone Isaacs and Paris Barclay in 2014.

[Facebook Disputes Claims It Fuels Political Polarization And Extremism](#) [Shannon Bond, *NPR*, 1 April 2021]

Facebook is making changes to give users more choice over what posts they see in their news feeds, as the social media company defends itself from accusations that it fuels extremism and political polarization. The changes, announced Wednesday, include making it easier for people to switch their feeds to a “Most Recent” mode, where the newest posts appear first, and allowing users to pick up to 30 friends or pages to prioritize. Users can now limit who can comment on their posts. Facebook has come under escalating scrutiny over the impact of its platform on society since the Jan. 6th assault on the U.S. Capitol by a pro-Trump mob, which was planned and documented on social media sites including Facebook. Many critics have zeroed in on the role of Facebook’s algorithms, which determine what posts users are shown and what groups and accounts they are recommended to join or follow, and how they may push people toward more inflammatory content.

[Filmmakers Call Out PBS For A Lack Of Diversity, Over-Reliance On Ken Burns](#) [Eric Deggans, *NPR*, 31 March 2021]

PBS executives, suggesting the service may provide an unfair level of support to White creators, facing a “systemic failure to fulfill (its) mandate for a diversity of voices.” Titled “A Letter to PBS From Viewers Like Us,” the missive references Ken Burns, arguably one of PBS’ biggest non-fiction stars and creator of popular projects like Baseball, Jazz, The Civil War and an upcoming six-hour program called Hemingway. Citing data from the filmmaker’s website, it says Burns has created about 211 hours of programming for PBS over 40 years, through an exclusive relationship with the service that will last until at least 2022. Such an arrangement leaves less room for filmmakers of color, who may struggle to gain similar funding or promotional support. And while PBS has created an initiative to elevate newly emerging filmmakers of color, such

initiatives can also create a false narrative that non-White artists are predominantly lacking in experience, the text adds.

[“Fuel up, do more”: Bowen Yang of “SNL” speaks out on anti-Asian hate](#) [Cynthia Silva, NBC News, 29 March 2021]

Bowen Yang used a recent “Saturday Night Live” segment to deliver a powerful message and ask people to “do more” to stop anti-Asian violence. Yang took center stage during the show’s “Weekend Update” segment on Saturday to comment on the wave of violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) during the pandemic. (NBC Universal is the parent company of NBC News and “SNL.”) The comedian, who became the show’s first Asian cast member in 2019, began his monologue by playfully calling out co-anchor Colin Jost for introducing him as an “Asian cast member.” Yang said it’s been difficult for Asians, not only in the last couple weeks but “since forever.”

[High court: Charlottesville can remove Confederate statues](#) [Matthew Barakat and Michael Kunzelman, *The Associated Press*, 1 April 2021]

Virginia’s highest court ruled Thursday that the city of Charlottesville can take down two statues of Confederate generals, including one of Robert E. Lee that became the focus of a violent white nationalist rally in 2017. The state Supreme Court overturned a Circuit Court decision in favor of a group of residents who sued to block the city from taking down the Lee statue and a nearby monument to fellow Gen. Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson. Charlottesville’s city council voted to remove both. White supremacist and neo-Nazi organizers of the August 2017 “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville said they went to the city to defend the statue of Lee. They clashed with counterprotesters before a man plowed his car into a crowd of people, killing a woman. City officials praised the ruling in a statement Thursday and said they plan to redesign the park spaces where the statues are located “in a way that promotes healing and that tells a more complete history of Charlottesville.”

[Hulu to produce, release “1619 Project” documentary series](#) [*The Associated Press*, 1 April 2021]

*Hulu will produce a documentary series based on “[The 1619 Project](#),” stories in *The New York Times* that examined the legacy of slavery in America dating from the arrival of the first slave ship from Africa. The announcement was an outgrowth of a deal announced last summer by the *Times*, Lionsgate and Oprah Winfrey to develop “The 1619 Project” into a portfolio of films, television series and other content. The Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper series, from writer Nikole Hannah-Jones, began appearing on the 400th anniversary of ship’s arrival in the then-British colony of Virginia. “‘The 1619 Project’ is an essential reframing of American history.” Williams said. “Our most cherished ideals and achievements cannot be understood without acknowledging both systemic racism and the contributions of Black Americans. And this isn’t just about the past—Black people are still fighting against both the legacy of this racism and its current incarnation.”*

[Kevin Durant accused of using homophobic, misogynistic slurs in private messages with actor Michael Rapaport](#) [Ben Morse, *CNN*, 31 March 2021]

NBA superstar Kevin Durant has been accused of using homophobic and misogynistic slurs in private messages with Michael Rapaport after the U.S. actor and comedian shared them on social media. Rapaport posted screenshots of the pair's Instagram direct messages on Twitter and Instagram in which Durant appeared to use homophobic, misogynistic and profane language. In the messages, Durant insulted the 51-year-old Rapaport, as well as offering to fight the actor, even asking for his address. Durant appeared to confirm that the messages were real, responding to a Tweet from another user: "Me and mike talk CRAZIER than this on the regular and today he's pissed....My bad mike, damn!!" Durant was previously recognized by Time magazine, which named him one of the world's most influential people. The two-time NBA champ is often remembered for a trophy acceptance speech in which he called his mother the real MVP.

[These Kentucky artists are ridding the world of hate, one tattoo at a time](#) [Kathleen Toner, CNN, 1 April 2021]

The recent attacks on Asian Americans are the latest reminder that prejudice and bigotry remain a serious problem in the United States. But during the past year, many people have also decided to abandon symbols of hate by reaching out to two tattoo artists in Kentucky. Last June, CNN reported that Ryun King and Jeremiah Swift were offering to cover up hate or gang-related tattoos for free. At the time, their newly-launched effort at the Gallery X Art Collective, a tattoo studio in Murray, had received about 30 requests. Today, King estimates they've received several hundred inquiries from far beyond Kentucky. "It's every part of the country that's contacted me—from New York to California. Literally. And people internationally," King said. "Ireland, Canada, Korea. ... I even had a girl call me from South Africa." Their "Cover the Hate" campaign was inspired by the racial justice protests that swept the globe last May after the killing of George Floyd.

DISCRIMINATION

[Arkansas governor signs medical conscience objections law](#) [Andrew DeMillo, *The Associated Press*, 26 March 2021]

Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson on Friday signed into law legislation allowing doctors to refuse to treat someone because of religious or moral objections, a move opponents have said will give providers broad powers to turn away LGBTQ patients and others. The measure says health care workers and institutions have the right to not participate in non-emergency treatments that violate their conscience. The new law won't take effect until late this summer. Opponents of the law, including the Human Rights Campaign and the American Civil Liberties Union, have said it will allow doctors to refuse to offer a host of services for LGBTQ patients. The state Chamber of Commerce also opposed the measure, saying it sends the wrong message about the state.

[The complicated battle over unconscious-bias training](#) [Christine Ro, *BBC News*, 28 March 2021]

Starbucks and Google have been doing it. So have Sephora and Papa John's. What these organisations have in common is that they've all introduced some form of unconscious-bias training, which educates people about the knee-jerk preconceptions they hold and how these beliefs may affect their actions. But while well-intentioned, there's mixed evidence that unconscious-bias training works. If they're not carefully designed, training sessions may become

eye-roll-inducing obligations, and some high-profile organisations have controversially dropped the programmes. But before we throw the baby out with the bathwater, it's important to ask: What, if anything, should replace unconscious-bias training?

[How Native Americans were vaccinated against smallpox, then pushed off their land.](#) [Dana Hedgepeth, *The Washington Post*, 28 March 2021]

More than 180 years ago, the federal government launched the largest effort of its kind in the United States to vaccinate Native Americans against the deadly disease of smallpox. With it ravaging Native American communities in the 1830s, the disease became a widespread public health crisis and threatened to curtail the government's massive effort to force thousands of Native Americans from their lands in the East and push them West to reservations. In 1832, Congress passed legislation—the Indian Vaccination Act—that allowed the federal government to use about \$17,000 to hire doctors to vaccinate Native Americans who were living near White frontier settlements. Many White settlers feared that Indians would spread the disease to them. The act was intended to vaccinate Indians against smallpox but for entirely mercenary reasons, according to Regis Pecos, a member of the Pueblo de Cochiti tribe in New Mexico.

[In AP survey, ADs raise worries about women's college sports](#) [Howard Fendrich and Eddie Pells, *The Associated Press*, 1 April 2021]

To hear many of those in charge of Division I programs tell it, the state of play for women's sports could get worse, not better, under proposals that would put more money in the pockets of some college athletes. Via a new Associated Press survey of athletic directors, and in conversations with ADs and conference commissioners during March Madness, a picture emerged of concern for sports other than the two largest revenue-generators, football and men's basketball. The AP asked 357 ADs a series of online questions shortly before various differences between the men's and women's basketball tournaments were put on full display over the past two weeks, drawing complaints from players and coaches, along with mea culpas from the NCAA. Granted anonymity in exchange for candor, 99 athletic directors participated. The most striking of the results released Thursday: 94% of respondents said it would be somewhat or much more difficult to comply with [Title IX gender equity rules](#) if their school were to compensate athletes in the biggest money-making sports.

[Remote Work Is Leading To More Gender And Racial Harassment, Say Tech Workers](#) [Shannon Bond, *NPR*, 30 March 2021]

Tech workers say they have experienced more harassment based on gender, age and race or ethnicity while working remotely during the pandemic, according to a survey from a nonprofit group that advocates for diversity in Silicon Valley. The increases were highest among women, transgender and nonbinary people, and Asian, Black, Latinx and Indigenous people. For example, more than 1 in 4 respondents said they experienced more gender-based harassment. That figure increased, when race and gender identity were accounted for, to 39% of Asian woman and nonbinary people; 38% of Latinx woman and nonbinary people; and 42% of transgender people. The [survey](#) of nearly 3,000 people around the country was conducted between May and February by Project Include, an advocacy group founded by Ellen Pao. Pao is a tech investor who in 2012 sued her then-employer, the venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins, over gender

discrimination. Pao lost that lawsuit and has since become a leading advocate for diversity in tech.

[Reservist Who Claims He Lost NASA Job for Taking Military Leave Gets Win in Court](#) [Hope Hodge Seck, *Military.com*, 31 March 2021]

A federal appeals court has handed down a win to a commander in the Navy Reserve who claims he was placed on a performance improvement plan and ultimately removed from his NASA position for taking leave to perform his military duties. The Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled March 11 that the Merit Systems Protection Board, an independent agency that evaluates the removal of federal employees, did not correctly evaluate the case of Fernando Santos, who had worked at NASA for 18 years when he was removed from his position in 2018. The court remanded Santos' case, appealing his removal from his job, back to the board for reconsideration.

[A yearslong push to ban hair discrimination is gaining momentum](#) [Candice Norwood, *PBS News*, 30 March 2021]

As a young Black professional, Michigan state Rep. Sarah Anthony said she vividly recalls mentors saying that wearing straightened hair would be better for her career than wearing her natural curls. Her curly hair would be seen as a “distraction,” or would “make the employer uncomfortable,” Anthony recalls being told by other Black women. A long list of similar stories have prompted lawmakers around the country—including Anthony—to introduce legislation aiming to establish legal protections for hair textures and styles tied to racial identity. Versions of this legislation, known as the CROWN Act, have been signed in eight states since 2019 and are gaining attention in other state legislatures. Oregon state Rep. Janelle Bynum, who introduced a CROWN Act bill in her state legislature this year, said one of the biggest challenges is how little lawmakers know about the issue of hair discrimination. “People don’t even realize that White dominant culture has been normalized and has been imposed upon people whose hair texture is different,” Bynum said.

DIVERSITY

[4 Female Navy Officers Make History Together as Commanders of Warships: “You Will See More Women”](#) [Joelle Goldstein, *PEOPLE*, 26 March 2021]

Four female officers are making historic strides for women of color in the Navy—and if you ask them, it certainly won’t be the last time. Commander Jones, Commander Simpson, Commander O’Cañas and Commander Wijnaldum are the trailblazing officers who will lead warships at the same time for the first time in Naval history. The women, who are all based at the Norfolk Naval Station in Norfolk, Virginia, sat down for an interview with Lester Holt that [will air on NBC Nightly News Friday](#), and opened up about how much has changed for women in the service and their hopes for the next generation. “[The Navy] looks different in the fact that as an ensign, I looked around and at that time, there were not many senior female officers that I could necessarily go to for gender-specific questions,” Commander Jones, who joined the Navy in 1999, says in a clip shared exclusively with PEOPLE.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[437th AW conducts all-female flights for Women's History Month](#) [Diana Cossaboom, *Joint Base Charleston Public Affairs*, 27 March 2021]

The 437th Airlift Wing conducted two all-female flights to commemorate Women's History Month at Joint Base Charleston March 15 and 17. The first all-female C-17 GlobeMaster III flight crew conducted an aerial refueling with a KC-135 Stratotanker from the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and carried 20 women assigned to various units across Joint Base Charleston. The second flight included two all-female crews who piloted a two-ship C-17 formation, where they flew to Pope Army Airfield, North Carolina, to conduct an airdrop with 80 female 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers, and an aerial refueling with a KC-135 also from the 171st ARW. "The fact that it is an all-female aircrew in both jets and it's all female jumpers is a huge deal because all of these women have gone through so many hurdles in order to be in their positions, be qualified, and be the tactical air women that they are," said Capt. Alisha Stroble, 16th Airlift Squadron deputy chief of tactics and C-17 pilot. Females make up approximately 20% of the Air Force and 15% of the Army. Of the 20% of females in the Air Force, approximately 1% are pilots.

[Air Force trying to diversify its largely White, male pilot corps with new strategy](#) [Scott Maucione, *Federal News Network*, 30 March 2021]

The Air Force's pilot corps is 93.6% male and 87.6% White; those demographics are grossly different from the 21% of women and at least 25% of the other races that make up the active-duty force. The service recently decided it's time to focus on diversity and inclusion within the pilot corps, and it's released a new strategy to increase the number of women and minorities serving as manned and unmanned aircraft pilots, air battle managers and combat systems officers. "Diversity is a warfighting imperative. Diversity brings us the best talent, the best skill, it gives us the best potential, it gives us the ability to look at the problem from multiple solutions," Lt. Col. Edemumo Oboho, strategist at Air Education and Training Command told Federal News Network. "It helps us avoid our blind spots. The innovative potential with diversity is huge." The strategy focuses on three objectives: Attracting talent from diverse backgrounds, developing and retaining aircrews by harnessing diversity and optimizing diversity through data.

[AFMC releases results of diversity survey](#) [Marisa Alia-Novobilski, *Air Force Materiel Command*, 30 March 2021]

The Air Force Materiel Command has released the results of its initial command-wide diversity and inclusion, [\(D&I\) survey](#), identifying areas of focus and improvement for initiatives across the command. "The survey shows that while we are opening minds to many blind spots that would have previously gone unnoticed, we still have a lot of work to do, as we continue our efforts to become a more diverse and inclusive AFMC," said Gen. Arnold W. Bunch, Jr., AFMC commander. "It is imperative that we get this right. We need to have an environment where every Airman feels accepted, valued and has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. These results will help guide our continued efforts." The intent of the survey was to establish a baseline for D&I perceptions across AFMC, with future assessments planned to monitor progress towards furthering AFMC diversity, equity and inclusion. More than 14,000 military and civilian Airmen responded to this survey, which ran from Nov. 30 through Dec. 21, 2020, with responses representative of personnel at all AFMC centers and installations, and military and civilian pay

plans. Participants provided more than 3,500 comments in response to the open-ended portion of the survey.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Army female leaders of past and present stress importance of mentorship](#) [Joseph Lacdan, *Army News Service*, 1 April 2021]

Anne Macdonald blazed trails for female Soldiers as one of the first women to graduate from West Point and as the first woman to command a battalion in the storied 101st Airborne Division. But she noted one regret she had during her 30-year Army career during a discussion panel Tuesday to recognize Women's History Month. "As I was coming along, I did not take the time to mentor others behind me," said Macdonald, who retired as a brigadier general. "In all honesty, I was trying to make my way forward. But if I had to do anything over, I wish that I had reached out, had extended a hand and let someone know the going is going to be tough, but we can do it together. "I heard it from women who had come behind us at West Point, who had said that first class never reached out. And I'm sorry that I didn't do that. Today, I get to do that."

[The Army Infantry Doesn't Just Need More Women. It Needs More Qualified Women](#) [Capt. Shaina Coss, *Military.com*, 29 March 2021] [OPINION]

Recent attention surrounding the Army Combat Fitness Test, or ACFT, produced a scornful public response shaming the Army into lowering physical standards to accommodate the more than 50% of women who failed to meet the minimum requirements during initial testing. Removing high standards and offering substitutions like the plank pose will increase pass rates among women, leading the Army to falsely conclude that it has achieved gender equality. However, this will not lead to the true advancement of women. While convenient for the current failures, this shortsighted reaction is ultimately degrading to all women, disproportionately harmful to the women in the infantry, and illogical.

[Decades of experience serves as foundation to G-2 leadership dynamic](#) [Devon L. Suits, *Army News Service*, 29 March 2021]

As the Army's lead intelligence officer, Lt. Gen. Laura A. Potter has had her share of assignments as the "first woman" to serve in a given role, she said. "I came into the Army when lots of positions were closed to women," the deputy chief of staff, [G-2](#), said last week. "Each opportunity allowed me to hone my leadership skills, not through the lens of gender, but to meet the requirements and excel in each role." Over her 32-year career, Potter witnessed many changes in support of diversity, equity and inclusion, such as the lifting of restrictions on combat arms positions to give women more opportunities to serve, she said. The service's recent shift to place its people first has also led to modifications to grooming and appearance standards, a gender-neutral minimum standard for the Army Combat Fitness Test that aims to reduce injuries and prepare Soldiers for combat, and an extended timeline to support new mothers, among other changes.

["I Earned This": One Girl's Journey To Becoming An Eagle Scout](#) [Sophia Schmidt, *NPR*, 30 March 2021]

No one around her doubted that 14-year-old Scarlett Helmecki would make it to the rank of Eagle Scout. “She just wanted it, and that’s what you have to have, whether you’re a boy or girl,” Catherine Kaser, one of the founding leaders of the all-girl Scouts BSA Troop 1923, said as Scarlett’s family and fellow troop members gathered Saturday to celebrate her place in history. It’s been just over two years since girls were allowed to join Scouts BSA—formerly known as the Boy Scouts—and earn the program’s top rank of Eagle Scout. Scarlett joined BSA Troop 1923 after it was formed two years ago. It was the first female Scouts BSA troop in Delaware, and along the way Scarlett and her friends endured teasing from male Scouts—and even some belittling comments from adults. Like, ‘Boy Scouts is just for boys,’ or, ‘Well then why can’t boys be in Girl Scouts,’ and, ‘You already have Girl Scouts,’” Scarlett remembered during an interview earlier this year.

[The Marine Corps Has Now Opened Both Its Boot Camps To Women, But Full Equity Remains Elusive](#) [Steve Walsh, NPR, 29 March 2021]

Until this year, the Marines’ other boot camp, Parris Island, South Carolina, was the only one that accepted women. Congress ordered the Marine Corps to fully integrate women into its training battalions at Parris Island by 2025 and at San Diego by 2028. The first class of women at San Diego has gone through pool exercises and scaled obstacles in the confidence course. Soon they will move north to Camp Pendleton, where they will begin rifle training as part of the 13 weeks it takes to become a U.S. Marine. One obstacle for their leaders is keeping these women in the Marines once they prove themselves, and then finding more women like them who want to be a part of the Corps. “It’s a profound transformation,” says Lea Booth, who was a Marine from 2004 to 2009. Another significant disincentive for women considering Marine Corps careers is the specter of sexual assault. The Marines typically lead the services in the number of assault and harassment allegations.

[Meet Captain StarEagle: Space Force Swears In 1st Female Native American Intel Officer](#) [Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com, 1 April 2021]

Space Force just welcomed its first female Native American intelligence officer. Capt. Haida StarEagle, a 17-year-veteran of the Air Force, transferred into the fledgling service earlier this month, according to a news release. She hails from the 36th Intelligence Squadron at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, where she served as a flight commander of training. She will remain with the 36th until her new duty title and station are approved, the release states. Her father, Chief Samuel Little Fox, the shaman of all 13 Long Island tribes, pinned the new occupational badge on StarEagle during her March 12 Space Force induction ceremony at Langley-Eustis. “When I was born, during my naming ceremony, the shaman came back from his vision quest and told my father that I was destined for the stars,” StarEagle, a Brooklyn native, said in the release. “My entire life has been focused toward the stars, and joining the Space Force puts me one step closer to following that dream.”

[Meet the women at forefront of COVID-19 vaccine development](#) [Nora O’Donnell, CBS News, 31 March 2021]

Nita Patel is trying to help end the pandemic. She’s one of the lead vaccine scientists at Novavax, a Maryland biotech company in the final trials of its COVID-19 vaccine. Her team isn’t just led

by a woman, it's almost all women. "They communicate with each other. They get along very well. I never seen them stress out," she said of how the female team works together. Patel isn't alone. Women are leading the effort at Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson and Oxford/AstraZeneca. At the National Institutes of Health, Kizzmekia Corbett helped design the Moderna vaccine. Patel has a theory as to why women are at the forefront: "We have a power inside us. We are very goal oriented, very persistent in achieving that goal." She said there are numerous reasons why science is a good field for women. "There is no boundary. It's unlimited space. It's a lot more fun than people can think."

[New Blacks in Government President Reflects on Her Career During Women's History Month](#)

[Courtney Bubl , GovExec, 26 March 2021]

Shirley Jones became national president of Blacks in Government in January and during this Women's History Month reflected on her over three-decade career in government, barriers she broke and where diversity needs to improve. She has spent her entire career in government at the Governmental Accountability Office. "I am very proud that in February of 2019, I was appointed by the U.S. comptroller general to the Senior Executive Service making me the first African American female in the agency's now 100 year history to be appointed to the position of managing associate general counsel," she said. Jones noted, however, that "despite progress in gender equality, according to [the Office of Personnel Management's] latest federal employment data, the federal Senior Executive Service is still largely male (66.2%) and White (78.8%)."

[Once a war refugee, Soldier rises through Army's ranks](#) [Joseph Lacdan, Army News Service, 29 March 2021]

At Saigon's Tan Son Nhat International Airport, 3-year-old Danielle Ngo sat in a terminal with her mother and infant sister. For hours they had waited for a plane that would take them out of Vietnam. Earlier, Danielle's mother, Ngo Thai-An, learned that the North Vietnamese forces had been closing onto the city. A relative who worked for the U.S. embassy had acquired tickets for them to travel to the U.S. The young mother knew she needed to take her children and leave immediately. The commercial plane never arrived. Thai-An said they likely became one of the last Vietnamese refugees to escape the airport, which served as a military base for South Vietnamese and U.S. aircraft. They and other South Vietnamese climbed into the back of one of the final U.S. military planes to leave the battle-torn nation. Danielle valued her life in the United States, so much that she had decided she would join the U.S. Army at 17 to repay the debt she felt she owed. "I wanted to give something back to America, which was my country now," Danielle said. "[America] had saved me from the war." Today she ranks as the highest active-duty woman of Vietnamese descent in the Army and the second highest only to Maj. Gen. Viet Xuan Luong.

[Pelosi picks first Black American to lead U.S. House security](#) [Reuters, 26 March 2021]

U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi nominated a Washington military commander to serve as chamber's top law enforcement officer, who would be the first Black American to hold that role. The commander, Major General William Walker, of the District of Columbia's National Guard, has criticized the Pentagon for taking hours to approve a request by the U.S. Capitol Police for National Guard troops to help respond to the deadly Jan. 6 attack on Congress by supporters of Donald Trump. As House sergeant-at-arms, Walker would oversee

security and protocol. The appointment is subject to a vote by the House, which is controlled by Pelosi's Democrats. Walker has commanded the D.C. National Guard since 2018 and has 39 years of military experience, including a long stint as a special agent with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

[Pew Research Center: Hispanic, Black workers still underrepresented in STEM](#) [Daniel Uria, *United Press International*, 1 April 2021]

Hispanic and Black workers continue to be underrepresented in the science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, workforce and education trends do not appear to show an increase, according to a [Pew Research Center study](#) released Thursday. The study found that Hispanic workers make up just 8% of all STEM workers in the United States despite accounting for 17% of total workers in the country, while Black workers comprise 11% of all employed adults and 9% of STEM workers, including 5% in engineering and architecture. Conversely, White and Asian workers are overrepresented in the field. The study found that White workers constitute 67% of workers in STEM jobs, surpassing their 63% share of total employment, while Asian workers hold 13% of STEM jobs compared to 6% of employment across all occupations.

[SFS Airmen reflect on women's influence in the Air Force](#) [Airman 1st Class Akeem K. Campbell, *366th Fighter Wing Public Affairs*, 31 March 2021]

"I put on this uniform because I love my country," said Senior Airman Elizabeth Hanson, 366th Security Forces Squadron response leader. "Even though I know it can be dangerous, I chose this job because I can protect people. As a woman, I put aside my gender each day and I see myself as a security forces warrior." Before the 1970s, women were not allowed to participate in any police or security matters in the Air Force. In 1971, for the first time, women were allowed to enter law enforcement specialist training, but only at the Security Police Academy on Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. Though women defenders have come a long way since the 1970s, modern changes are still needed to keep up with their growing numbers in the Air Force. A recent change includes the 366th SFS ordering new female cut plate carriers, to help improve female defender's efficiency in performing their jobs. These types of changes have aided the performance of female defenders in security forces and lessened the gap between gender inequality in their career field.

[SOCOM is committing itself to attracting more women and people of color](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 31 March 2021]

*As the special operations community takes a deep look at itself after 20 years of relentless counterterrorism missions, it's seeking solutions for how it can adapt to the much-discussed "era of great power competition"—and that is going to include more women and people of color, according to a recent report obtained by *Military Times*. There are no hard-and-fast targets laid out in [Special Operations Command's diversity and inclusion plan](#), but at 20 pages long, it's more of a treatise on where the special operations community would like to go. "All of us understand diversity and inclusion are operational imperatives," the plan opens. "This Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for sustained and direct action toward increasing the diversity of our formation and ensuring all our environments, from the team room to the executive conference room, are inclusive." A push to promote more women and people of*

color into leadership, as well as rank-and-file, positions held overwhelmingly by White, male troops—decades after racial and gender integration—is part of a long game.

[Women’s History Month: Fredricksburg Native Exemplifies Equal Rights As A Woman In The Workplace](#) [Sgt. Kristiana Montanez, *Marine Corps Base Quantico Public Affairs*, 31 March 2021]

Fifty years ago, Jean Stanfield, a 77 year-old, retired administrative supervisor and native of Fredericksburg, Virginia, and her husband, Allen Stanfield, purchased a quaint home nestled in a quiet cul-de-sac in the Fredericksburg suburbs. “When I was growing up, I always told my dad I wanted to join the military,” explained Stanfield. “He said, ‘No, I don’t want you to do that. “So I said, ‘If I can’t join, I’m going to work for them.’” Stanfield said she has always had respect for the United States military and what it stands for. Stanfield applied for a job to work as a civilian in the Operating Management Services Division of Naval Hospital Quantico in 1969. She was hired and started working not long after. Stanfield, a woman in charge of a division of men, would often lead several administrative meetings weekly. Before any conversation, she would always do her research, so she knew what she was talking about. “As a female in a man’s world you had to be a little bit forceful,” Stanfield said. “I had to be assertive. I had to earn my respect. I was never trying to be bossy either. “I’ve always believed in equal job, equal pay.”

EXTREMISM

[“Be aware”: The Pentagon’s target list for extremist infiltrators—right and left](#) [Betsy Woodruff Swan and Bryan Bender, *POLITICO*, 27 March 2021]

Flags from the left-wing Antifa movement. Depictions of Pepe the Frog, the cartoon character that’s been misappropriated by racist groups. Iconography from the far-right Proud Boys, including the phrase “stand back and stand by” from former President Donald Trump. They are all signs that extremists could be infiltrating the military, according to internal training materials that offer a more detailed view into the array of radical groups and ideologies the Pentagon is trying to keep out of the ranks. “There are members of the [Department of Defense] who belong to extremist groups or actively participate in efforts to further extremist ideologies,” states a 17-page briefing obtained by POLITICO that was compiled by the DOD Insider Threat Management and Analysis Center, which is part of the [Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency](#). “Be aware of symbols of far right, far left, Islamist or single issue ideologies,” it warns, stressing that members of the military and civilian personnel have “a duty and responsibility” to report extremist behavior or activity.

[Civilian employee who allegedly advocated for “civil war” banned from Air Force base](#) [Rachel S. Cohen, *Air Force Times*, 29 March 2021]

An Air Force civilian employee who allegedly threatened to take part in overthrowing the government was barred from his workplace and may face further repercussions, a service spokesman confirmed March 26. The unnamed man, who the Air Force said claims to be a member of the far-right Proud Boys, is assigned to an Air Force Materiel Command installation. “The employee is currently barred from entering the installation where he is employed for supporting violent behavior against the U.S. government,” command spokesperson Derek

Kaufman told Air Force Times. Kaufman declined to say whether the Air Force has launched a formal investigation into his conduct or if the person is still employed. “In order to protect the employee’s privacy as well as the integrity of the administrative process associated with possible employment actions, we are not naming the installation at this time,” he said.

[Extremism Stand Downs Focus on Oath, Not Data Collection](#) [C. Todd Lopez, *DOD News*, 30 March 2021]

Across the Defense Department, in units large and small, commanders and leaders held stand downs to address extremism in the ranks. The direction for those stand downs came in early February from Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III. The overall goal of the 60-day stand down has not been about collecting information from the force, but rather, to reiterate to the force something they all heard the first day of their military or civilian service: the commitment they made to the U.S. military, Pentagon Press Secretary John F. Kirby said during a briefing Tuesday, “It was meant to do two things: to reinforce our values and, specifically, the importance of the oath that everyone takes here to the Constitution and what that oath requires of you,” Kirby told reporters. “There are active verbs in that oath that matter. And it was a chance to revisit what we’ve all promised to do, and what we’ve all promised to serve.”

[The military doesn’t even know how bad its extremism problem is](#) [Daniel Milton, Andrew Mines and Angelina Maleska, *The Washington Post*, 29 March 2021]

In the wake of the attack [January 6th, 2021], it seemed to some that the military community was stumped for solutions and unable to size the problem of extremism among its own. While the military-wide stand-down issued by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was undoubtedly a step in the right direction, it will take more time, effort and ingenuity to develop both a deeper understanding and a coherent strategy toward combating extremism in the largest workforce in the world. The problem of extremism in the military community, which we define as including both current and former military personnel, has been around for decades, but the events of Jan. 6 provide a useful snapshot of what it looks like today. Our review of the almost 330 Capitol Hill cases being prosecuted in federal jurisdiction turned up 40 alleged perpetrators with military experience—about 12 percent. This is a higher proportion than the 7 percent share of people in the general population with military experience, although not as high as some early estimates suggested.

[The military has long had an extremism problem. What will it do now to finally solve it?](#) [Ashley Fantz, *CNN*, 31 March 2021]

How many service members harbor extremist views is unknown—the Defense Department has never kept data on the problem. But the January 6 siege on the U.S. Capitol, in which at least 33 current and former service members have been charged, has reignited concerns at the top echelons of the Pentagon. Lloyd Austin, the new secretary of defense and the first Black person to hold the post, considers the insurrection a “wake-up call,” for the military, Pentagon press secretary John Kirby told CNN. “What’s vexing about this is we don’t have a great sense of the scope of the problem,” Kirby said. “Many of these people ... work very hard to conceal their beliefs. We can’t be the thought police.” Several years into the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, as the

need for recruits rose, Pentagon researchers bluntly concluded that the military had a ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’ policy pertaining to extremism.”

[Philly Proud Boys president Zach Rehl denies inciting Capitol riot as he fights for pretrial release](#)

[Jeremy Roebuck, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 March 2021]

A federal judge ordered Philadelphia Proud Boys president Zach Rehl released on house arrest but immediately stayed that decision on Friday, the same day an appellate court issued more stringent requirements for prosecutors seeking to keep Capitol riot defendants like him behind bars while they await trial. Though he ultimately rejected prosecutors’ arguments, the stay he issued means that Rehl—one of the most visible Proud Boys leaders on the East Coast and one of four charged with conspiring to instigate the Jan. 6 assault—will remain in custody for now pending a hearing scheduled for Thursday in Washington. Rehl’s attorney, Shaka M. Johnson, dismissed government claims that his client played a leading role in coordinating the attack on the Capitol or that he poses an ongoing threat that should keep him in custody until trial. “He had some opinions. He let those opinions be known,” Johnson argued in court Friday. “But nothing that he said was meant to incite, infuriate or fuel what happened Jan. 6.”

[REPRINT]

[U.S. commands in Japan so far aren’t revealing much about ongoing extremism training](#) [Erica Earl, *Stars and Stripes*, 26 March 2021]

*U.S. military authorities at bases in Japan are mostly tight-lipped about what the rank-and-file are saying, if anything, during mandatory training sessions on extremism that must be completed by April 6. The Pentagon defines extremism as advocacy for a supremacist doctrine or ideology that promotes racism, discrimination or depriving people of rights based on their race, creed, color, sex, religion, ethnicity or national origin. Spokespeople at Kadena Air Base on Okinawa confirmed that extremism training has begun; however, they were unable to get their responses to *Stars and Stripes*’ queries about the details of those discussions cleared from higher headquarters after several weeks. Bases that were willing to share more about their training said they are trying to determine how to make the stand-down as productive as possible rather than just a “check the box” event.*

[What it’s really like inside one of the military’s “extremism stand-downs”](#) [Haley Britzky, *Task & Purpose*, 31 March 2021]

*It only took a few months of being in the Army before one young Black soldier noticed racism in her unit. She had just reported to her very first assignment after completing Advanced Individual Training. It was late on a Friday when she arrived at her installation and aside from what room to report to in the barracks, she didn’t have any other information—including what she needed to do next or where she could find the dining facility. So she dumped her bags in her room and decided to ask the soldier next door for help. “She wanted to ask where she could get some chow, so she knocked on the room next door. The soldier opened the door and hanging right there on the back wall, in full view of the open door, was a White power flag,” a senior Army official said at the Pentagon on Friday. *Task & Purpose* was invited to listen in on Friday’s conversation under the condition that participants be kept anonymous so they could speak freely and honestly about their experiences.*

HUMAN RELATIONS

[Want To Listen Better? Turn Down Your Thoughts And Tune In To Others](#) [Julia Furlan, NPR, 30 March 2021]

Listening is more than just being physically present when another person is talking. Anyone who has deployed a disengaged “mhhh” while their partner asks about dinner or a kid breaks down the difference between a brontosaurus and a triceratops knows this well. But listening—not just hearing—means a lot more than that. And dedicating yourself to actively listening can be radical and transformative.

[What the Navy’s War on Sleep Deprivation Teaches Us about Cultural Change](#) [Elizabeth Howe, Defense One, 24 March 2021]

The Navy says it has successfully shifted its surface warfare officers’ culture of sleep deprivation, leading to healthier sailors and fewer aviation mishaps. As Defense Department leaders attempt to foment larger-scale culture shifts like those around sexual harassment and mental health, what pointers can they take from the fleet? Within SWO culture, sleep deprivation was a point of pride, Adm. William Lescher, vice chief of naval operations, told the House Armed Services Committee during a hearing Tuesday. “I as an aviator would get up and have my crew rest and make sure I had a circadian rhythm before I would fly,” said Lescher, a Navy helicopter pilot. “My teammates across the passageway did not have the same discipline, and there were times when, in the SWO culture, it was a point of pride to operate sleep-deprived.” Last year, [Vice Adm.] Kitchener, who commands Naval Surface Forces, implemented the [comprehensive crew endurance management policy](#). The instruction requires ships to alter sailor watch schedules in order to align with the body’s natural circadian rhythms.

[Why ambiverts are better leaders](#) [Bryan Lifkin, BBC News, 22 March 2021]

It’s like asking someone if they’re a cat person or a dog person—so basic, almost tribal: are you an extrovert or an introvert? Each of these identities has its own strengths and weaknesses, yet it seems there’s constant debate about which it is better to be. Some say the internet has a “love affair” with introverts, and that being an introvert is, at long last, cool, particularly during the pandemic. That’s likely a reaction to a culture that has long seemed to celebrate and reward extroverts, especially in many Western countries and particularly in the workforce, where they’re able to use their natural people skills. Complicating things further, some research has shown that introverts can outshine extroverts as leaders, despite the fact that the confident demeanour of an extrovert fits many people’s image of a typical CEO. So, which is it? Who has more of an edge, and who’s more successful at work: bubbly, outgoing workers; or reserved, restrained ones? The answer, it turns out, is those who can be both: the chameleon-like ambivert.

MISCELLANEOUS

[Almost half of working military spouses lost jobs during the coronavirus pandemic, study finds](#) [Rose L. Thayer, Stars and Stripes, 31 March 2021]

More than 40% of working military spouses reported losing their jobs during the height of the coronavirus pandemic, impacting a population that already faced an unemployment rate six times

higher than the national average, according to an annual survey. “This has been a devastating period for military spouse employment,” said Kathy Roth-Douquet, CEO and board president of Blue Star Families, a nonprofit that conducts research and advocates on behalf of military families. The group’s [report](#) on its annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey released Tuesday found that during the pandemic about 42% of working spouses reported they lost their jobs, with the most common reason being a furlough or layoff. The pre-pandemic unemployment rate for military spouses was about 24%, and the civilian unemployment rate was 3.5% in February 2020, the month before coronavirus began shutting down America, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[The Dutch went first in 2001; who has same-sex marriage now?](#) [David Crary and Mike Corder, *The Associated Press*, 1 April 2021]

Twenty years ago, just after the stroke of midnight on April 1, the mayor of Amsterdam married four couples in City Hall as the Netherlands became the first country in the world with legalized same-sex marriages. “There are two reasons to rejoice,” Mayor Job Cohen told the newlyweds before pink champagne and pink cake were served. “You are celebrating your marriage, and you are also celebrating your right to be married.” Same-sex marriage is now legal in 28 countries worldwide, as well as the self-governing island of Taiwan. That includes most of Western Europe. Yet its spread has been uneven—Taiwan is the only place in Asia to take the step; South Africa is the only African country to do so.

[Nearly Half of DOD Employees Got More Productive When They Started Teleworking](#) [Stephen Losey, *Military.com*, 1 April 2021]

The Defense Department’s abrupt and rocky shift to telework amid the coronavirus pandemic had an unexpected benefit: It did away with pointless meetings, office distractions and tiring commutes that sapped employees’ and troops’ productivity. The Pentagon’s inspector general said in a [report released](#) Thursday that 47% of respondents to a survey on teleworking practices reported that their productivity increased while working from home during the pandemic. Another 41% felt they were about as productive while teleworking as they were in the office, and nearly 12% felt their productivity slipped.

[Supporting LGBTQ+ Service Members: Reproductive Health and Services](#) [Maggie Baisley, Ph.D., *Psychological Health Center of Excellence*, 24 March 2021]

With the repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy in 2011 and the marriage equality Supreme Court decision in 2015, same-sex couples and LGBTQ families in the military can now openly access services to become pregnant. Accessing specialty services in the military can be a challenge, particularly at remote locations or when primary care physicians are not knowledgeable about the process. Behavioral Health Consultants (BHCs) and other mental health professionals in primary care have a unique opportunity to advocate for the reproductive health needs of LGBTQ families and provide education to primary care providers and leaders. Mental health providers also can anticipate and begin to address some of the added pressures LGBTQ individuals may experience navigating this system. This knowledge and cultural competence will improve readiness for the individual service member and their family and by proxy, the unit.

[Survey: Half of Black and Latina Women on the Brink of Poverty](#) [Brent Woodie, *Route Fifty*, 29 March 2021]

In the past year, around half of Latina and Black women struggled to pay for basic necessities such as rent and child care, according to [research](#) by LeanIn.org and SurveyMonkey. Conducted in February, the poll was highlighted last week on Women’s Equal Pay Day, which marks how far into the year it takes women, on average, to earn what men did the previous year. In comparison, Latina and Black women are two times as likely as White men to say they have barely enough to pay for food, housing for or child care in the past year. As well, roughly 20% of Black and Latina women surveyed said the pandemic has had a “devastating” impact on their finances, with only 9% of White men and 12% of White women reporting the same sentiment.

[Switzerland’s female soldiers can finally stop wearing men’s underwear](#) [Jack Guy and Martin Goillandeu, *CNN*, 31 March 2021]

For the first time ever, the Swiss army is going to give its female recruits women’s underwear, as the force looks to attract more women to its ranks. At present, female soldiers are issued with men’s underwear, but two different sets of women’s undergarments, for warmer and colder weather, will be tested during a trial starting next month, Kaj-Gunnar Sievert, spokesman for Armasuisse, the Swiss armed forces’ procurement organization, said Wednesday. Armasuisse told CNN in a statement that “previous army equipment and uniforms were too little or not at all geared to the specific needs of women.” the underwear trial is part of a wider update of military uniforms, which were developed and designed in the 1980s, according to Armasuisse.

MISCONDUCT

[Air Force commander is fired for fraternization](#) [Caitlin M. Kenney, *Stars and Stripes*, 1 April 2021]

The commander of a South Carolina-based airlift unit was fired Thursday following an investigation into relationships he had that were deemed inappropriate, according to the Air Force. Col. Jaron Roux was found to have “engaged in unprofessional relationships and fraternization,” according to a statement by the 18th Air Force. He is the commander of the 437th Airlift Wing at Joint Base Charleston. Roux was fired by Maj. Gen. Kenneth Bibb Jr., the commander of the 18th Air Force, due to a “lack of confidence in his ability to command” after the allegations were substantiated, according to the statement. Roux has been reassigned to the headquarters of Air Mobility Command at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., which is about 24 miles east of St. Louis, Mo. The vice commander of the wing, Col. Christopher Robinson, is now serving as the interim commander.

[Fort Hood-based brigade commander under investigation after allegations of toxic leadership, flouting coronavirus rules](#) [John Vandiver, *Stars and Stripes*, 29 March 2021]

A Fort Hood brigade commander is under investigation after allegations of toxic leadership and violating coronavirus quarantine rules, even as hundreds of his troops contracted the illness soon after his unit’s arrival in Germany for a nine-month mission. Col. Michael Schoenfeldt led the 1st Armored Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, until he departed Germany for Texas in February because of unspecified health reasons, division officials said. He now faces numerous allegations

by subordinate officers related to what they described as a bullying leadership style. Soldiers in the 1st Armored Brigade, which began arriving in Germany in November, said the toxic climate in their unit continued well after the findings of widespread dysfunction were reported to Congress. “This is the worst I’ve been treated. That’s the bottom line,” said one brigade officer under condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation. “I’ve dealt with some hard leaders before, but this was toxic through and through.”

[SOCOM Investigating New Diversity Chief’s Posts, Including One Comparing Trump to Hitler](#) [Stephen Losey, *Military.com*, 29 March 2021]

U.S. Special Operations Command is investigating its new chief of diversity and inclusion over social media posts criticizing police and former President Donald Trump, officials confirmed Monday. SOCOM welcomed Richard Torres-Estrada in a tweet Thursday. But within days, critics were roasting Torres-Estrada for some of his public Facebook posts, particularly one last summer that implicitly compared President Trump to Adolf Hitler. In response to a Military.com inquiry, SOCOM spokesman Ken McGraw said in an email, “USSOCOM is aware of the situation, and the command has initiated an investigation.” Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby told reporters Monday that SOCOM commander Gen. Richard Clarke informed Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin about the investigation. Kirby said Austin supports SOCOM’s decision to look further into the posts and appreciated being apprised of the situation.

RACISM

[A “History of Exclusion, of Erasure, of Invisibility.” Why the Asian-American Story Is Missing From Many U.S. Classrooms](#) [Olivia B. Waxman, *TIME*, 30 March 2021]

On the morning of March 17, Liz Kleinrock contemplated calling out of work. The shootings at three Atlanta-area spas had happened the night before, leaving eight dead including six women of Asian descent, and Kleinrock, a 33-year-old teacher in Washington, D.C., who is Asian-American, felt the news weighing on her heavily. But instead of missing work, she changed up her lesson plan. She introduced her sixth graders over Zoom to poems written by people of Japanese ancestry incarcerated during World War II. Her lesson included “My Plea,” printed in 1945 by a young person named Mary Matsuzawa who was held at the Gila River Relocation Center in Arizona: “I pray that someday every race / May stand on equal plane / And prejudice will find no dwelling place / In a peace that all may gain.” Kleinrock was not the only educator rushing to fill that gap. On March 19, Katie Li, 37, the Boston Public Schools Ethnic Studies coordinator, described a “panic” among higher-ups trying to put out statements and provide resources in the wake of the shootings, but not knowing how to make sense of what happened in the Atlanta area themselves.

[“How about we call you Fred?”: Microaggressions against my Asian name](#) [Kuan-lin F. Liu, *CNN*, 30 March 2021] [OPINION]

For many of us Asians living in the West, our name is a tricky subject that often makes us feel self-conscious and embarrassed when people try to pronounce it. Growing up attending American international schools around the world, I got used to teachers struggling with my name. There was always the awkward moment on the first day of school during attendance check

when a new teacher got to my name on their student list and had to pause before reading it out loud with hesitation.

[How an Attack on a Black WWII Veteran Jump-Started the Civil Rights Movement](#) [James Butler, *Military.com*, 29 March 2021]

U.S. Army Sgt. Isaac Woodard was traveling home after the war in 1946 when he wanted to relieve himself at a rest stop. The driver at first refused to let him off the bus and later called the cops. A local South Carolina chief of police viciously beat Woodard and caused him to go blind. The PBS American Experience documentary series examines the Woodard story and its fallout in “[The Blinding of Isaac Woodard](#),” a two-hour film set to premiere on Tuesday, March 30, at 9 p.m. ET. As with all PBS programming, make sure to check local listings. The program also will stream on PBS.org and in the PBS Video App. It’s important to note that Woodard, 26 at the time, had just been discharged from Fort Gordon in Augusta, Georgia, and was wearing his Army uniform when the attack occurred. Woodard and thousands of men like him had put their lives on the line for freedom and were returning to a country where many didn’t want Black soldiers to enjoy all the privileges of service.

[Justice Department to review how best to fight hate crimes](#) [Michael Balsamo, *The Associated Press*, 30 March 2021]

Attorney General Merrick Garland on Tuesday ordered a review of how the Justice Department can best deploy its resources to combat hate crimes during a surge in incidents targeting Asian Americans. Garland issued a department-wide memo announcing the 30-day review, citing the “recent rise in hate crimes and hate incidents, particularly the disturbing trend in reports of violence against members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community since the start of the pandemic.” The memo comes as a number of police departments across the U.S. are reporting an uptick in hate crimes and attacks on Asian Americans and as lawmakers and community leaders have been increasingly outspoken about the need for the federal government to do more to combat hate crimes.

[Korean groups rally on the Mall to decry racism after deadly attacks in Atlanta](#) [Ian Duncan, *The Washington Post*, 27 March 2021]

Members of the area’s Korean community laid white chrysanthemums near the foot of the Lincoln Memorial on Saturday to honor the victims of the Atlanta shooting rampage, and picked up protest signs to rally on the Mall against racism. “We should not be intimidated about speaking out,” said Paula Park, the president of the Korean American Community Association of Greater Washington. “By joining and speaking out together, we can stop tragedies like this from happening in the future.” The white chrysanthemum is a symbol of mourning in Korean culture, and the rally—attended by the son of Suncha Kim, one of the victims—was in part a somber vigil after the shootings. But there were flashes of anger and calls for solidarity, too. The organizers of the rally said the region’s Korean community has rarely spoken up and is now seeking to become more visible in the face of the shootings and other attacks that have targeted the elderly.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Man accused of assaulting Asian vet charged with hate crime](#) [*The Associated Press*, 27 March 2021]

A 53-year-old man accused of using racist slurs while attacking an Asian American man in San Francisco is facing felony assault and hate crime charges. Victor Humberto Brown was initially booked on misdemeanor counts, but prosecutors recently elevated the case to a felony, the San Francisco Chronicle reported. In a brief court appearance Friday, he said he has post-traumatic stress disorder. Ron Tuason, an Army veteran of Filipino, Chinese and Spanish descent, told the newspaper he was at a bus stop in the city's Ingleside neighborhood on March 13 when Brown approached him, yelling "Get out of my country" before using a racial slur meant to denigrate Asian people. Tuason said Brown also said, "It's because of you there's a problem here." Tuason, 56, said he believes Brown was referring to the coronavirus. Tuason said Brown punched him multiple times, knocking him to the ground.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Prejudice against Asian Americans is real and it's ugly](#) [Eun Kyung Kim, *Roll Call*, 29 March 2021] [OPINION]

"Got a green card bucko?" "When you finally go back to your country..." "I do not consider myself a xenophobe; as a matter of fact, I was engaged to an Asian girl for three and a half years ..." Those lines are from just three of dozens of emails I received in 2003 after starting a new job as a reporter who covered immigrants and refugees. These people reacted to stories I wrote, but they attacked me personally because of my foreign-sounding name. I remember thinking at the time: I should save these emails. I can show them to people who ask: People don't really say those things to you, do they? I wish I could have saved some of the misogynist, racist and occasionally threatening 1 a.m. voicemails I received, too, in those days before the newsroom phones had caller ID. Every time it happens, society tells us we're overreacting. And this is why, when several friends and loved ones reached out to me following the Atlanta shootings, I started unloading on them: What happened within the last few weeks, or within the last year, is not new. This has gone on my entire life. Any Asian will tell you the same.

[San Francisco Man Who Threatened Asian Woman In Bakery Arrested For Hate Crime](#) [Vanessa Romo, *NPR*, 31 March 2021]

San Francisco police on Tuesday arrested a 45-year-old man suspected of threatening and stalking an Asian woman working at a bakery store on at least two occasions. Darrell Hunter was taken into custody without incident, officials said in a statement that called the alleged actions a hate crime. He has been booked at San Francisco County Jail on three counts of criminal threats, two counts of burglary, stalking, three hate crime enhancements and a probation violation. The victim, a 42-year-old Asian woman whose name has not been released, first called police on Sunday when she says Hunter entered the store threatening to shoot Chinese people. According to her report, it was the third day in a row that Hunter had been in the shop and caused a disruption. But by the time officers responded to the call, the man had fled.

[Survey: 22% of Americans Have Experienced a Hate Crime](#) [Brent Woodie, *Route Fifty*, 1 April 2021]

A [report from researchers at AAPI Data](#) shows that 22% of more than 16,000 people surveyed said they had been victims of a hate crime, meaning were verbally or physically abused or that their property was damaged because of their race or ethnicity. However, some groups experienced hate crimes disproportionately: 34% of Black and 34% of multiracial respondents said they were victims of hate crimes, while Asian Americans (27%), Latinx (27%), Native Americans (25%) and Pacific Islanders (24%) experienced hate crimes at similar rates. Only 17% of Whites surveyed said they had been the victim of a hate crime. In the survey, when asked if people have acted if they were afraid of you, nearly half of Black respondents said yes, followed by Pacific Islanders (38%), multiracial (30%), Native Americans (29%), Latinx (24%), Asian Americans (18%) and Whites (15%).

[Video shows vicious attack of Asian American woman in NYC](#) [Michael R. Sisak and Karen Matthews, *The Associated Press*, 30 March 2021]

A vicious attack on an Asian American woman near New York City's Times Square is drawing widespread condemnation and raising alarms about the failure of bystanders to intervene amid a rash of anti-Asian violence across the U.S. A lone assailant was seen on surveillance video Monday kicking the 65-year-old woman in the stomach, knocking her to the ground and stomping on her face, all as police say he shouted anti-Asian slurs at her. Two workers inside the building who appeared to be security guards were seen on the video witnessing the attack but failing to come to the woman's aid. Their union said they called for help immediately. The attacker was able to casually walk away while onlookers watched, the video showed.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[White House announces initiatives to address anti-Asian violence](#) [Lauren Egan, *NBC News*, 30 March 2021]

The White House announced initiatives Tuesday to address anti-Asian violence amid new attention to the rise of attacks against Asian Americans after six women of Asian descent were killed in a shooting this month in the Atlanta area. President Joe Biden will reinstate and expand the scope of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, the White House said. The Department of Health and Human Services will also provide \$49.5 million to programs helping AAPI survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and the National Science Foundation will spend \$33 million to study bias and xenophobia. The Justice Department will also establish a cross-agency initiative to respond to anti-Asian violence that will include an online tool to better study and share data about national hate crimes statistics, as well as new training for state and local law enforcement agencies to promote accurate reporting of hate crimes.

RELIGION

[Alabama Senate committee deadlocks on bill to lift K-12 yoga ban](#) [Bryan Lyman, *The Montgomery Advertiser*, (Montgomery, Ala.), 31 March 2021]

A 28-year ban on yoga in Alabama's public schools may be in place a little longer. The Senate Judiciary Committee Wednesday deadlocked on legislation from Rep. Jeremy Gray, D-Opelika, that would lift the 1993 prohibition after testimony from Christian conservatives, including

representatives of former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore's Foundation for Moral Law, who claimed it would lead to proselytizing in public schools by followers of Hinduism. "Yoga is a very big part of practicing Hindu religion," said Becky Gerritson, a longtime conservative activist based out of Wetumpka. "If this bill passes, then instructors will be able to come into classrooms as young as kindergarten and bring these children through guided imagery, which is a spiritual exercise, and it's outside their parents view, and we just believe that this is not appropriate." "I've been doing yoga probably for 10 years now," Gray said. "I've taught classes for five years, and I can tell you I still go to a Baptist Church every Sunday."

[Dozens of LGBTQ students at Christian colleges sue the U.S. Education Dept., hoping to pressure Equality Act negotiations](#) [Michelle Boorstein, *The Washington Post*, 30 March 2021] Elizabeth Hunter says she became suicidal after Bob Jones University administrators grilled the former student about her sexuality for tweeting "happy Pride" and writing a book with lesbian characters. She was fined, sent to anti-gay counseling and removed from her job at the campus TV station. Veronica Penales says she's told officials at Baylor University, where she is a sophomore, that people leave anti-gay notes on her door, but they don't investigate. Lucas Wilson said he graduated from Liberty University with "a profound sense of shame" after being encouraged to go to conversion therapy. The three are among 33 current and past students at federally funded Christian colleges and universities [cited in a federal lawsuit](#) filed Monday against the U.S. Department of Education. The suit says the religious exemption the schools are given that allow them to have discriminatory policies is unconstitutional because they receive government funding. The class-action suit, filed by the nonprofit Religious Exemption Accountability Project, references 25 schools across the country.

[Gallup: Fewer than half of Americans belong to a church or other house of worship](#) [Bob Smietana, *Religious News Service*, 29 March 2021]

Ask Americans if they believe in God and most will say yes. But a growing number have lost faith in organized religion. For the first time since the late 1930s, fewer than half of Americans say they belong to a church, synagogue or mosque, according to a new report from Gallup. Forty-seven percent of Americans now say they belong to a house of worship, down from 70% in the mid-1990s and 50% in 2019. The decline is part of a continued drop in membership over the past 20 years, according to Gallup data. The polling giant has been measuring church membership since 1937 when nearly three-quarters of the population (73%) reported membership in a house of worship. For much of that time, membership remained at about 70% but began to decline after 1999. By the late 2000s, membership had dropped to about 62% and has continued to fall.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Holy days arrive for the faithful as pandemic eases in U.S.](#) [David Crary and Mariam Fam, *The Associated Press*, 31 March 2021]

For Christians across the United States, Easter services on Sunday will reflect an extra measure of joy as the nation experiences rising optimism after a year of pandemic. Even if still observing restrictions, many churches may draw the largest numbers of in-person worshippers in months. It's a season of major holy days for other faiths as well, occurring in a brighter mood than a year ago. Jews are observing Passover this week, and Muslims will enter the holy month of Ramadan

in about two weeks. The Rev. Sarah Wilson said that during the past year, the congregation has endured “fear, exhaustion, change, confusion, irritation, disappointment, doubt.” Ramadan, a time for fasting and worship, is typically centered on togetherness as Muslims congregate for prayers and iftars, or evening meals to break the daily fast. Salima Suswell, founder and executive director of the Philadelphia Ramadan & Eid Fund, said it is partnering with mosques to provide “grab-and-go” iftars three days a week.

[Indians gather for Holi celebrations as virus cases surge](#) [Sheikh Saaliq, *The Associated Press*, 29 March 2021]

Hindus threw colored powder and sprayed water in massive Holi celebrations Monday despite many Indian states restricting gatherings to try to contain a coronavirus resurgence rippling across the country. Holi marks the advent of spring and is widely celebrated throughout Hindu-majority India. Most years, millions of people throw colored powder at each other in outdoor celebrations. But for the second consecutive year, people were encouraged to stay at home to avoid turning the festivities into superspreader events amid the latest virus surge. India’s confirmed infections have exceeded 60,000 daily over the past week from a low of about 10,000 in February. On Monday, the health ministry reported 68,020 new cases, the sharpest daily rise since October last year. It took the nationwide tally to more than 12 million.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Colorado Bill Would Give Rape, Sexual Assault Survivors Evidence Updates](#) [Kate Elizabeth Queram, *Route Fifty*, 29 March 2021]

Survivors of rape and sexual assault could receive updates on the status of their evidence collection kits under a proposal making its way through the Colorado General Assembly. “What I’ve found in my research is that this action is done by some detectives at some police department and not at others, leaving many survivors having to chase down their results,” Ingarfield said last week in a hearing before the Colorado House Judiciary Committee. “This is a burden they should not have to bear.” The [bill](#), approved unanimously by the committee, would give survivors the option to receive updates on the status of their test kits, including when: the evidence is submitted for testing; when the test results are received; if the kit contained a DNA sample; and whether that DNA sample matched a profile in a state or federal database.

[Even Staying Silent Doesn’t Always Spare Sexual Assault Victims from Retaliation, Study Finds](#) [Stephen Losey, *Military.com*, 30 March 2021]

Perceived retaliation against service members who are victims of sexual assault is rampant in the military, a [new study from Rand Corp.](#) found—even against those who don’t officially report their assault. For the study released Monday, Rand analyzed data collected in 2014 on sexual assaults that occurred in the military, including examining the experiences of those who did not report their assaults or filed only an unreported claim. The data showed that about 54% of military women who had been sexually assaulted and told either a mandated reporter—someone who is legally obligated to ensure a report is filed when they know of an incident, such as someone in the victim’s chain of command or military law enforcement—or filed an unrestricted report had experienced either social retaliation, professional retaliation or a combination of the two.

[Fort Sill military instructors suspended after a soldier in training reports sexual assault](#) [Rose L. Thayer, *Stars and Stripes*, 1 April 2021]

Multiple members of the training cadre at Fort Sill, Okla., were suspended this week after a soldier in training reported she was sexually assaulted at the base, said Maj. Gen. Ken Kamper, commander of the base and the Fires Center of Excellence. “This past Saturday, a soldier assigned to Fort Sill reported she was the victim of sexual assault, involving Fort Sill cadre members. This information was immediately reported to law enforcement,” Kamper said Thursday during a news conference. Within hours, agents with Army Criminal Investigation Command, known as CID, began investigating the report and interviewing potential suspects and witnesses. The soldier who made the report has been assigned a special victims counsel, has access to all services and is “absolutely safe,” Kamper said. “We’re proud of the courage she displayed coming forward with these allegations,” he said. “We’re also committed to protecting the privacy of this soldier.”

[Guard Responds After Member Is Charged with Sexual Assault](#) [The Associated Press, 26 March 2021]

The Vermont National Guard is investigating after one of its members was charged with sexual assault and condemns the alleged behavior as “abhorrent” and “repulsive,” said Adj. Gen. Gregory Knight. The weekly newspaper Seven Days first reported on the accusations against Sgt. Daniel Blodgett. He is charged with aggravated sexual assault without consent and aggravated sexual assault using drugs to impair, according to the Franklin County court. Blodgett has pleaded not guilty. “Even though we, as an organization—and it’s also (Department of Defense) policy that when a member is arrested or charged with a crime, we have a duty to report, it doesn’t always happen,” Knight said. “Even though we have other mechanisms in place—periodic background checks for security, clearances, things like that—sometimes, we don’t catch everything so the provost marshal team will engage in that in the near term.”

[Minnesota Supreme Court overturns a felony rape conviction because the woman voluntarily got intoxicated](#) [Konstantin Toropin and Hollie Silverman, CNN, 30 March 2021]

The Minnesota Supreme Court overturned a felony rape conviction in a ruling last week because the woman was intoxicated by her own will during the alleged assault. Though advocates say the ruling comes as no surprise, it underscored a need to change the current Minnesota law that governs rape charges when alcohol is involved. Minnesota law criminalizes as “criminal sexual conduct in the third degree” sexual penetration by a person who “knows or has reason to know that the complainant is ... mentally incapacitated.” The state statute currently defines “mentally incapacitated” as meaning “that a person under the influence of alcohol, a narcotic, anesthetic, or any other substance, administered to that person without the person’s agreement, lacks the judgment to give a reasoned consent to sexual contact or sexual penetration.” Interpreting the statute, the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled, “The legislative definition of ‘mentally incapacitated,’ as set forth in (the law), does not include a person who is voluntarily intoxicated by alcohol.”

[SHARP director: Preventing sexual assault is everyone’s responsibility](#) [Devon L. Suits, *Army News Service*, 2 April 2021]

Building a culture of prevention, awareness, trust and support continue to drive efforts within the Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program, as it works toward rolling out new changes to eliminate those harmful behaviors. "As we turn our focus to National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month during April, it is going to take all of us working together throughout the year," said Jill Londagin, the SHARP program director. "Together, we can work toward eliminating inappropriate behavior and prevent sexual violence," she said in an interview Tuesday. "Every member of our Army family has an obligation to live the Army's values and ensure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect." Year round, the SHARP program maintains its commitment to eliminating sexual harassment/assault and associated retaliation, in addition to supporting survivors and holding offenders accountable, she said.

[Women frequently experience sexual harassment at work, yet few claims ever reach a courtroom](#) [Joseph A. Seiner, *The Conversation*, 30 March 2021] [OPINION]

Sexual harassment allegations against New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, including at least three from current or former aides, are a reminder of just how commonplace unwanted touching, propositioning and other inappropriate behavior is in the workplace. My [recent research](#) explores the prevalence of toxic work environments—like the one described in Albany, New York—and just how startlingly common sexual harassment at work is. I discovered that even when women try to find justice by suing their alleged abusers, their cases rarely see a courtroom.

SUICIDE

[Department of the Air Force remains focused on suicide prevention](#) [Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs, *Air Force News Service*, 1 April 2021]

Initially in 2020, suicide numbers declined but as the coronavirus pandemic continued, the suicide trajectory increased and returned to the high levels experienced the previous year. The Department's efforts to address these trends focus on improving care for Airmen, Guardians and families. In 2019, the former chief of staff of the Air Force directed a Resilience Tactical Pause to combat the increasing suicide trend, providing the opportunity for Total Force Airmen to gather with their leaders and coworkers to focus on connectedness and resilience. In 2020, the Air Force shifted to remaining socially connected and physically distanced emphasizing the challenges of the COVID-19 environment. "One suicide is too many. Our forces and families, like most Americans, experienced many stressors related to the pandemic and loss of connections," said Brig. Gen. Claude Tudor, Air Force integrated resilience director. The Department's suicide prevention strategy can be summarized as: "connect, detect, protect and equip."

VETERANS

[Her military career cut short inspires advocacy and nonprofit addressing epidemic facing veterans and first responders](#) [Brandon Black, *Military Times*, 28 March 2021]

Kimberly DeFiori shares the trauma she experienced in Afghanistan so that other veterans and first responders aren't afraid to ask for help. To dispel the notion of weakness in seeking treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. She talks about the haunting memories that drove her to the bottle. How, without seeking help, she nearly killed

herself. She recounts the horrific night in Germany so that other victims of sexual assault and rape never feel guilt or shame or at fault. What was supposed to be a promising military career was instead cut short by a decade-long struggle waged behind closed doors. Yet, it emboldened her voice at a time when veterans and first responders are experiencing a silent epidemic.

[How a one-armed outfielder became an inspiration to wounded WWII veterans](#) [Claire Barrett, *Military Times*, 1 April 2021]

“I can’t remember when I haven’t had an ambition to be a ballplayer,” Pete Gray told Yank, The Army Weekly in 1945. “Being a big-leaguer is just something I dreamed of.” While a common sentiment among many at the time, for Gray, born Peter Wyshner, the path to Major League Baseball proved to be even more difficult. At age six, while hitching a ride home on a grocer’s delivery truck, Gray slipped off and his right arm was crushed by the truck’s wheel. Gray was rushed to the hospital, where his arm was amputated from the elbow down. Gray continued to bounce around semi-pro clubs until 1941, when he gave up baseball and attempted to join the Army after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Denied on the basis of his amputation, Gray was infuriated. Years later he remained bitter at the 4-F classification, stating, “If I could teach myself how to play baseball with one arm, I sure as hell could handle a rifle.” In 1945 the outfielder got his big break. Acquired by the St. Louis Browns for \$20,000, Gray played in 77 games for the team.

[Service Dogs Can Help Veterans with PTSD—Growing Evidence Shows They May Reduce Anxiety in Practical Ways](#) [Leanne Nieforth and Marguerite E. O’Haire, *The Conversation*, 26 March 2021]

As many as 1 in 5 of the roughly 2.7 million Americans deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001 are experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder. PTSD, a mental health problem that some people develop after experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening traumatic event, is a complex condition and can be hard to treat. Our lab is studying whether service dogs can help these military veterans, who may also have depression and anxiety—and run an elevated risk of death by suicide—in addition to having PTSD. We’ve been finding that once veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder get service dogs, they tend to feel less depressed and less anxious and miss work less frequently. The traditional treatments for PTSD, such as talk therapy and medication, do work for many veterans. But these approaches do not alleviate the symptoms for all veterans, so a growing number of them are seeking additional help from PTSD service dogs.

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[The transition you never asked for: Finding meaning after losing your military career to disability](#) [Meredith Mathis, *Task & Purpose*, 26 March 2021]

If you’re finding yourself unexpectedly or unwillingly facing medical discharge and the fear and uncertainty that comes with it, you are not alone. What felt like the end of the road turned out to be only the beginning of a new life – one filled with gratitude, connection, and purpose. Here are seven years of hard lessons and helpful tools I’ve gathered along the way which you might find useful in building a meaningful life. As a disabled veteran, regardless of what level of disability you’re assigned by the VA, you have access to a plethora of life-enriching resources. Don’t hesitate to make full use of them. Integrating back into the civilian world with a disability after

having your military career cut short can feel deeply unfair. It's a level of disappointment that few people will ever truly understand. But if the military has taught us one thing, it's to adapt and overcome in the face of fear and adversity.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)