

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 30 APRIL 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

[Feds' Engagement and Job Satisfaction Rises Despite—or Because of—Pandemic](#) [Erich Wagner, *GovExec*, 26 April 2021]

Federal employees reported the biggest increase in their engagement and job satisfaction in more than a decade when they took the government's annual survey of workplace attitudes last fall, although officials warned against making sweeping conclusions based on the data. The Office of Personnel Management on Monday announced the [results of the 2020 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey](#), which was delayed twice last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the federal government, employee engagement increased by four points from 2019 to 72 out of 100, while the global satisfaction index, which seeks to measure employees' happiness with their job, jumped from 65 in 2019 to 69 last year. Officials who administered the annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey warned against making sweeping conclusions about the 2020 results, due to changes in the survey's timing and some of its content.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[The Marine Corps Is Known as a Force of Young Warriors. That's About to Change](#) [Gina Harkins, *Military.com*, 28 April 2021]

The Marine Corps' junior enlisted ranks make up nearly half of the force, with most leaving the service after just one four-year term. Now, leaders say, they need to change the service's personnel models to build up more senior ranks as Marines face new threats. Small units—including infantry squads—need to be led by a staff sergeant, Commandant Gen. David Berger wrote in a new update to his 10-year force design plan. Putting staff noncommissioned officers in those roles will be a big cultural change for the service, which pushes leadership and decision-making far down the chain of command. Smith said giving more Marines the option to stay will likely be welcome news for many. "You can't accelerate experience and maturity," Lt. Gen. Eric Smith, deputy commandant for Combat Development and Integration, said last week."

[Pressure mounts on Austin to support major shift in handling military sexual assault](#) [Lara Seligman, *Politico*, 29 April 2021]

After failing to curb the growing incidence of sexual assault and harassment in the military, the Pentagon may finally be poised to make major changes in the way these cases are handled by removing commanding officers from their role of prosecuting cases in their units. President Joe Biden has signaled his support for the move, and now more Democratic and Republican lawmakers are signing on to a revised effort to change the law. Last week, a Pentagon panel made an initial recommendation that an independent military prosecutor—not a commanding officer—handle decisions to prosecute service members for sexual assault and harassment. And retired Adm. Mike Mullen, the former chair of the Joint Chiefs and influential Austin adviser, is adding fuel to the fire, becoming the first prominent former military officer to support the move in an exclusive interview with POLITICO.

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

CULTURE

[Air Force Recruiting unveils Tuskegee Airmen paint scheme for Indy 500, NASCAR races](#)

[Master Sgt. Chance Babin, *Air Force Recruiting Service Public Affairs*, 24 April 2021]

Air Force Recruiting Service and their partners at Richard Petty Motorsports and Ed Carpenter Racing, introduced their newest paint scheme, which pays homage to the original trailblazers, the Tuskegee Airmen. The red tails, yellow stripes, and star emblem aren't just a visual cue, but a reminder great things can happen when we celebrate our differences. "Our partnerships with Richard Petty Motorsports and Ed Carpenter Racing provide the Air Force with platforms to reach large audiences" said Maj. Jason Wyche, Air Force Recruiting Service National Events branch chief. "We're excited to leverage these platforms to pay tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen. It's more than just a paint scheme; it's an incredible opportunity to educate millions on the history behind the Red Tails. We hope individuals find inspiration from the Tuskegee Airmen and their story."

[As America's First Working First Lady, Jill Biden Redefines the Role](#) [Amanda Becker, *The 19th*, 29 April 2021]

Jill Biden, 69, is not the first presidential spouse who was working when their husband campaigned for the nation's highest office. Michelle Obama, who has a law degree, was the vice president for community affairs at the University of Chicago Hospitals system. Hillary Clinton continued practicing law as Arkansas' first lady but stepped back from her own career during her husband's presidential administration, where she focused on efforts to pass health care legislation. First ladies have always been subject to the public's perception about what it means to be a spouse in the political sphere and the gendered expectations that go along with it, according to Ohio University's Katherine Jellison, a history professor who has studied first ladies. Jim McClellan, the dean of NOVA's liberal arts program and a history professor, said they have "a great teacher who happens to be a first lady, rather than a first lady who happens to be a teacher."

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[At a subdued but innovative Oscar ceremony, Hollywood affirms a message of inclusion](#) [Paul Farhi, *The Washington Post*, 26 April 2021]

The Academy Awards showed off some newfound diversity among its nominees and some pandemic-era innovation during Sunday's telecast, in what amounted to the most unusual Oscars ceremony in the 93-year history of the event. On a night when best director and best picture went to Chloé Zhao for her film "Nomadland," the event highlighted an unprecedented number of films produced by and starring people of color. The sponsoring Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences also sought to reimagine the annual TV show—threatened by years of declining audiences—to avoid the Zoom-induced chilliness and technical glitches that have cratered the ratings of other live award programs for the past year.

[\[REPRINT\]](#) [\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Biden will allow U.S. embassies worldwide to fly Pride flag, reversing a Trump administration decision](#) [John Haltiwanger, *Business Insider*, 23 April 2021]

Secretary of State Antony Blinken has authorized U.S. embassies to fly the Pride flag, according to a State Department cable first reported by Foreign Policy. Blinken gave U.S. diplomatic outposts the greenlight to fly the rainbow flag before May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, and to keep it on display through Pride Month in June. But the top U.S. diplomat in the cable also said that this was not mandatory, leaving it up to diplomats to “determine that such a display is appropriate in light of local conditions,” per the New York Times, which also reviewed the cable. “President Biden believes that America’s strength is found in its diversity. America is stronger, at home and around the world, when it is inclusive,” a State Department spokesperson told Insider.

[Carmouche to be 1st Black jockey in Kentucky Derby since '13](#) [Stephen Whyno, *The Associated Press*, 28 April 2021]

Long before Kendrick Carmouche started riding horses growing up in Louisiana, Black jockeys were synonymous with the sport. Black riders were atop 13 of the 15 horses in the first Kentucky Derby in 1875 and won 15 of the first 28 editions of the race. Everything has changed since: Carmouche on Saturday will be the first Black jockey in the Kentucky Derby since 2013 and is just one of a handful over the past century. “As a Black rider getting to the Kentucky Derby, I hope it inspires a lot of people because my road wasn’t easy to get there and I never quit,” Carmouche said. “What I’ve been wanting all my career is to inspire people and make people know that it’s not about color. It’s about how successful you are in life and how far you can fight to get to that point.”

[Chasing A Dream: For 13-year-old bull rider Nicholas Jackson, pursuing championships means facing physical danger and navigating life in a predominantly White sport.](#) [Roman Stubbs, *The Washington Post*, 22 April 2021]

Nicholas Jackson was already caked in dirt when he climbed onto the back of a white-spotted bull on a cold Monday night in March. “You have a feel for him. That’s what he is. Have fun,” a stock contractor said to the 13-year-old on top of a 1,500-pound animal named Doctor Evil, before yanking open the rusted chute. Nicholas is a world champion in his age group and a rising star. His parents drive him nearly six hours round-trip to practices in Pennsylvania most weeks, both because it is his dream and because they believe he represents something larger than himself. He comes from five generations of horse trainers and sharecroppers, and as a young Black bull rider, he’s honoring family members who were never able to compete at his age. And as professional bull riding looks for new ways to diversify and educate its fan base on the rich but largely ignored history of Black competitors, many in the industry see Nicholas as a young athlete who can help shatter racial stereotypes and inspire other kids to ride.

[Georgia park with giant Confederate carving proposes changes](#) [Sudhin Thanawala, *The Associated Press*, 26 April 2021]

A park near Atlanta with a giant carving of Confederate leaders would publicly acknowledge that it was a gathering spot for the Ku Klux Klan, relocate Confederate flags and remove the carving from its logo under proposals unveiled Monday to address criticism of its Confederate legacy. Stone Mountain Memorial Association CEO Bill Stephens presented the proposals to the park’s board, saying Stone Mountain needed to change to remain financially viable but couldn’t “cancel

history.” The board did not immediately vote on any of them. The park 15 miles (25 kilometers) northeast of downtown Atlanta is a popular hiking and tourist destination but is replete with Confederate imagery, including a colossal sculpture of Gen. Robert E. Lee, Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Gen. Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson on the mountain’s northern face. It is the largest Confederate monument ever crafted.

[Hawaii close to honoring Juneteenth, leaving 1 state holdout](#) [Audrey McAvoy, *The Associated Press*, 28 April 2021]

Hawaii was poised to become the 49th state to recognize Juneteenth after the House and Senate on Tuesday passed legislation designating June 19 as a day to commemorate the end of slavery in the United States. If Hawaii’s governor signs the bill, South Dakota would be the only remaining state that doesn’t recognize the day as either a state holiday or a day of observance. South Dakota’s Senate passed a measure earlier this year that would observe the day, but the bill didn’t make it through the House. In North Dakota, the governor on April 12 signed legislation designating it a ceremonial holiday. Akiemi Glenn, the founder and executive director of the Popolo Project, said the legislation is a way of honoring the ancestors of Hawaii’s Black people. Popolo is the Hawaiian word for a plant with dark purple or black berries. The word has also come to refer to Black people.

[Māori are trying to save their language from Big Tech](#) [Donavyn Coffey, *Wired Magazine*, 28 April 2021]

Languages around the world are dying—the UN estimates that an indigenous language dies every two weeks. Racist assimilation policies are largely to blame. Well into the 20th century, Māori children were often punished with shame or physical beatings when they spoke their native language in schools. As a result, when that generation reached adulthood, many chose not to pass on the language to their own children to protect them from the same types of persecution. This was a major cause of Māori language decline between 1920 and 1960. Now, the fluent population within many indigenous groups is both shrinking and aging. The language—and the traditional knowledge embedded in it—are both at risk of extinction. The small staff of Māori language broadcasters and one engineer were about to become pioneers in indigenous speech recognition technology. But building the tools was only half the battle. Te Hiku soon found itself fending off corporate entities trying to develop their own indigenous data sets and resisting detrimental western approaches to data sharing. Guarding their data became the priority because the only people truly interested in revitalising the Māori language were the Māori people, themselves.

[Meet Ayesha McGowan, the first Black American woman in pro cycling: “The thing that we’re working for isn’t just existing in a space, it’s thriving”](#) [Sana Noor Haq, *CNN*, 20 April 2021]

A bike can take you a long way quickly. As well taking you to new places and spaces. It’s a journey cyclist Ayesha McGowan is experiencing both professionally—and emotionally. McGowan says it’s her stubbornness that has pushed her to become the first Black American woman in pro cycling. She comes from a long line of matriarchs, inheriting tenacity and grit from her grandmother, mother and older sister. Despite industry-led efforts to encourage greater global participation in the sport, McGowan quickly became aware of bike racing’s gender

disparities when she started cycling. She explains that her interest and push for gender advocacy is because it aligns with her values. In 2015, McGowan started [A Quick Brown Fox](#), an online blog where she encourages more women and ethnic minority people to engage with the sport.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Simone Biles drops Nike and signs with Athleta](#) [Chris Isidore, CNN, 23 April 2021]

Nike for a deal with Athleta, the athletic clothing unit of Gap Inc. Biles is a significant signing for Athleta's marketing efforts. She's the first woman to capture five all-around gymnastic world championship titles, and the winner of five Olympic medals, four of them gold. But Biles has often seemed overlooked during her time at Nike, despite her athletic success. A recent Nike ad highlighting Black female athletes did not include any recognizable images of Biles. Although Nike has many leading female athletes under contract, including Serena Williams, the company has faced criticism over how it has treated athletes who become pregnant. In 2019, several Nike-sponsored athletes publicly pressured the company to extend financial support for athletes who have infants at home. By contrast, Athleta and Gap have been building a reputation for being a supportive home for women, both athletes and executives.

[This PSA traces 150 years of anti-Asian hate in America](#) [Amna Nawaz, PBS News, 27 April 2021]

Anti-Asian sentiments have been acutely felt throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Nearly 4,000 hate incidents, including verbal and physical attacks, along with other forms of discrimination, took place across the country in the past year, according to the group Stop AAPI Hate. The anti-Asian hate seen throughout the pandemic also follows a long history of violence and discrimination against Asian American and Pacific Islanders in the U.S. Nguyen, with his platform in film and television, wanted to remind—or teach—Americans that anti-Asian hate is ingrained in American history. This is the starting point for Bao Nguyen's [short film PSA](#), titled "Together." The three-minute video, which features celebrities like comedian and actor Ken Jeong, star of the upcoming "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings" Simu Liu and "Black Panther" and "Us" star Winston Duke, opens with actor Olivia Munn holding a burning candle. The six Asian women killed in Atlanta "were grandmother, mothers, daughters, sisters and wives," she says.

[Wary Supreme Court weighs student's Snapchat profanity case](#) [Mark Sherman, The Associated Press, 28 April 2021]

A wary Supreme Court on Wednesday weighed whether public schools can discipline students for things they say off campus, worrying about overly restricting speech on the one hand and leaving educators powerless to deal with bullying on the other. The justices, hearing arguments in the case of a 14-year-old high school freshman's Snapchat F-bombs, struggled to fit the need to protect students' political and religious expression with the ability of schools to get at disruptive, even potentially dangerous, speech that occurs outside the school setting. In one of many examples members of the court offered, Justice Elena Kagan described boys who keep a sexually charged online ranking of girls based on their looks. "You can't put people in jail for commenting on people's appearance, but shouldn't a school be able to deal with it?" Kagan asked.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

DISCRIMINATION

[IG Disparity Review survey deadline extended](#) [SECAF Public Affairs, *Air Force News Service*, 26 April 2021]

The Department of the Air Force is extending the participation deadline for the Inspector General Disparity Review until May 9. Due to a significant response rate, the survey, which began April 9, will remain open to facilitate maximum feedback from Airmen and Guardians. The survey is part of the second ongoing [Inspector General Disparity Review](#) which expands its focus to gender and ethnicity, including Hispanics, Latinos, Asians, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. “To fully capture the voice of Airmen and Guardians, the Department of the Air Force Inspector General will keep the ongoing gender, racial and ethnic disparity review survey open for an extra week, said Lt. Gen. Sami Said, Air Force inspector general. “Feedback so far has been very high, so we’re keeping the survey open for an extra week to give everyone a chance to contribute to this very important effort. We highly encourage all our airmen and guardians to share their stories, views and concerns. To the tens of thousands that already have, thank you!”

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[“Within our own walls.” Employees at federal civil rights watchdog describe their own workplace discrimination, retaliation in Texas](#) [Brett Murphy, Javonte Anderson and Nick Penzenstadler, *USA TODAY*, 28 April 2021]

Patonia Rhule wanted to start a dialogue at her job about systemic racism. It seemed appropriate: She is an investigator at the federal watchdog agency responsible for protecting American workers from discrimination. Rhule emailed all her colleagues at the Dallas office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in early June, shortly after she and other Black employees were passed over for promotions. She considered it a benign message of support: “#BlackLivesMatter.” It was the week the same rallying cry was painted on the street outside the White House and began echoing through every major American city. Rhule assumed her fellow investigators at the agency, if anybody, would understand. Instead, she was met with hostility. One co-worker responded, copying several supervisors, that he found the sentiment highly offensive. “All lives matter in my eyes,” he wrote back. After several increasingly heated email exchanges between the two and others, Rhule’s bosses reprimanded her, and then she was suspended for being unnecessarily combative, failing to follow directions and misusing agency email in a number of exchanges—including the BlackLivesMatter conversation—documents obtained by USA TODAY show.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

DIVERSITY

[Biden nomination would be Pentagon’s most senior openly transgender official](#) [Rebecca Kheel, *The Hill*, 23 April 2021]

President Biden will nominate a transgender retired Navy commander to oversee readiness at the Pentagon, the White House said Friday. If confirmed as assistant secretary of Defense for readiness, Shawn Skelly would be the highest ever ranking openly transgender defense official. The White House also announced Friday that Biden would nominate another leading advocate for LGBT rights in the military, Brenda “Sue” Fulton, to be the assistant secretary of Defense for manpower and reserve affairs. Fulton is a former Army officer who was in the first U.S. Military Academy at West Point class to admit women. She was the first openly gay member of the academy’s Board of Visitors when then-President Obama appointed her in 2011.

[Department of the Air Force creates two new barrier analysis working groups for LGBTQ,](#)

[Indigenous Nation members](#) [SECAF Public Affairs, *Air Force News Service*, 26 April 2021]

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning Initiative Team (LIT) and the Indigenous Nations Equality Teams (INET) were recently formally established by the Department of the Air Force under the umbrella of its Barrier Analysis Working Group (BAWG). The establishment of these two teams builds on the successes of the Department of the Air Force’s other teams and allows the Department of the Air Force to identify and address the issues impacting diversity and inclusion for Airmen and Guardians. The LGBTQ Initiative Team focuses on the LGBTQ community and identifies and works to resolve the issues that disproportionately impede the success of LGBTQ Airmen and Guardians. The creation of this team comes 10 years after the repeal of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell, the legislation that prohibited LGB service members from serving openly. For many of the senior-ranking military members, some of whom served under DADT for nearly two decades, the creation of LIT is a watershed event.

[For No. 2 Air Force post, Biden picks Gina Ortiz Jones, gay Iraq vet who nearly won W. Texas congressional seat](#) [Todd J. Gilman, *The Dallas Morning News*, 27 April 2021]

President Joe Biden has picked Gina Ortiz Jones, an Air Force veteran who ran two close congressional races in West Texas, for the No. 2 post at the branch she served during the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” era, when gay and lesbian personnel like her were tolerated but risked discharge if they came out. “We are beyond thrilled,” said Jennifer Dane, executive director of the Modern Military Association of America, which advocates for LGBTQ personnel and veterans. “She represents diverse intersections of minority groups and her visibility at the top echelons of leadership is exactly what our communities need. She knows firsthand what damaging effects discriminatory policies like ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ have on the health and wellbeing of the force.” Jones would be the second openly gay undersecretary of the Air Force.

[“Here I Am.” Meet Kendall Martinez-Wright, a Black-Puerto Rican Trans Woman Running for State Office Amid Record Numbers of Anti-Transgender Bills](#) [Kate Elizabeth Queram, *Route Fifty*, 28 April 2021]

Last week, Kendall Martinez-Wright watched as Missouri legislators debated a proposal to require transgender children to play on sports teams that correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth. Martinez-Wright, 27, had seen hundreds of floor debates in her decade as a lobbyist and legislative strategist, but this one hit differently. This one was personal. Last June, Martinez-Wright came out publicly as a transgender woman. In February, she declared her candidacy for state office, an [announcement](#) that came as record numbers of state legislatures

advanced proposals targeting transgender youth, touching on everything from participation in athletics to access to medical care. Though she's the first Black and Puerto Rican transgender woman to run for the Missouri House, Martinez-Wright hadn't intended to make her gender identity the focus of her campaign. But the timing of her announcement ensured that it became a talking point.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[In historic first, Biden flanked by two women as he addresses Congress](#) [Jenna Romaine, *The Hill*, 29 April 2021]

As President Biden addressed a joint session of Congress for the first time on Wednesday night, a historic first took center stage: two women seated behind the president. Flanked by Vice President Harris and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Biden started his address by thanking both "Madam speaker" and "Madam vice president," noting, "No president has ever said those words, and it's about time." The two women made history—Harris as the first female as well as Black and South Asian vice president, and Pelosi as the first female House speaker. Even in the face of another White, male president, the presence of two women—one a woman of color—as top government officials behind the president marked a progression toward diversity.

[The Marines Need Volunteers to Help Them Reassess Body Standards](#) [Gina Harkins, *Military.com*, 24 April 2021]

Researchers are seeking hundreds of Marines to get high-tech body scans and special X-rays that could lead to military-wide updates to troops' body composition standards, which have long been criticized as outdated. The Marine Corps is conducting what officials say is the most technologically advanced study of body composition standards since the 1980s. Over the next year, the Marine Corps' Human Performance Branch hopes to get between 600 and 800 volunteers based in the Washington, D.C., area to participate in the new study, which could inform the military's strict weight and body-fat limits. The population will include Marines of all ages and those who are postpartum.

[More than 400 businesses back LGBTQ rights act](#) [Dee-Ann Durbin, *The Associated Press*, 27 April 2021]

More than 400 companies—including Tesla, Pfizer, Delta Air Lines and Amazon—have signed on to support civil rights legislation for LGBTQ people that is moving through Congress, advocates said Tuesday. The Human Rights Campaign, a Washington-based LGBTQ advocacy group, said its Business Coalition for the Equality Act has grown to 416 members, including dozens of Fortune 500 companies. Big names like Apple, PepsiCo, General Motors, CVS, Facebook, Marriott, Capital One, Starbucks and Home Depot pepper the list. The Equality Act would amend existing civil rights law to explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identification as protected characteristics. Those protections would extend to employment, housing, loan applications, education and other areas.

[Race on Campus: How to Be a More Inclusive Mentor](#) [Katherine Mangan, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 27 April 2021]

When Susan J. Corbridge began mentoring James Q. Simmons, she didn't pretend to understand what it was like to be a queer, Black, male nursing student in an overwhelmingly straight, White, female profession. But the clinical professor of nursing and medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago cared enough to ask the right questions. When Corbridge is working with students, "I want to hear what their concerns are and what barriers they're facing instead of just assuming I know," she says. "It's important to start with that." Across the country, colleges are diversifying their student bodies faster than their faculty ranks. That means that more students of different races, genders, and religious backgrounds will be mentored by faculty members who've enjoyed relative privilege getting to where they are.

[Second generation Korean American reflects on Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#)

[Russell Toof, *Army News Service*, 23 April 2021]

May is Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, a national observance that honors the perseverance and legacy of Asian and Pacific Americans and celebrates their contributions to the nation. "My father and my father-in-law were both 10 years old during the Korean War," said Col. Abraham Suhr, a second generation Korean American. "My father's father was captured and never seen or heard from again. My father's six other brothers and sisters survived by their mother's devoted tenacity and with the help of the American GIs. My father has a deep appreciation for the sacrifice it took for each American Soldier to leave their family to come to Korea to defend people they didn't even know." Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month stands as a reminder of the strength the Army has gained and will gain, through a high-quality diverse all-volunteer force. "I have gained multicultural experiences through various military assignments and being a physician to a large number of people from different ethnicities," said Suhr.

[UK's first hijabi firefighter: "Firefighters don't look like me"](#) [Chris Waring, *BBC News*, 27 April 2021]

A woman who is believed to be the UK's first hijab-wearing active firefighter has said the job still gets stereotyped. Uroosa Arshid, 27, from Aspley, Nottingham, said: "A lot of people do still stereotype firefighters, so when they see people like me they are very shocked and confused." Mrs Arshid said Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service had supported her by sourcing a special hijab to wear underneath her oxygen mask and hopes other young Muslim women may feel inspired to follow in her footsteps. A spokesperson for the service said: "We are extremely privileged and honoured to be able to say we have the UK's first hijabi firefighter." Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union, said: "Firefighters are no strangers to breaking down barriers and Uroosa is no different, paving the way for more female Muslim firefighters to join the service."

EXTREMISM

[Enough about "not picking sides." The only right position is against White supremacy and extremism](#) [Esteban Castellanos, *Air Force Times*, 24 April 2021] [COMMENTARY]

In late March, the U.S. Air Force Academy held its Department of Defense-mandated extremism stand-down training to examine and to eradicate extremism and White supremacy within the

ranks. Superintendent Lt. Gen. Richard Clarke spoke of extreme ideologies on “both sides,” rather than confronting the unique flavor of the extremism threat on display Jan. 6 at the U.S. Capitol. Cadets learn how to lead by the example set from their leaders. Whether they lead with honor and integrity in all aspects of their lives, and especially in moments of duress, depends on the standard of leadership that is set by people like Lt. Gen. Clarke. Many USAFA graduates feel the mild response to the insurrection from the academy and its Association of Graduates failed to reflect these values and stands counter to everything they publicly expect of graduates. We are disappointed and feel that leadership has failed our graduates, the members they lead, and ultimately the citizens of this country.

[COUNTERPOINT]

[Commentary on extremism was a Trojan horse for ideology](#) [Dr. Ronald J. Scott, Jr., *Air Force Times*, 30 April 2021] [COMMENTARY]

I read the commentary, “Enough about “not picking sides.” The only right position is against White supremacy and extremism,” by Esteban Castellanos, U.S. Air Force Academy Class of 2003. He and his co-signers use terms such as “insurrection,” “White supremacy,” and “extremism.” They represent a view that Whites, especially our nation’s Founders, inspired by a Judeo-Christian tradition, are oppressors. Castellanos and his co-signers demonstrate naivete in “taking sides” in a situation that is being manipulated and orchestrated by elements within America’s society bent on destroying it—the proverbial Trojan horse. I have not read any commentaries by Castellanos or his co-signers criticizing Black Lives Matter and antifa riots and looting deliberately staged to influence the 2020 presidential election.

[Homeland Security Launches Review of Extremism Within Agency](#) [Ben Fox, *The Associated Press*, 26 April 2021]

The Department of Homeland Security on Monday announced an internal review to assess the threat of violent extremism from within the agency, part of a broader administration focus on domestic threats following the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Senior DHS officials will immediately begin the review, which is aimed at preventing, detecting and responding to extremism within the ranks of a sprawling agency that includes the Coast Guard and the nation’s immigration enforcement organizations, Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in announcing the effort. DHS plans in the coming days to issue new policies for reporting internal threats and suspected extremism. The agency did not cite any specific incidents in announcing the review. Past known cases include that of a Coast Guard lieutenant who was accused of being a domestic terrorist and convicted on weapons and drug charges last year.

[REPRINT]

[How Extremists Weaponize Irony To Spread Hate](#) [Tom Dreisbach, *NPR*, 26 April 2021]

Nick Fuentes is best known for using cartoonish memes to spread White supremacist propaganda. His followers refer to themselves as “Groypers”—a reference to a mutated version of the Pepe the Frog cartoon that was co-opted by the far right. But Fuentes has said himself that he uses irony and “jokes” to communicate his message without consequences. “Irony is so important for giving a lot of cover and plausible deniability for our views,” Fuentes said in a 2020 video. He specifically cited Holocaust denial—or what he termed Holocaust “revision”—as a topic that is

too fraught to discuss earnestly, even on the far right. Researchers who track domestic extremism say Fuentes is not the only figure to adopt these tactics, particularly among far-right content creators, who encourage their audiences to follow suit.

[NYC Man Accused Of Threatening To Kill Members Of Congress Says It Was Just “Blather”](#)

[Mark Katov, NPR, 27 April 2021]

A New York City man charged with making online threats to murder members of Congress told a jury on Tuesday that the threats weren't meant to be taken seriously. Brendan Hunt acknowledged he had written the online statements but dismissed them as “blather” produced under the influence of marijuana and alcohol. Hunt was arrested Jan. 19 as part of the FBI's sweeping investigation of the assault on the U.S. Capitol. Hunt was not present at the Capitol riot, but his posts to social media caught the attention of federal investigators. In a criminal complaint filed Jan. 18, the FBI said Hunt, a part-time actor and filmmaker and full-time employee of the New York State Office of Court Administration, appeared online under the alias “X-Ray Ultra,” posting far-right incendiary material. The FBI said Hunt made a series of threatening posts between Dec. 6, 2020, and Jan. 12, 2021, “in which he threatened, or incited others, to murder members of Congress.”

[We've Been Here Before: Learning from the Military's History With White Nationalism](#) [Simone

Askew, Jack Lowe, Nette Monaus, and Kirsten L. Cooper, *War on the Rocks*, 27 April 2021]

[COMMENTARY]

Since the growth of the modern White power movement in the 1970s, servicemembers have been directly involved in every major surge in White nationalist activity across the country. Throughout this discussion it is important to remember the legal distinction between veterans, who are no longer subject to Department of Defense regulations, and active-duty servicemembers, though extremists in both groups are often closely linked through ideology, experience, and personal networks. Since the 1970s, when White power militias began recruiting disillusioned Vietnam War veterans, both active-duty servicemembers and veterans have provided stolen weapons and paramilitary training to White nationalist groups, orchestrated the Oklahoma City bombing, founded neo-Nazi organizations, planned the violent Unite the Right rallies, and urged other extremists to enlist in order to gain skills and training for the coming “racial holy war.”

HUMAN RELATIONS

[The Biology of Grief](#) [Ann Finkbeiner, *The New York Times*, 22 April 2021]

I've been thinking a lot lately about the more than 565,000 people who have died from Covid-19 in the United States. Each of them has left, on average, nine people grieving. That's more than five million people going through the long process of grief. When someone you love dies, experts have a pretty good sense of the path that grief takes through the mind, but have only a general sense of how it progresses through the rest of the body. First is a shock in which you feel numb or intensely sad or angry or guilty or anxious or scatterbrained or not able to sleep or eat or any combination of the above. During those first weeks, people have increased heart rates, higher blood pressure and may be more likely to have heart attacks. Over their lifetimes, according to

studies done mostly on bereaved spouses, they may have a higher risk for cardiovascular disease, infections, cancer and chronic diseases like diabetes.

[Federal Employees Sing Telework’s Praises, Want to Continue After the Pandemic](#) [Amelia Gruber, *NextGov*, 29 April 2021]

Federal employees who have been teleworking during the novel coronavirus pandemic are giving their new work arrangement rave reviews. In two recently released surveys many teleworkers said they were as—if not more—productive than they had been in the office, and reported greater engagement and job satisfaction. The broader of these surveys—the [Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey](#) administered by the Office of Personnel Management in the fall of 2020—found that 59% of federal employees teleworked daily at the height of the pandemic, up from just 3% before. Those who used the work arrangement were more likely to be engaged with their jobs, OPM said. Similarly, a recent survey by the [National Treasury Employees Union](#) found widespread satisfaction with the arrangement.

[Having an Old-fashioned Nervous Breakdown Might Be a Good Thing](#) [Michael Lee Stallard and Katharine P. Stallard, *GovExec*, 8 April 2021]

*Should the term “nervous breakdown” be embraced again? One of my (Michael’s) favorite journalists, Jerry Useem, provides a fascinating look at the history of the nervous breakdown in this [article](#) he wrote for *The Atlantic* titled “Bring Back the Nervous Breakdown.” Where Useem lands aligns with my thinking as an advocate for fostering connection, both for its positive effect on individuals and for how it improves the performance of groups, as well as what I share with clients about the harmful effects of stress and disconnection.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[How multitasking fuels original thinking](#) [David Robson, *BBC News*, 27 April 2021]

Whenever I sit down to write, I like to clear long periods for concentrated work. No emails, phone calls or meetings—just me and the blank page. If I do have to tackle many other tasks, I try to have a short break to cleanse my mind before I begin again. That’s because I always assumed that creativity was dependent on entering “the zone”—and that required a kind of meditative peace and quiet beforehand. However, it seems I may have been completely mistaken in my approach. According to a compelling [new study](#), busy periods of multitasking—just the kind of activities I try to avoid—can actually fuel our subsequent creativity. Thanks to a “spillover effect”, the energy and excitement of hectic jobs can lead to more original idea generation. Importantly, this brain boost seems to apply to many different types of creation—from the generation of original business plans to the culinary flourishes of expert chefs—suggesting that people of many different professions might benefit.

[Is there an antidote to “digital intensity”?](#) [Kate Morgan, *BBC News*, 25 April 2021]

Late last year, a tweet from BuzzFeed trends editor Delia Cai went viral: “Another day of staring at the big screen while scrolling through my little screen so as to reward myself for staring at the medium screen all week,” she joked. It seems right on. More than a year into the pandemic, we are glued to our screens. And it’s not only about bingeing movies and scrolling through TikTok. As remote work has set in, we’re relying entirely on digital tools to keep in touch with each other

and get our work done. This all-virtual-all-the-time nature of our everyday has led to a worrisome spike in “digital intensity”. It’s not just that we’re increasingly using digital tools to work; it’s that we’re also using digital tools more to work more. A [new survey from Microsoft](#) tracked the habits of more than 30,000 users in 31 countries over the last year, and the results are alarming.

[We instinctively add on new features and fixes. Why don’t we subtract instead?](#) [Benjamin A. Converse, Gabrielle S. Adams, Andrew H. Hales and Leidy E. Klotz, *The Washington Post*, 15 April 2021]

Across a series of studies that we published this month in the [journal Nature](#), we demonstrated that, when asked to change or improve something, people tend to overlook the option to subtract parts. We asked research participants to make changes to designs, essays, recipes, itineraries, structures and even miniature-golf holes. Our studies showed that people’s first instinct is to change things by adding. When they are able and willing to think a little longer, they are perfectly capable of finding subtractive changes. But they usually don’t think longer. They quickly identify an additive idea that is good enough, put it into action and move on.

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

[You’re Gonna Miss Zoom When It’s Gone](#) [Olga Khazan, *The Atlantic*, 16 April 2021]

If there’s a villain of the pandemic, other than COVID-19, it’s probably Zoom. The videochatting platform is making people tired, it’s making people awkward, and it’s making people sick of their own faces. Zoom is such a shoddy substitute for real life that, according to one survey, nearly one in five workers has illicitly met up in person with colleagues to discuss work. And in another poll, a third of women said they were “talked over, interrupted or ignored more frequently” in virtual meetings than in person. Zoom haters: I hear you, and I validate your experiences. But Zoom is actually great! Don’t get me wrong. I love reporting in person—in fact, I’ve missed it dearly. But I find working in an office, public speaking, going to big parties, and attending important meetings in person enormously stressful. I prefer Zoom for all of these things, and I’m going to miss it when it’s gone.

[REPRINT]

MISCELLANEOUS

[Navy May Recognize Black WWII Sailor Who Towed Wounded Shipmates Through Shark-Infested Waters](#) [Stephen Losey, *Military.com*, 27 April 2021]

*A movement is gaining steam to recognize a heroic Black sailor from World War II, who towed a raftload of wounded shipmates through shark-infested waters after their ship was sunk in 1942. After the rescued ensign recounted the story to *The Associated Press* and on the radio, French became nationally known as the “Human Tugboat.” He received a hero’s welcome in his sister’s hometown of Omaha, Nebraska. His story was retold in comic strips and trading cards, and he traveled the country to help sell war bonds before enthusiastic crowds. But the only official recognition he received came in the form of a 1943 letter of commendation from Southern Pacific Fleet commander Adm. William Halsey, according to the [Swimming Hall of Fame article](#). Though*

the survivors felt French deserved a Medal of Honor or at least a Silver Star, the Swimming Hall of Fame story states, he never received either.

[Tribes Want Medals Awarded for Wounded Knee Massacre Rescinded](#) [Mark Walker, *The New York Times*, 23 April 2021]

On Dec. 29, 1890, along the Wounded Knee Creek on the Pine Ridge Reservation in the southwest corner of South Dakota, the U.S. Army killed hundreds of unarmed members of the Lakota Sioux tribe, including many women and children. In the aftermath of one of the bloodiest acts of violence against Native Americans by federal forces, the government looked into the conduct of the troops of the Seventh Cavalry—and decided to award 20 Medals of Honor, the nation’s highest military commendation, to soldiers involved in the massacre. Now members of the tribe are stepping up a long-running pressure campaign to have those medals rescinded, saying that the government should recognize the atrocity for what it was and take a step that could help heal the historical wounds of that day.

MISCONDUCT

[Booze, a strip club and a major gone missing: How a 101st Airborne unit went off the rails in Poland](#) [John Vandiver, *Stars and Stripes*, 26 April 2021]

A U.S. Army Apache helicopter unit’s planned visit to World War II sites in Poland devolved into a drunken escapade at an off-limits strip club, leading to the suspected drugging of a battalion executive officer who went missing and wasn’t found until the next day, an Army investigation found. Earlier this month, the Army fired Col. Michael Schoenfeldt as commander of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, for bullying and toxic leadership during the Fort Hood group’s deployment to Europe. The Army probe into the incident in Poland also revealed broader concerns about potentially compromised combat readiness due to a pilot being incapacitated during the trip, as well as perception within the unit of special treatment that undermined morale. “These issues included perceived preferential treatment for pilots over other personnel, and for officers over NCOs/Soldiers, as well as the way incidents were treated by the chain of command,” the Dec. 3 Army 15-6 investigation report said.

[“Lost trust and confidence”—How the military covers up officer misconduct and why that’s harmful to democracy](#) [Thomas J. Brennan, *The War Horse*, 28 April 2021]

For decades, the Marine Corps and Defense Department have established a strong track record of hiding officer misconduct from public scrutiny and retaliating against whistleblowers. The War Horse identified nearly four dozen cases since 2015 involving Marine officers where the military released no information about why the commander was relieved. The Corps confirmed in an email statement that at least 13 other officers, previously removed for “lost trust and confidence,” have been retained and are still on active duty. The lack of transparency is not limited to the Marine Corps and extends across all branches. In the Army, since 2015, more than a dozen senior officers have been relieved for “lost trust and confidence” following myriad unauthorized or illegal behaviors. Six were generals. In the Air Force, at least 29 relieved commanders were identified. Five were generals. Ten others were colonels. In the Navy, at least 41 commanders were also identified by The War Horse. Twelve were captains and five were

admirals. In nearly 130 known cases across the armed forces, the military released no information about why the senior officers were relieved.

[Army Commander of JBLM Hospital Removed Over Undisclosed Allegations](#) [Matthew Cox, *Military.com*, 30 April 2021]

The Army has fired the commander of Madigan Army Medical Center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington after the completion of an investigation into undisclosed allegations against him. Col. Christopher Warner, who has been suspended from the job since Oct. 5, was “officially relieved” March 1 by Lt. Gen. Randy George, commander of I Corps, Lt. Col. Neil Penttilla said in an Army statement. Col. J.T. George ordered the investigation “when allegations came to light in late September 2020 that were unrelated to Madigan, its personnel, or JBLM,” Penttilla said. Penttilla would not release further details about the allegations against Warner because of privacy concerns.

[Former Coast Guard Academy command master chief faces allegations of “inappropriate conduct”](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Navy Times*, 28 April 2021]

The U.S. Coast Guard has launched an investigation into “alleged inappropriate conduct” by the former command master chief of the Coast Guard Academy, officials confirmed Wednesday. Former Command Master Chief Brett VerHulst abruptly resigned as senior enlisted leader of the academy on Tuesday for reasons that remain unclear. Academy spokesman Cmdr. David Milne said Wednesday that while the school’s superintendent accepted VerHulst’s resignation Tuesday, “he was simultaneously temporarily removed from his position pending the outcome of the ongoing investigation.” Milne said he did not know when the Coast Guard Investigative Service’s investigation began, and he declined to say what kind of alleged inappropriate conduct was being investigated.

[Fort Drum brigade commander fired over alleged misconduct](#) [Kyle Rempfer, *Army Times*, 29 April 2021]

The commanding general of 10th Mountain Division relieved one of his brigade commanders Wednesday due to a loss in trust in his ability to command, the unit said in a press release. Maj. Gen. Brian J. Mennes relieved Col. J.T. Eldridge, commander of 1st Brigade Combat Team at Fort Drum, New York, following an investigation stemming from allegations of misconduct. When reached for comment, Lt. Col. Kamil Sztalkoper, a spokesman for the 10th Mountain Division, would only say that the investigation was an administrative one and the relief was not based on an equal opportunity complaint, sexual misconduct allegation or toxic command climate.

[White Fort Jackson soldier charged in altercation with a Black man to be prosecuted in civilian courts](#) [Sarah Sicard, *Army Times*, 23 April 2021]

A White Fort Jackson soldier charged in connection with an April 12 altercation with a Black man will be prosecuted by the civilian justice system before the military justice system gets involved, the South Carolina post’s commanding general said Friday. Sgt. First Class Jonathan Pentland, the Army non-commissioned officer shown confronting a Black man walking in his

Columbia, South Carolina, neighborhood in a viral video, was charged with third-degree assault and has been suspended from all instructor duties. The charge is a misdemeanor, and Pentland faces a fine of not more than \$500, 30 days imprisonment, or both.

RACISM

[3 Men Indicted On Federal Hate Crime Charges In Ahmaud Arbery Killing](#) [Emma Bowman, NPR, 28 April 2021]

A grand jury has charged three Georgia men with federal hate crimes and attempted kidnapping in the death of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old Black man who was shot while jogging last year. Gregory McMichael, 65; his son, Travis McMichael, 35; and William “Roddie” Bryan, 51, were each charged with one count of interference with rights and with one count of attempted kidnapping, according to a Justice Department statement. Travis and Gregory McMichael also face charges of using guns to inflict violence. The indictment alleges the defendants used force and threats to intimidate and interfere with Arbery’s right to use a public street because he was Black.

[The Army had to clarify which racist incident it was talking about in an official statement](#) [Haley Britzky, Task & Purpose, 26 April 2021]

The commander of Fort Jackson had to clarify which racist incident he was addressing in a statement on Friday after videos of two separate, racist incidents involving current and former soldiers assigned to the South Carolina Army post recently went viral. “First, I want to reiterate that the command in no way condones the behavior and actions depicted in not just one, but two recent videos posted to social media,” said Brig. Gen. Milford Beagle, Jr. “Those behaviors are absolutely counter to the Army values and professionalism expected of soldiers, both on and off duty. For clarity, the Sumter, SC incident are the actions of a former soldier, discharged from the Army in 2020, but the association to the Army and Fort Jackson obliges me to address each.” The two incidents come at a time when Army leaders have been increasingly vocal about confronting racism in the ranks, including holding listening sessions throughout the force and extremism stand-downs, which were directed by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. The goal is simple: to create an Army that welcomes diversity.

[Asian Americans face barriers and bigotry in medicine](#) [Augustine M.K. Choi, CNN, 21 April 2021] [OPINION]

For so long, Asian Americans have been left out of critical conversations about race, despite longstanding barriers that impede their lives and careers. At the academic medical institution in New York City where I work, Asians and Asian Americans make up 32% of the student body and 24% of faculty and staff. Many of us, whether immigrants or U.S.-born, may seem to fit the myth of the “model minority”—successful, industrious, proof of the American dream. But we are far from a homogenous group, and Asian Americans of all classes and backgrounds are vulnerable to discrimination and violence. Asians around the country—including doctors, scientists, technicians and medical secretaries—are routinely harassed because of the way we look, our presumed inability to speak English and other stereotypes. This racism can seep into the health care setting, where [nearly one in five](#) practicing doctors is of Asian descent.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Biden CFPB pick urged to fix “racist policies” at agency](#) [Katy O’Donnell, *Politico*, 27 April 2021]

Rohit Chopra, President Joe Biden’s nominee to lead the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, told lawmakers last month that racial inequality is “reinforced and exacerbated” by workplace racism. Now, complaints of pay discrimination may be one of the first big challenges he addresses at his own agency. According to the CFPB’s union, Black employees last year were paid a median \$20,000 less than White employees. Base pay was lower for employees of color even when job type and experience were the same, the union said in a pay study it conducted in the fall. According to former CFPB officials, the pay problems can be traced back to the agency’s hiring process when it was first created 10 years ago and it sought to staff up quickly.

[Black cemeteries are reflection of deep segregation history](#) [Christine Fernando, *The Associated Press*, 29 April 2021]

“When I walk through the cemetery, it’s like walking down the old streets of my community,” Linda Davis said. Similar Black cemeteries are scattered throughout the United States, telling the story of the country’s deep past of cemetery segregation. As these burial grounds for the dead mirrored the racial divisions of the living, Black communities organized to defend the dignity of their deceased and oppose racist cemetery policies. Many Black Americans excluded from White-owned cemeteries built their own burial spaces, and their descendants are working to preserve the grounds. Racism still haunts these cemeteries, though, and many are at risk of being lost and lack the support other cemeteries have received. “There are few areas of life that bigotry and discrimination do not touch,” said Michael Rosenow, associate professor of history at the University of Central Arkansas. “Even cemeteries became battlegrounds for dignity.”

[Black or “Other”? Doctors may be relying on race to make decisions about your health](#) [Jacque Smith and Cassie Spodak, *CNN*, 26 April 2021]

When she first learned about race correction, Naomi Nkinsi was one of five Black medical students in her class at the University of Washington. Nkinsi remembers the professor talking about an equation doctors use to measure kidney function. The professor said eGFR equations adjust for several variables, including the patient’s age, sex and race. When it comes to race, doctors have only two options: Black or “Other.” Nkinsi was dumbfounded. “It was really shocking to me,” says Nkinsi, now a third-year medical and masters of public health student, “to come into school and see that not only is there interpersonal racism between patients and physicians ... there’s actually racism built into the very algorithms that we use.” At the heart of a controversy brewing in America’s hospitals is a simple belief, medical students say: Math shouldn’t be racist.

[Connecticut school apologizes for alleged racism](#) [*The Associated Press*, 27 April 2021]

Officials at a private Connecticut school issued an apology following racist allegations against Black students, announcing plans to make the institution more diverse and inclusive. Anonymous testimonies were posted to an Instagram account starting in June 2020 detailing the racist behaviors, the Stamford Advocate reported. The posts often named specific staff members at King

School, and some of the allegations included Black students being told they couldn't get into prestigious universities, students using racial slurs and double standards. The school hired a law firm to investigate the allegations and to make recommendations on how the institution can be more inclusive and diverse.

[Declaring racism a public health crisis brings more attention to solving long-ignored racial gaps in health](#) [Paul K. Halvorsen, *The Conversation*, 22 April 2021] [OPINION]

As a professor and founding dean of the Fairbanks School of Public Health at Indiana University, I agree drawing attention to the racial gaps in health care is an important step in addressing them. Acknowledging racism as a public health threat allows for the creation of workforce training programs in public health, medicine, nursing and other fields. It also may require all health-related professional training programs to include structural racism identification and implied bias and anti-racism strategies within the curriculum. This will put a sharper focus on the measurement of the factors that influence racism. Designating racism as a public health emergency can create institutional focus on actions taken to address this long-overlooked issue.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[FBI starts probe into death of Black man killed by deputies](#) [Ben Finley and Jonathan Drew, *The Associated Press*, 28 April 2021]

The FBI launched a civil rights probe Tuesday into the death of Andrew Brown Jr., a Black man killed by deputies in North Carolina, as his family released an independent autopsy showing he was shot five times, including in the back of the head. North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper called for a special prosecutor while pressure built on authorities to release body camera footage of last week's shooting. A judge scheduled a hearing Wednesday to consider formal requests to make the video public. The FBI's Charlotte field office, which opened the civil rights investigation into Brown's death, said in a statement that its agents planned to work closely with the Department of Justice "to determine whether federal laws were violated."

[Group of Texas students disciplined after they pretended to auction Black classmates in social media group chat](#) [Leah Asmelash, Ed Lavandera and Ashley Killough, *CNN*, 23 April 2021]

*Multiple high school students in Texas are facing disciplinary action after they created a social media group pretending to auction off their Black peers. The group, called "N***** Auction" on the app Snapchat, was started by a handful of students at the Aledo Independent School District, just outside of Fort Worth. The district initially described the chat as "cyber bullying" with "racially charged" language in an April 5 letter to parents, but ultimately labeled it "racist" after generating backlash from some Aledo residents. The incident isn't the only racist occurrence the district has seen. A week after the Snapchat auction came to light, fliers announcing a "Great Sale of Slaves" appeared at multiple campuses in the district. In a statement, district officials said the Aledo ISD Police Department is reviewing security footage and investigating the situation.*

[People of color more exposed than Whites to air pollution](#) [Drew Cosley, *The Associated Press*, 29 April 2021]

Across America, people of color are exposed to more air pollution than Whites from industry, vehicles, construction and many other sources, a new study has found. Using government air pollution and census data, researchers found that disproportionate numbers of non-White people were exposed to potentially hazardous fine particle pollution from nearly all major U.S. emission sources, regardless of where they live or how much money they make. The [study](#), published Wednesday in the journal Science Advances, also found that Blacks were the only group disproportionately exposed to each of the pollution sources examined. Researchers found that on average Black, Hispanic and Asian people were exposed to higher than average levels of fine particle pollution, while White people were subjected to lower than average levels.

[Pepper-sprayed Army officer makes first public comments since traffic-stop video release](#) [Bill Atkinson, *The Progress-Index*, (Petersburg, Va.), 23 April 2021]

The Army lieutenant who was seen on video being pepper-sprayed and detained by Windsor Police during a December 2020 traffic stop made his first public comments since the video went viral and his attorney filed a million-dollar federal lawsuit against the officers who stopped him. “This has truly been a challenging experience and also a life-changing experience not just for me by also for my family,” Lt. Caron Nazario said in a brief speech April 20 in Brooklyn, N.Y., where he was honored by his hometown for his military service. “Through this challenging experience I’ve seen an outpouring of love and support around the world.” Earlier this month, Nazario’s attorney, Jonathan Arthur of Richmond, filed a federal lawsuit in Norfolk against the two officers claiming that Nazario’s First and Fourth Amendment rights were violated by how the stop unfolded.

[Racial gap persists among Capitol Hill interns](#) [Jim Sakas, *Roll Call*, 29 April 2021]

When Congress started paying its interns a few years ago, the expectation was that it would help level the playing field for students of color, who tend to come from less money than their White peers. A [recent study](#) from Pay Our Interns found, however, that the students getting paid internships were still overwhelmingly White and disproportionately more likely to attend private universities—just half went to public schools, compared with 75 percent of all U.S. undergraduates. While Congress does act as a whole in some regards, hiring staff is an office-by-office task. Even though the House has created an Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Senate Democrats have their own initiative to help offices diversify, ultimately it’s up to individual members to decide who they hire, and how.

[Reports of antisemitic incidents in the U.S. last year were at their 3rd-highest level in decades: ADL](#) [Connor Perrett, *Insider*, 27 April 2021]

Reported incidents of antisemitism were at their third-highest level ever recorded last year, the Anti-Defamation League, which has tracked antisemitic incidents since 1979, said Tuesday. According to [data](#) from ADL, there were 2,024 antisemitic incidents in the U.S. in 2020, a 4% decline from the 2,107 incidents recorded in 2019—the highest number of incidents ever recorded. “While any decline in the data is encouraging, we still experienced a year in which antisemitic acts remained at a disturbingly high level despite lockdowns and other significant changes in our daily lives and interactions with others,” Jonathan A. Greenblatt, the CEO and national director of the ADL, said in a statement.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[White official fired for refusing to refer to Black professor as “doctor”](#) [Laura Jarrett, CNN, 27 April 2021] [VIDEO]

A White North Carolina city council official was fired for refusing to use the title “doctor” when speaking to a Black female professor, despite her repeated request during a virtual commissions meeting.

RELIGION

[New House chaplain keeps praying through the turmoil](#) [Chris Cioffi, Roll Call, 29 April 2021] *House Chaplain Margaret G. Kibben begins many of her prayers in a familiar place—“Would you pray with me?” Since being sworn in on Jan. 3, Kibben has prayed after the death of a Capitol Police officer, during a bitter partisan debate on pandemic aid and as she stood in the chamber on Jan. 6 while a pro-Trump mob beat on the barricaded doors. Kibben, now 60, earned her undergraduate degree from Goucher College in Maryland before attending Princeton Theological Seminary. She entered active duty in 1986 through the Navy’s Theological Student Program and also has a master’s degree in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College. She is married to retired Marine Lt. Col. Timothy J. Kibben. She left the Navy in 2018, retiring as the 26th chief of chaplains, after a nearly three-decade career spent roughly half in the Navy and half in the Marines. She served aboard ships, was deployed to Afghanistan for about a year and reached the rank of rear admiral.*

[Orthodox Christians, including Coptic and Greek churches, to celebrate Easter on Sunday](#) [Theo Karantsalis, *The Miami Herald*, 26 April 2021]

As Roman Catholics and many Western churches held Easter services on April 4, Coptic Orthodox Christians will celebrate Pascha on Sunday, along with other members of the Orthodox Christian faith, including the Greek and Russian Orthodox churches. “Arabs could not pronounce the Greek word Aigyptios [Egyptian] so they abbreviated it to qubt, the Arabic word for Copt,” said Father Timotheus Soliman, of St. John the Baptist Coptic Orthodox Church, 7851 Riviera Blvd., in Miramar, near the Miami-Dade-Broward County line. About 160 families, totaling 640 people, from Monroe, Miami-Dade and Broward counties attend St. John the Baptist, Soliman said. A new church being built on the five-acre site is expected to open by early 2022. Copts follow strict rules including a 55-day fast preceding Easter, charitable giving and partaking of the sacraments.

[\[REPRINT\]](#) [\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

SEXISM

[How Houston’s First Pregnant City Council Member is Using Her Power to Enact Change](#) [Barbara Rodriguez, *The 19th*, 23 April 2021]

Abbie Kamin could not keep food down. She was hit with bouts of debilitating pain. Some days, she could barely get out of the bed. Yet all the while, Kamin worked. It was a rough first trimester, but the global pandemic offered a strange silver lining for the Houston city council

member: Kamin spent last summer joining council meetings from bed. During the worst of her morning sickness she disabled video, even though it made colleagues suspicious. Texts came in: Why is your camera off? But she wasn't ready to share that she was pregnant. Across the country, the pandemic has laid bare the longstanding inequities for people navigating pregnancy while working. Pregnancy-related benefits and accommodations vary from job to job, with recommendations for how businesses implement those benefits often set by policymakers through state laws and local ordinances. Kamin wanted to use her position to help city employees who are pregnant and their families. She wasn't sure how it would play out, but she wanted to try.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[How words are used in military culture to describe strength and weakness](#) [Lt. Col. Francesca Graham, *Military Times*, 28 April 2021] [COMMENTARY]

The Army is an elegant beast. Aggression and violence are its method, and its purpose is to protect. There is an elegance, a precision in its violence. Weakness is the natural enemy of power. What is it about weakness that interests me? Nothing. But weakness is interested in me. I live with the unwanted shadow of weakness every day. I do not know this shadow, but it knows me. It latches onto me through our words—some vulgar—the use of which we intend to describe weakness. These words—or more precisely accusations—include “princess,” “bitch,” “Sally,” “Nancy,” “girl,” and “pussy.” You hurl these words against a person who you know is weak and do not want on your team. They could be physically weak, mentally weak, or possessing a weakness of courage or of character. Men and women equally use these words to denote weakness. Unique to these words is that they are all female gendered. Therefore, whether we realize it or not, they are an attack on or a segregation of the feminine. Conversely, words and phrases that denote power, such as “manning,” “manpower,” “man-up,” “grab a pair,” and “put your big boy pants on” are understood or are descriptive of the masculine.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Acting Navy Secretary Makes Mental Health, Sexual Assault Prevention Top Priorities for Fleet](#) [Andrew Dyer, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 27 April 2021]

Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Harker is looking to make the most out of what he believes will be a limited run atop the department, launching initiatives to prevent sexual assault and encourage sailors to seek mental health care after a year of coronavirus stress, he told the Union-Tribune in an interview on April 21. He said that experience has informed how he approaches one of his top priorities in the Navy, preventing sexual assault. To address the issue, Harker said the Navy and Marine Corps have data compiled over the last couple of years that can be used to identify which units have a higher risk of having an assault. Harker said he's made addressing mental health among sailors another priority. To do that, Harker said more ships need more Navy corpsmen trained to help sailors with those issues. “With the younger generation coming out there's not as much stigma and so they're seeking more mental-health treatments—we have to make sure we have sufficient resources deployed,” Harker said.

[Idaho lawmaker accused of rape resigns after ethics ruling](#) [Rebecca Boone, *The Associated Press*, 29 April 2021]

An Idaho lawmaker accused of rape by a 19-year-old legislative intern has resigned after an ethics committee found he should be formally censured. The investigation into Rep. Aaron von Ehlinger began in March after a young staffer reported he raped her in his apartment after the two had dinner at a Boise restaurant. Von Ehlinger has denied all wrongdoing and maintains he had consensual sexual contact with the young woman. He resigned Thursday after an ethics committee unanimously agreed that he engaged in “behavior unbecoming” and recommended that he be suspended without pay for the rest of the legislative session. The Republican from Lewiston wrote in his resignation letter that he hoped stepping down would spare his colleagues from having to deal with the ethics committee’s recommendation, which he disagreed with.

[Military leader shares personal knowledge, lasting impact of sexual assault](#) [Jenn DeHaan, *Army News Service*, 22 April 2021]

It can be an uncomfortable topic to discuss—but not one that those who are directly impacted by it are able to shy away from. For these and other reasons, military leaders are ensuring theirs are the voices speaking out against sexual harassment and assault. One such leader is Fort Knox Garrison Commander Col. C.J. King, for whom this issue is extremely important. “It’s about protecting your brothers and your sisters,” said King, “and being there for your fellow Soldier.” In this case, King said he is speaking from experience. “I probably didn’t take this as serious as I should have until five, six years ago when I was personally impacted by it,” said King. “When a Soldier came forward and I saw it with my own eyes, [I saw] the impact this has on a person.” As King reflected on the way this affected him personally, he admitted he can only imagine what victims are going through. “I could have done more.”

[Service chiefs will weigh in on controversial plan to remove commanders’ control over sexual assault cases](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 23 April 2021]

Now that a Pentagon review commission has made the controversial recommendation to strip commanders of their authority to oversee sexual assault and harassment cases, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin wants to get feedback from top military leaders before making any final decisions about formal changes. Austin has given the services until the end of May to evaluate the proposals from the Pentagon’s sexual assault and harassment independent review commission, which included removing sexual assault prosecutions from the chain of command and allowing an independent prosecutors office to handle them instead, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said Friday. The commission additionally recommended that an independent decision-maker be called in for cases sexual harassment and some hate crimes. Sexual assault prevention advocates have long argued that commanders have shown they are not up to the challenge of following through with sexual assault reports, as the incidents may shine an unfavorable light on a command and therefore, that officer’s abilities as a leader.

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

[Sexual Assaults rise as the Peace Corps fails its volunteers](#) [Donovan Slack and Tricia L. Nadolny, *USA TODAY*, 22 April 2021]

Emma Tremblay, then a 25-year-old Peace Corps volunteer from Seattle, was 4,000 miles from home on an exam table in Ecuador. “Do you feel good?” he asked, then leaned in. Tremblay feared he might go further. Half undressed, in pain and unsure whether she could fight him off,

she stared him down. I'm fine, she said. When he backed away, Tremblay gathered her things and rushed onto Quito's crowded streets. Then, another violation of her trust: The Peace Corps had been warned the doctor was a threat. Ashley Lipasek, a fellow volunteer, told Tremblay she had complained to the Peace Corps three months earlier in 2018 after the doctor hit on her and made vulgar remarks while touching her during a physical exam. A USA TODAY investigation revealed the Peace Corps is failing to manage the threat of sexual assault against its volunteers, at times placing them in dangerous situations and inflicting further trauma by bungling its response to assaults. Volunteers have also accused staff of misrepresenting sexual assaults in official records, failing to explain the option of having a sexual assault forensic exam, and otherwise violating policies established over the last decade to address the Peace Corps' vexing track record on sexual assault.

[\[SEE ALSO-VIDEO\]](#)

[U.S. Army to Replace Criminal Investigations Chief in Wake of Guillen's Death](#) [Tara Copp, *Defense One*, 26 April 2021]

The U.S. Army has decided to replace the head of its criminal investigations division less than a year after naming her to the position, as the service continues to face the aftermath of the murder of Spc. Vanessa Guillen. Maj. Gen. Donna Martin became provost marshal general of the Army and commanding general of Army Criminal Investigation Command last July, just 10 days after Guillen's body was found outside Fort Hood, Texas. It's the second time in as many years that the Army has replaced its top law enforcement officer. Since 1971, CID has been led by only 15 commanding generals, most of whom served three years or longer. Martin replaced Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen, who also served only a year in the post.

VETERANS

[As a military spouse, I suffered secondary traumatic stress, which is real and often debilitating](#) [Ashley Jordan, *The Washington Post*, 24 April 2021] [COMMENTARY]

"Ash? My helicopter crashed, but I'm okay," my husband blurted through the phone. At that time, in 2011, Aaron was an Army officer and a medevac helicopter pilot deployed to Afghanistan during the troop surge of 2010. His words were hurried, and it sounded as if he was trying to catch his breath. I couldn't tell if he was anxious about delivering this news or still reeling from the adrenaline of his near-death encounter. Either way, the information slammed into me like a tidal wave. My bustling world stopped, and my body went numb. The truth of how close I'd come to being a war widow left me stuttering and stunned—and the trauma of that lasted for years. When Aaron came home four months after the crash, I didn't understand that although my husband made it back physically unscathed, he was emotionally scarred and so was I.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Astronaut Michael Collins, Apollo 11 pilot, dead of cancer](#) [Jessica Gresko, *The Associated Press*, 28 April 2021]

Apollo 11 astronaut Michael Collins, who piloted the ship from which Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin left to make their historic first steps on the moon in 1969, died Wednesday of cancer, his family said. He was 90. Collins was part of the three-man Apollo 11 crew that effectively ended

the space race between the United States and Russia and fulfilled President John F. Kennedy's challenge to reach the moon by the end of the 1960s. Collins was born in Rome on Halloween 1930. His parents were Virginia Collins and U.S. Army Maj. Gen. James L. Collins. After graduating from the U.S. Military Academy in 1952, a year behind Aldrin, Collins joined the Air Force, where he became a fighter pilot and test pilot. Collins said one of the things that struck him most was the way the Earth looked from space—peaceful and serene but also delicate. “As I look back on Apollo 11, I more and more am attracted to my recollection, not of the moon, but of the Earth. Tiny, little Earth in its little black velvet background,” Collins said while marking the mission's 50th anniversary in 2019.

[Court orders Army to review thousands of “bad paper” discharges](#) [Nikki Wentling, *Stars and Stripes*, 28 April 2021]

A federal court approved a lawsuit settlement this week requiring the U.S. Army to review and potentially upgrade thousands of other-than-honorable discharges dating back 10 years. The U.S. District Court for Connecticut finalized the agreement Monday. It orders the Army Discharge Review Board to reconsider thousands of cases where upgrades were denied, despite evidence that veterans were struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury or military sexual trauma when they separated from the military. The board will review decisions made between April 17, 2011, and April 26, 2021, that partially or fully denied relief to post-9/11 veterans with other-than-honorable discharges. The lawsuit was filed in 2017 by Steve Kennedy and Alicia Carson, Iraq and Afghanistan veterans denied discharge upgrades despite diagnoses of mental health conditions.

[From combat in Afghanistan to COVID-19 in California, he comforts the hurt and dying](#) [Theresa Walker, *The Orange County Register*, (Anaheim, Calif.), 27 April 2021]

He's only 31, but Nathan Solares has already tended the wounded and dying from two wars. The first war, in Afghanistan, helped to prepare him for the other, the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. As a young corpsman, the U.S. Navy's designation for medics, Solares handled military and civilian casualties while stationed at Kandahar Airfield, a NATO base in Afghanistan for international troops and Americans from all branches of the Armed Forces. Today, Solares works the overnight shift for Cadence Hospice in Orange. His shifts typically run 4 p.m. to 8 a.m., with the latter half spent as “night runner,” meaning he's on call to go to patients in crisis and handle family emergencies. As he did in Afghanistan, Solares has served his hospice patients without fear. Only now, instead of desert-toned fatigues and a helmet, he suits up in layers of protective gear—face mask and gown—over nurse's scrubs, including a blue-and-pink set the stocky Solares wears.

[History forgot about these Black soldiers of WWII. Now, a group is making its mission to remember their work.](#) [Denise M. Watson, *The Virginian-Pilot* (Norfolk, Va.), 29 April 2021]

The smell joined Jefferson Wiggins and members of his all-Black service unit as they tramped through the French countryside. The telltale foulness grew in the weeks following the Normandy invasion in June 1944. It became more constant as American soldiers pushed the Germans back through Belgium and into the Netherlands. Wiggins would be among the 260 African American men who would dig graves and bury the fallen. The field would become the Netherlands

American Cemetery in Margraten. Wiggins died in 2013 and his widow, Janice, said recently that he spent most of his life trying to forget that grim work detail. History seemed to forget, too. Now a team of Dutch historians, and an author in Portsmouth, have embarked on several projects to spotlight these men. They are looking specifically for any relatives of the 172, some of whom hailed from Hampton Roads. They want to include photos and histories of the men in The Faces of Margraten program.

[“I drew the line at lying to reporters”—A military spokesman calls for increased accountability and transparency](#) [Paul Gainey, *The War Horse*, 28 April 2021] [OPINION]

Once a Marine, always a Marine. The Marines have used that tired slogan for decades to sell camaraderie and belonging. But as a public affairs officer, I knew the Corps had an ugly history of misogyny, racism, and hazing—all issues that make so many Marines feel persecuted and excluded from that vaunted camaraderie. Despite these disturbing and often neglected issues, I chose to look past such unacceptable attitudes and focus on the sacrifice, honor, and courage it takes to succeed as a Marine. I now know that was a mistake. I never thought that I would one day tell my own story in a public venue. I never thought that refusing to lie to the press would be the end of my career in the Corps.

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