

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 6 AUGUST 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

[Employee Group Calls on OPM to Ban Salary History from Hiring](#) [Erich Wagner, *Government Executive*, 5 August 2021]

A federal employee association aimed at ensuring gender equity at the Justice Department on Thursday called on the Office of Personnel Management to implement regulations to block agencies' use of job applicants' salary history as part of the federal hiring process. The DOJ Gender Equity Network, which is composed of around 1,000 Justice Department employees, and a number of other employee associations [last year sent a letter](#) to the leaders of each component of the department asking them to stop asking applicants' about their salary histories during the hiring process, arguing it contributes to unfair treatment of women, minorities and LGBTQ+ employees. But last September, the Justice Management Division responded to the letter, justifying the practice by noting that it is allowed under federal hiring regulations. In a [letter](#) to OPM Director Kiran Ahuja Thursday, the association cited President Biden's executive order encouraging better diversity, equity and inclusion across the federal government as an impetus for banning questions about job applicants' salary history.

[Gillibrand: UCMJ changes needed to ensure fairness for all troops](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military.com*, 2 August 2021]

*For the last eight years, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand has been arguing the military justice system is in need of massive overhaul to better address sexual assault and harassment cases. Next year, those changes may finally be put in place. Last month, during debate over the annual defense authorization bill, Senate Armed Services Committee members adopted Gillibrand's proposal to remove serious crimes from the traditional military chain of command. House Armed Services Committee members are expected to follow suit when they mark up their draft of the bill next month. It's potentially a massive change in how many military crimes are handled, one that goes against Pentagon recommendations that only sexual misconduct crimes be handled by independent military prosecutors. But Gillibrand, D-N.Y., argues it is long overdue and precisely what is needed to restore faith in military justice officials and other leaders. *Military Times* sat down with her last week to talk about the potential impact of the changes and the work still ahead.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[More than half of women in Army report facing some form of sexual harassment: study](#) [James R. Webb, *Military Times*, 3 August 2021]

Women soldiers say they are facing repeated attempts at unwanted sexual relations, being "ignored," "mistreated" and "insulted" due to their gender and hearing they are not as good as men, according to a [Rand Corporation study](#) about sexual harassment and gender discrimination faced by soldiers. On Monday, Rand released the results of a five-month study that was requested by the Army as part of Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's February 2021 order to address sexual assault. The study, comprised of 1,582 female and 900 male active-duty soldiers, concluded that

while men and women both face forms of harassment in the Army, women are more likely to face “serious” or “persistent” harassment. The most prevalent form of harassment experienced by women—reported by 53 percent of respondents—was being “ignored, mistreated,” or “insulted” due to their gender. In addition, 45 percent of women reported hearing that they weren’t as good as men at their job. Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Prevention Director Jill Londagin [said in a release](#) that while sexual jokes and discussions are common in the workplace that “this behavior is unprofessional and disrespectful.”

CULTURE

[Army to memorialize Black soldier lynched on Georgia base 80 years ago](#) [Alexa Mills, *The Washington Post*, 1 August 2021]

Felix Hall was 18 years old when he left home in Millbrook, Ala., to join other young men preparing to serve in World War II. But instead of fighting in the Pacific, as his all-Black regiment would do with distinction, the Army private was abducted, bound at the hands and ankles, and lynched in a wooded ravine. His killers were never brought to justice. On Tuesday, more than 80 years after Hall’s death, officials at Fort Benning will unveil a memorial honoring his life and service, and formally acknowledge the act of racial violence that happened on base and under the Army’s watch. The memorial plaque—and its affirmation that this and similar crimes eventually moved President Harry S. Truman to desegregate the armed forces—will be placed at the site where Hall was last seen alive. A separate marker will be installed in the woods where Hall’s corpse was discovered six weeks after his disappearance. “To be lynched as you’re in service to the United States Army?” said Richard Liebert, a retired Army officer who trained at Fort Benning in the 1970s and ’80s. Liebert, who is White, has for the past five years pressed the Army to recognize this young soldier whose life was stolen from him—not by an enemy abroad, but by hatred at home.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[How Navy Veteran Monica Helms Created the Transgender Pride Flag](#) [Blake Stilwell, *Military.com*, 5 August 2021]

When Monica Helms was in the Navy, she served aboard the submarines USS Francis Scott Key and the USS Flasher. Her missions had her going out on deployments of up to 70 days each. She served for eight years, hiding something she didn’t quite understand. Helms would come to understand it and, with a little nudge from the universe, fully embrace herself. After making her transition, she fought for the rights of transgender people, especially those who served in the U.S. military, while creating one of the enduring symbols of that struggle, the transgender pride flag. She first flew her original design at the Phoenix Pride Parade in 2000. Since then, it has caught on as a symbol of trans pride around the world. Cities officially raise the flag on public flagpoles during Transgender Awareness Week and the Transgender Day of Remembrance, both of which are in November.

[Navy’s Top Admiral Said SEALs Had “Character and Ethics” Issues](#) [Konstantin Toropin, *Military.com*, 2 August 2021]

The Navy's highest-ranking officer acknowledged on Monday that the branch's elite warfighting unit, the SEALs, had a problem with character and ethics. Speaking at the annual Sea Air Space conference at a convention center just outside of Washington, D.C., Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday noted that the special warfare community underwent "a comprehensive review" that he likened to the review the surface warfare community conducted after the collisions of the Fitzgerald and the McCain. That review looked at the collisions the two destroyers had with merchant ships in 2017 that claimed the lives of 17 sailors. The evaluation of special forces was conducted by the U.S. Special Operations Command and [found](#) that unrelenting demand—along with the command's willingness to take on the missions when overtasked—has taken a toll across special warfare units. According to Gilday, the issue "with the SEALs—it wasn't professional competency like it was in the surface community; it was character and ethics."

[Top Air Force Enlisted Leaders Are Getting a Title Change](#) [Steve Beynon, *Military.com*, 5 August 2021]

Top enlisted leaders are getting new titles later this year, according to a memo sent to all airmen dated Aug. 4. The title "superintendent," usually reserved for senior master sergeants and chief master sergeants, will switch to "senior enlisted leader." The move goes into effect Oct. 1, coinciding with the new fiscal year. The change would impact the senior enlisted member at the detachment, squadron and group levels. "Today's modern threats call for a new level of teaming and partnerships to defend the security of our nation," the Air Force memo said. "To support this mission imperative, it is important that our duty titles reflect the key leadership roles many of our senior noncommissioned officers serve in." The memo was signed by Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass and Gen. Charles Brown Jr., the Air Force chief of staff. It's unclear what spurred the change or what tangible impact it will have on the force beyond new titles on paper, as pay will not be altered.

[Washington NFL team bans fans from wearing Native American dress](#) [BBC News, 5 August 2021]

The Washington Football Team, which dropped the controversial name Redskins last year, has now banned fans from wearing Native American headdresses and face paint at its home stadium. The new policy was among several the U.S. NFL team said would help provide the "best possible fan experience for all". The Redskins name and logo was retired by the franchise in July last year. It followed years of pressure from groups and sponsors who criticised the name as offensive to Native Americans. On Wednesday, the Washington DC-based American football team said it was updating policies for its FedEx Field stadium in Maryland for the new season. It said it was "excited to welcome everyone back wearing their burgundy and gold", but that Native American costumes and paint "may no longer be worn into the stadium".

DISCRIMINATION

[The "acute" ageism problem hurting young workers](#) [Kate Morgan, *BBC News*, 5 August 2021]

We think of ageism as an issue affecting older workers. But experts say it's hitting young workers harder than ever. There's no question age discrimination is a problem affecting older workers, says Michael North, an assistant professor of management and organisations at New York University's Stern School of Business. A U.S. [study](#) showed that nearly two-thirds of workers aged

45 and older had seen or experienced age discrimination. But younger workers face age discrimination, too. In fact, new research shows it may actually be the youngest team members who are bearing the brunt of workplace ageism right now, potentially impacting on their careers. Older workers, meanwhile, have always had negative-leaning opinions about the young. North says it's a "generational cycle" that goes back thousands of years; the "kids these days" attitude has existed as long as there have been kids to criticise. But the ageism today's millennial and Gen Z workers are facing, North believes, is more acute—and derives from pervasive perceptions that they are entitled, lazy radicals. "In this case," he says, "it's not just a life-stage critique. This is something more extreme."

[Federal employees have some of the worst whistleblower protections in the country, advocates say](#) [Nicole Ogrysko, *Federal News Network*, 2 August 2021]

Whistleblower advocates are hopeful 2021 is the year they can make stronger protections for federal employees a reality. And they believe it's imperative this year, especially as federal employees are managing trillions of dollars in new government spending on COVID-19 relief and potentially infrastructure. "While the United States was the pioneer of whistleblower rights, in some ways our rights are the dinosaur rights now," Tom Devine, legal director for the Government Accountability Project, said last week at the National Whistleblower Center's annual celebration of those who disclose waste, fraud and abuse. "We haven't kept pace with the global best practice standards in the rest of the world." Advocates see promise in the [Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act](#), which House Oversight and Reform Committee Chairman Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) and Rep. Nancy Mace (R-S.C.) introduced earlier this year. The bill already cleared the oversight committee and now awaits a full vote in the House. Devine likened the bill to "the promised land" for federal employees.

[Former school superintendent alleges anti-gay discrimination](#) [The Associated Press, 3 August 2021]

The former superintendent of Hull public schools alleges in a lawsuit that he was discriminated against because he is gay and his firing has made it impossible for him to land a new job in education. Michael Devine alleges breach of contract, defamation, a civil rights violation, intentional infliction of emotional distress and other wrongs in the \$5 million federal lawsuit against the school system, the town and five school committee members. Stephen Kuzma, Devine's attorney, told *The Patriot Ledger* for a story Monday that the firing stemmed from Devine's text message exchanges with a 21-year-old former student who lived in Florida. The former student initiated the communication. There was never evidence that the communication between the two was inappropriate and Devine did not violate school policy regarding staff and student communication as the school committee said when it fired him, according to the suit. Police determined there was nothing criminal to investigate. The \$5 million demand for damages is mostly for Devine's lost wages and his diminished earning capacity.

[University of Montana sued over alleged sex discrimination](#) [The Associated Press, 5 August 2021]

A lawsuit filed by three former and one current university employee accuses the University of Montana of sex-based discrimination. [The Missoulian reported](#) the suit filed in U.S. District Court on Wednesday alleges the university "has long fostered and encouraged a culture, and the resulting

actions, that ‘on the basis on sex’ denied female employees the benefits of their long dedication to UM’s educational programs.” Among the allegations, the plaintiffs accuse university President Seth Bodnar “of taking the reins” in the university’s unequal treatment of women, pointing to several instances of alleged discrimination. “UM did not create a glass ceiling for these women’s careers,” the lawsuit said. “UM created a brick wall for these women’s careers.” The plaintiffs are Catherine Cole, Barbara Koostra, Mary-Ann Sontag Bowman and Rhondie Voorhees.

DIVERSITY

[Here’s why the Marine Corps is considering returning to promotion photos](#) [Philip Athey, *Marine Corps Times*, 3 August 2021]

The Navy and Marine Corps may soon require that official photos be submitted for promotion boards, after photo removal led to decreased diversity, senior leaders for both services said Tuesday. In July 2020 then Secretary of Defense Mark Esper required all services within the Department of Defense to remove the photograph requirement in an effort to eliminate unconscious bias from the promotion board process. Navy Vice Adm. John Nowell Jr., the chief of Naval personnel, said that comparing data over the past five years of one-star boards the Navy saw a decrease in diversity promotions when the photograph requirement was removed. “I think we should consider reinstating photos in selection boards, we got the data,” Nowell said during a panel on inclusion and diversity as a force multiplier at the 2021 Sea-Air-Space conference in National Harbor, Maryland. “It’s a meritocracy, we’re only going to pick the best of the best, but we’re very clear with our language ...that we want them to consider diversity across all areas. Right?” Nowell said. “And therefore ... I think having a clear picture on this just makes it easier. So actually our data show that it would support adding photos back in.”

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Hubbard shy about making history as a transgender Olympian](#) [Anne M. Peterson, *The Associated Press*, 3 August 2021]

Weightlifter Laurel Hubbard was never seeking the attention that inevitably came with becoming the first openly transgender woman to compete in the Olympics. Ultimately, she didn’t win—Hubbard couldn’t complete any of her first three lifts and finished out of contention for a medal. But in the end, going home to New Zealand empty-handed was secondary to being authentic. “All I’ve ever wanted to be is myself,” she said. “I’m just so grateful that I’ve had the opportunity to come here and be me.” Hubbard, who was largely quiet in the run-up to the Olympics and during the competition except for statements released by the federation, is soft-spoken and intensely private. But as an athlete and competitor, the Olympic stage beckoned. Hubbard, who transitioned when she was 35, downplayed her history-making role in this Olympics. “These type of situations are always quite difficult for me because, as some of you may know, I have never really been involved with sport because I’m looking for publicity, profile, or exposure,” she said.

[National Labs Move to Support Researchers Seeking Name Changes on Past Work](#) [Brandi Vincent, *NextGov*, 4 August 2021]

America’s 17 national laboratories teamed up with leading scientific publishers, journals and other organizations in a new initiative to make it easier for researchers to update their past publications

to accurately reflect changes to their names over the course of their careers. This collaboration does not stem from federal policy changes but marks one way the labs are working in alignment as they embark on respective diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory is coordinating the new partnership. “For researchers of all genders, and transgender researchers specifically, the new process ensures they can rightfully claim ownership of prior work without fear of reprisal under their lived name and be known in their respective fields primarily through their merits as published authors,” [lab officials explained](#) last week. More entities can join this effort. For those involved, it represents intent to advance inclusivity in science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, fields and publishing, according to the announcement. Prior to this move, researchers would typically face long and time-consuming processes to complete name-change requests. As more requests have flowed in over recent years, some publishers have started to independently update their own policies.

[Tamyra Mensah-Stock Becomes 1st U.S. Black Woman To Win Wrestling Gold](#) [Bill Chappell, NPR, 3 August 2021]

U.S. wrestler Tamyra Mensah-Stock closed out her first Olympics in dominating style Tuesday, winning gold in the women’s 68-kilogram freestyle final. She is only the second woman—and the first Black woman—to win an Olympic wrestling gold for the United States. The top-seeded Mensah-Stock defeated second-seed Blessing Oborududu 4-1 after seizing points with two takedowns in the first period. By winning silver, Oborududu became the first Nigerian athlete to win an Olympic medal in wrestling. Mensah-Stock said, “It’s so freaking awesome. You’re making history, I’m making history. We’re making history. So it meant a lot.” She also spoke about her desire to inspire Black girls to pursue wrestling and her family’s heritage in Ghana, where her father was from. Mensah-Stock lost her father while she was in high school—he died in a car crash coming home from a wrestling meet, according to Team USA.

EXTREMISM

[Ex-deputy accused of racist posts sentenced to prison for illegal gun](#) [Rachel Scully, *The Hill*, 4 August 2021]

A former sheriff’s deputy in Georgia who was accused of racist posts was sentenced to three years in prison on Tuesday for illegal possession of firearms, federal prosecutors said. Cody Richard Griggers, 28, in April pleaded guilty to one count of owning an unregistered firearm and has been sentenced to three years and eight months in prison. Griggers also made statements “consistent with racially motivated violent extremism,” even going as far as bragging about beating a Black man as “sweet stress relief.” In addition to his extremist beliefs, Griggers also made “frequent positive references to the Nazi holocaust,” according to prosecutors. “Cody Griggers disgraced that trust by espousing violent extremism and possessing a cache of unregistered weapons while on duty, including a machine gun with a silencer and obliterated serial number,” Acting U.S. Attorney Peter D. Leary said in the statement.

[“White supremacy, racism”: Remembering the El Paso massacre that targeted Latinos](#) [Cynthia Silva, *NBC News*, 3 August 2021]

Authorities say that on Aug. 3, 2019, a Texas man drove 700 miles to El Paso from a Dallas suburb and opened fire with an automatic rifle, killing 23 people, including a man who died as a result of his injuries nine months later, and injuring about two dozen more. The suspect, who according to an indictment, told authorities that he targeted Latinos, had railed against immigrants and Hispanics in writing, law enforcement officials said. The attack is considered to be the deadliest against Hispanics in modern U.S. history. Grady, who advocates for gun control legislation and immigrant border reform, stood alongside members of the nonprofit Border Network for Human Rights, or BNHR, survivors of the massacre and elected officials at one of the events Tuesday to remember those who lost their lives. They are issuing a call to action to “take a stand against White supremacy, racism and xenophobia,” as the group has said in a statement. The suspect, Patrick Crusius, remains in jail awaiting a trial date. State prosecutors have charged him with murder and are pursuing the death penalty; federal prosecutors have filed hate crime and firearm charges.

HUMAN RELATIONS

[4 ways that volunteering can be good for you](#) [Jennifer A. Jones, *The Conversation*, 28 July 2021] *Volunteering has long been associated with good mental and physical health, particularly for older people. In a long-term study, researchers at the University of Wisconsin found that volunteering was linked to psychological well-being, and the volunteers themselves said it was good for their own health. While anyone can benefit from volunteering, people who are the least connected to others tend to benefit the most. In fact, the benefits are so strong that researchers have suggested public health officials educate the public to consider volunteering as part of a healthy lifestyle. One [study](#) in particular looked into which kind of volunteering may be best for your health. When a team of social scientists combed through data collected in Texas, they found that people who volunteered in ways that benefited others tended to get a bigger physical health boost than volunteers who were pitching in for their own sake. They also benefited in terms of their mental health, such as by experiencing fewer symptoms of depression and becoming more satisfied with their lives.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

INTERNATIONAL

[18 to stand trial after hazing death of Black student](#) [Belgium] [*The Associated Press*, 5 August 2021]

All eighteen students accused of playing a role in the death of a Black student during an initiation ritual at a Belgian university have been ordered to stand trial, lawyers for the victim’s mother said on Thursday. Twenty-year-old Sanda Dia died in a hospital in December 2018 after he was forced to drink excessive amounts of alcohol, fish oil, and made to sit in freezing water during a vicious hazing to enter the elite student fraternity called Reuzegom. Lawyers Nathalie Buisseret and David Dendoncker confirmed reports in Belgian media that the students from the prestigious KU Leuven University will face charges of manslaughter, intentional administration of harmful substances resulting in death, degrading treatment and culpable negligence. “After the Reuzegom student initiation ritual, it was immediately clear that the ritual was in all respects contrary to what KU Leuven expects from its students,” the university said.

[Barbie of Oxford Covid vaccine designer Dame Sarah Gilbert created](#) [BBC News, 4 August 2021]

Barbie maker Mattel has created a doll of the scientist who designed the Oxford coronavirus vaccine, Prof Dame Sarah Gilbert. Dame Sarah said she found the creation “very strange” at first—but she hoped it would inspire children. “My wish is that my doll will show children careers they may not be aware of, like a vaccinologist,” she said. Her Barbie is one of six to honour women working in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). The others include an Australian medic who helped create a reusable gown for health workers, and a Brazilian biomedical researcher. “I am passionate about inspiring the next generation of girls into STEM careers and hope that children who see my Barbie will realise how vital careers in science are to help the world around us,” said Dame Sarah. In recent years, toymaker Mattel has responded to criticism that its Barbie doll sets an unrealistic image of womanhood. It now offers dolls themed around careers such as a firefighter, doctor and astronaut—and in a range of skin tones beyond its original White, blonde doll that first launched in 1959.

[Canadian Soccer Player Quinn Becomes The First Out Trans And Nonbinary Gold Medalist](#) [Sharon Pruitt-Young, NPR, 6 August 2021]

Canadian soccer player Quinn has just made Olympics history. The Canadian women’s soccer team took home the gold on Friday, beating out Sweden and earning the top spot for the first time in their Olympics history. The winner of the final was determined via penalty kicks, yet another Olympic first for women’s soccer. And on the heels of that victory, Quinn, a midfielder for Canada, also accomplished something monumental: They became the first ever openly transgender and nonbinary athlete to not only win gold, but to medal at all in the Olympic Games. It’s the latest history-making move for Quinn, who also had the honor of being one of the first openly trans athletes to compete in the Olympic Games. (While they helped Canada take home the bronze at the 2016 Games in Rio, they did not come out as trans and nonbinary until last year.)

[China: Backlash over marriage question in Olympian’s interview](#) [Tessa Wong, BBC News, 6 August 2021]

A Chinese state media interview with an Olympic gold medalist asking when she would get married and have children has sparked backlash online. The CCTV segment with Gong Lijiao, who won the women’s shot put final on Sunday, also described her as a “manly woman”. Netizens have criticised the interview calling it sexist and narrow-minded. They discussed it online with the hashtag: “Is marriage the only thing that can be talked about women?” The questions have led many to object to what they see as ingrained expectations of Chinese women as well as outdated ideals of beauty and femininity. The clip, filmed on the sidelines of the Tokyo Olympics, begins with a female CCTV journalist telling the camera that Gong “gave me the impression that she is a manly woman, until one breakthrough moment”. The CCTV journalist goes on to describe Gong as “giving a bashful smile” while asked about her personal life. Gong is then asked whether she has a boyfriend, what kind of man she is looking for, and whether she would arm-wrestle a boyfriend. The interview ends with Gong laughing and saying: “I don’t arm-wrestle. I’m very gentle.”

[Germany giving over \\$40 million to fight antisemitism](#) [The Associated Press, 4 August 2021]

The German government said Wednesday it will strengthen its battle against the quickly growing antisemitism in the country by investing 35 million euros (\$41.5 million) into research and educational projects focused on understanding its causes and effectively fighting hatred of Jews. Police registered 2,351 cases of antisemitism in Germany last year, which was an increase of 15% compared to the year before, officials reported. “This is the highest number in the last couple of years,” German Education and Research Minister Anja Karliczek said. “There’s reason for worry that this is only the tip of the iceberg and that the unreported number of daily attacks on Jews is substantially higher.” Karliczek said that the government wants to invest millions into researching the causes of antisemitism “because we need deep knowledge in order to be able to efficiently fight” it. She said millions would be given to universities to examine the different facets of hatred against Jews and to develop strategies on what to best do against it. Various projects will focus on antisemitism in schools, in the German justice system or on the internet and social media.

[Juventus apologizes for racist post shared on women’s team's Twitter feed](#) [Toyin Owoseje, CNN, 6 August 2021]

Juventus has apologized after a tweet was posted on its women’s team’s official account showing a player making a racist gesture towards Asian people. The Italian soccer club sparked outrage on Thursday after it tweeted a photo showing defender Cecilia Salvai using her fingers to pull her eyes back while wearing a red training cone on her head. The post also included emojis that mimicked the eye-pulling gesture. The photograph was swiftly taken down but not before it prompted a ferocious backlash and accusations of “blatant racism” from the online community. The controversy comes months after Juventus marked International Day against Racial Discrimination on March 21. Players wore special jerseys featuring numbers associated with statistics related to racism, such as the fact that one in three Black people experience racial harassment in Europe.

[Kris Wu: K-Pop star arrested on suspicion of rape](#) [BBC News, 31 July 2021]

Chinese-Canadian pop star Kris Wu has been arrested on suspicion of rape. Officers in Beijing said the investigation centred on online allegations that the star, 30, had “deceived young women multiple times into having sexual relations”. The first accusation came early this month when a woman said he had assaulted her while she was drunk. Mr Wu, one of China’s biggest celebrities, has denied all the allegations of assault. The first to accuse him was 19-year-old student Du Meizhu, who posted on social media that she had met Mr Wu when she was 17. She said she had been invited to a party at his home, where she was pressured to drink alcohol and woke up in his bed the next day. Ms Du said seven other women had told her Mr Wu had seduced them with promises of jobs and other opportunities. She said some were minors. At least 24 more women have since come forward alleging inappropriate behaviour.

[New Zealand Apologizes For 1970s Immigration Raids That Targeted Pacific Islanders](#) [Dalia Faheid, NPR, 1 August 2021]

Beginning in 1974, New Zealand police armed with dogs woke up Pacific Islanders who allegedly overstayed their visas at dawn, pushed them into police vans for questioning, then often deported them and placed their children in state care homes. The early morning operation became known as the “Dawn Raids.” Nearly 50 years later, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on Sunday formally apologized for those raids and the lasting hurt they have caused. Ardern expressed

the government's "sorrow, remorse and regret" over the raids. New Zealand welcomed thousands of Pacific Islanders after World War Two to help fill a labor shortage. There were more than 65,000 Pacific Islanders in the country by 1976. But an economic crisis later caused unemployment to rise, and migrants were blamed. Along with raids at homes, workplaces, schools and places of worship, police targeted non-White New Zealanders by forcing them to carry a passport at all times. Pacific Islanders were disproportionately impacted by the raids, even though most visa overstayers were from Australia, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

[New Zealand's women's rugby celebrated their gold medal with an emotional haka, a traditional Māori dance](#) [Tyler Lauletta, *Insider*, 31 July 2021]

New Zealand's women's rugby team, known as the Black Ferns, secured a gold medal they've been waiting to wear for five years on Saturday. After their win, the Black Ferns turned to the cameras to let out an emotional haka—a traditional Māori celebration dance that New Zealand athletes have used as a show of force and intensity. While fans weren't in the arena to see it, they could feel the Black Ferns energy through their screens while watching at home. At Rio 2016, the first Olympics to feature Rugby 7s, the Black Ferns entered as heavy favorites and dominated their way to the gold medal game, only to lose to Australia in the final. This time, the Black Ferns flipped the script. While they had a few close calls en route to the final, including an extra-time win over Fiji in the semis, the Black Ferns took care of business in the gold medal game.

[Olympic boxer Nesthy Petecio dedicates silver medal to LGBTQ community](#) [Jo Yurcaba, *NBC News*, 4 August 2021]

Nesthy Petecio of the Philippines won silver Tuesday in women's featherweight boxing after a close match against Japan's Sena Irie. The out boxer dedicated her win to her country, her coaches and to LGBTQ people. "This win is for the LGBTQ community. Let's go, fight!" she said, according to a translation from ESPN. Petecio's Olympic medal brought a number of historic firsts for her country: She is the first woman from the Philippines to win a boxing medal, and the first Filipino boxer to medal at the Games in almost 25 years, according to Outsports. She and her teammate Irish Magno, who is also part of the LGBTQ community, were the first Filipino women to compete in boxing at the Olympics. Magno was the first Filipino woman to qualify for the Games, according to Quartz.

[Premier League players to continue taking a knee this season](#) [The Associated Press, 3 August 2021]

Premier League players will continue to take a knee before games during the 2021-22 season in an anti-racism gesture. The league said Tuesday it "wholeheartedly supported" the decision and confirmed that players and match officials will also continue to wear "No Room For Racism" badges on their shirts. "We feel now, more than ever," the players said in a group statement released by the league, "it is important for us to continue to take the knee as a symbol of our unity against all forms of racism. We remain resolutely committed to our singular objective of eradicating racial prejudice wherever it exists, to bring about a global society of inclusion, respect and equal opportunities for all." Pockets of England fans booed their players for taking a knee in warmup matches ahead of the European Championship and again before a tournament game

against Croatia. Premier League chief executive Richard Masters said the league has had “a long-standing commitment” to fight racism.

[Russian gay family flees to Spain after threats](#) [BBC News, 5 August 2021]

A Russian lesbian family who featured in a controversial health food ad say they have left Russia after suffering online abuse and death threats. The mother, Yuma, said on Instagram “we’re safe, we’re resting”. The family were targeted in a hate campaign after appearing in an ad for grocery chain VkusVill. The firm later apologised and replaced the photo with one of a heterosexual family. Yuma’s daughter Mila wrote in an online post that they are now in Barcelona. Both Yuma and her oldest daughter Alina are in same-sex relationships. Mila said “now my family and I really need to get settled in Barcelona, these are not easy times for us and we need friends”. Homophobia is widespread in Russia, where many supporters of President Vladimir Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church identify LGBT+ activists with Western liberal values, seen as contrary to Russian tradition.

[South Korean presidential candidate’s feminism remarks generate controversy](#) [Elizabeth Shim, United Press International, 2 August 2021]

A South Korean presidential front-runner is under fire for comments about feminism after he suggested the movement is responsible for low birth rates. Yoon Seok-young, 60, said Monday at a meeting of the main opposition People Power Party that the advocacy of women’s rights has been too politicized, Segye Ilbo reported. “Some say feminism is too politically exploited [to the point] it prevents healthy relationships between men and women,” Yoon said. “From a social standpoint, the conditions are ill-suited for having and raising children. This is not a problem that can be solved by giving out government subsidies.” Former Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun, a presidential candidate, said in a Facebook post that Yoon was “promoting misogyny.” “To hear [Yoon] say that feminism is the cause of low birth rates, and prevents healthy relationships between men and women, is saddening,” Chung said. Feminist activists have pursued a range of causes in South Korea. Protests against spy cameras in public restrooms have led to legislature making voyeurism illegal in the country.

[Tokyo Olympics sparks anti-LGBT slurs on Russian TV](#) [Vitaly Shevchenko, BBC News, 4 August 2021]

The participation of openly gay, lesbian and transgender athletes in the Tokyo Olympics has led to an upsurge in anti-LGBT commentary on Russian state TV. Extremely offensive language, some of which appears in this article, was used by the hosts and guests on talk shows aired by the country’s two most popular television channels. Even though the Kremlin has tended to not publicly support anti-LGBT sentiment, it fits in with the state ideology of defending Russia’s “traditional values” against the West. The state-run channels dedicated several of their talk shows to speak disparagingly about LGBT athletes at the Games, using words like “abomination” and “perversion”. In response, an International Olympic Committee (IOC) spokesman told the BBC they were contacting the official Russian broadcaster, one of the two channels in question, to express their concern. In a statement to the BBC, it said: “We have been in contact with our contractual broadcasting partner in Russia in order to get clarity on the situation and to underline the Fundamental Principles of the Olympic Charter and we are following up accordingly.” It also

pointed to its own efforts in celebrating the diversity of its athletes, in particular its support for the Tokyo games' LGBT hospitality centre Pride House.

[UK police arrest 11 over racist abuse after Euros final](#) [The Associated Press, 5 August 2021]

British police said Thursday they have made 11 arrests in connection with the online racial abuse of England soccer players following their team's loss to Italy in the final of the European Championship last month. Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Saka endured a barrage of abuse after they missed penalties in England's shootout defeat at London's Wembley Stadium on July 11. The U.K. Football Policing Unit said it has requested data from social media companies to advance its investigation and has passed on information to local police forces, which so far have arrested 11 people on suspicion of a number of offences, including malicious communications. "There are people out there who believe they can hide behind a social media profile and get away with posting such abhorrent comments," Cheshire Chief Constable Mark Roberts, who leads soccer policing for the National Police Chiefs' Council, said. "They need to think again."

MISCELLANEOUS

[Covid: Pulse oxygen monitors work less well on darker skin, experts say](#) [Amara Sophia Elahi, BBC News, 31 July 2021]

NHS England and medicines regulator, the MHRA, say pulse oximeters may sometimes overestimate oxygen levels. The devices beam light through the blood, and skin pigmentation may affect how light is absorbed, they say. NHS England is issuing updated guidance, advising patients from Black, Asian and other ethnic minority groups to continue using pulse oximeters, but to seek advice from a healthcare professional. An NHS Health and Race Observatory report published in March recommended that the MHRA should carry out an urgent review into the use of pulse oximeters. Ranjit Senghera Marwaha bought a pulse oximeter while unwell with coronavirus last year, but her oxygen levels dropped so low that she had to be hospitalised. "Never ever did I factor that the colour of my skin or the pigmentation in my skin would have an impact on the way in which these gadgets work." Dr Habib Naqvi, director of the NHS Race and Health Observatory, welcomed the updated guidance on pulse oximeters. "Although a valuable clinical tool, clinicians are increasingly becoming aware of the potential errors or inconsistencies associated with pulse oximeters, so we need to have this in mind when using the devices," he said.

[FBI agent used photos of female office staff as bait in sex trafficking sting—report](#) [Sarah N. Lynch, Reuters, 2 August 2021]

An FBI agent faces potential disciplinary measures after an investigation by the Justice Department's internal watchdog revealed he allegedly asked a female support staffer to provide "provocative" photos of herself that he used as bait in an undercover sex-trafficking operation. In a memo on Monday, Inspector General Michael Horowitz said the investigation led his office to discover that the agent's conduct was not an isolated incident, and there were also other cases in which agents have asked female office staff to pose as minor children or sex workers in undercover operations. While their faces were blurred and they remained clothed, Horowitz said the staff whose photos were used were not certified undercover or covert employees. The agent under

investigation never obtained written consent from the employees, and he advised them “not tell anyone, including their supervisors, about the UC [undercover] operations.”

[Lack of Time Off Worsens Mental Health Problems for Public Health Workers](#) [Andrea Noble, *Route Fifty*, 5 August 2021]

The coronavirus pandemic has taken a toll on public health workers. Burnout is rampant, but staffing shortages and increasing hospitalization rates make it difficult to recuperate. A [recent survey](#) details the impact, finding that half of public health workers reported experiencing mental health problems during the pandemic. Symptoms were worse among those who were unable to take time off from work, according to the survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The survey of approximately 26,000 public health workers found that 53% of state, tribal, local, and territorial public health workers had experienced at least one symptom of a mental health condition in the past two weeks. Among those workers, 32% reported depression, 30% reported anxiety, 37% reported PTSD, and 8% reported suicidal ideation. Most (93%) of the survey takers reported working on Covid-19 “response activities.” The CDC asked workers about other impacts on their mental health, such as number of hours worked and the percent of time their job was focused on coronavirus-related response, but the survey found “the inability to take time off had the largest impact on reporting symptoms of mental health.”

[Website Informs Civilians About DOD Opportunities](#) [Jim Garamone, *DOD News*, 2 August 2021]

Say “Department of Defense” and most Americans automatically envision uniformed soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen or Space Force guardians. They don’t think of the sinews holding all this together: DOD civilians. “One of the things that I find so fascinating is that the Department of Defense civilian workforce ... is close to 950,000, and still people don’t seem to know about it,” said Michelle LoweSolis, the director of Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service. Pentagon officials have built a website—<https://www.dodciviliancareers.com>—to correct this misperception. The website project’s team lead said the site is primarily a recruitment tool; the website’s purposes were to educate folks about civilian employment and help them explore where they might find their fit within the organization. The idea began about two years ago, said Desiree Seifert, associate director for employment integration and strategic recruitment, at the service. The organization had a website before, but it wasn’t dynamic, Seifert said. “It didn’t let people know who we are or the variety of positions that we have,” she said.

MISCONDUCT

[Investigation clears 101st Combat Aviation Brigade leadership of misconduct](#) [John Vandiver, *Stars and Stripes*, 6 August 2021]

The leadership of an Army aviation brigade has been cleared of wrongdoing following a lengthy investigation into misconduct complaints, the 18th Airborne Corps said this week. The 101st Airborne Division’s Combat Aviation Brigade, which came under scrutiny in April after soldiers on an official trip visited a Polish strip club where a senior battalion officer went missing, was probed after various complaints were filed against the command. During the brigade’s Europe rotation, there were indications of a morale problem. A command climate survey of the brigade’s headquarters company conducted during the Europe deployment found that 44% of those polled

“reported knowledge” of suicidal thoughts and 25% reported some type of bullying behavior in the unit. The battalion commander who organized the September staff ride was issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand and will retire, while the executive officer faces separation, Army officials said last month. Other members of the unit also were punished.

RACISM

[UN creates permanent body to address challenges of racism](#) [Edith M. Lederer, *The Associated Press*, 2 August 2021]

The U.N. General Assembly approved a resolution Monday establishing a Permanent Forum of People of African Descent to provide expert advice on addressing the challenges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance. The resolution adopted by consensus by the 193-member world body also calls for the forum to serve as “a platform for improving the safety and quality of life and livelihoods of people of African descent” and their full inclusion in the societies where they live. The forum’s establishment comes during the International Decade for People of African Descent, established by the General Assembly, which began on Jan. 1, 2015, and ends on Dec. 31, 2024. It is focusing on the themes of recognition, justice and development. The resolution approved Monday by the General Assembly says that despite efforts to combat racism, instances and various forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance remain widespread and should be condemned. The assembly said that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and have the potential to contribute constructively to the development and well-being of their societies.”

[Vauhxx Booker charged in case where he alleged men beat and threatened to lynch him](#) [Laura Lane, *The Herald-Times (Bloomington, Ind.)*, 2 August 2021]

A Bloomington man who said he was battered and threatened with racial slurs during a July 4, 2020, melee at Lake Monroe now faces battery and trespassing charges from the incident. On Friday, more than a year after the Fourth of July skirmish that gained international media attention, Vauhxx Booker, was charged in Monroe Circuit Court with battery resulting in moderate bodily injury, a felony, and misdemeanor criminal trespass. Despite a 68-page Indiana Department of Natural Resources report that recommended charging all three men, Oliphant did not file charges against Booker before passing the case along. The DNR conservation officers' final report included 16 witness accounts and listed possible charges against the two White men Booker reported attacked him, and suggested charges against Booker, who is Black, as well. Booker claimed the men he said attacked him called for someone to get a noose, which two witnesses said they also heard, according to a probable cause affidavit. Booker held news conferences to decry what happened, and his lawyer called on the FBI to conduct a hate crime investigation. No federal hate crime charges have been filed.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

RELIGION

[Understanding evangelicalism in America today](#) [Terry Shoemaker, *The Conversation*, 4 August 2021]

A precipitous decline in the number of Americans identifying as White evangelical was revealed in [Public Religion Research Institute's 2020 Census on American Religion](#). In 2006, almost a quarter of the American population identified as White evangelical, but only 14.5% the population does so today. Evangelical is an umbrella category within Protestant Christianity. The category of evangelical is complicated; unlike Catholics, who have a centralized authority, evangelicals do not maintain a single spokesperson or institution. Instead, evangelicalism in the United States today is composed of several institutions, churches and a network of largely conservative spokespersons. Consequently, there are a variety of churches, theologies and practices within evangelicalism. They include certain groups such as Baptists, Methodists and nondenominational churches, among others, many of which are members of the National Association of Evangelicals. So what constitutes an evangelical, or what is evangelicalism in the United States today?

SEXISM

[The coded language that holds women back at work](#) [Christine Ro, BBC News, 3 August 2021]

Workplace language encodes gendered expectations that feed into who we hire, how we assess people and who we promote, holding some people back. Gender researchers often discuss the differences between agentic and communal language and behaviours. To be agentic is to be confident and decisive; to be communal is to be warm and helpful. In many countries, including seemingly progressive ones, men are still perceived as more agentic, while women continue to be viewed as more communal. This feeds into persistent ideas about women, particularly women of colour, being less suited for leadership. Much of the language around leadership (and certain types of jobs) inclines towards agency—sending, intended or not, a gender-coded message about who the ideal candidate is. Erin Oldford and John Fiset of Canada's St. Mary's University have found that male-coded language (think “dominant” and “competitive”) is [rife in finance internship postings](#), which are an important part of building finance careers. These send subtle signals of welcome to stereotypically masculine applicants. In contrast, women are more comfortable applying for jobs advertised using terms like “interpersonal” and “understand”, even for the same positions and sectors. One multi-field study inspired behavioural designer Kat Matfield to create an online tool called [Gender Decoder](#).

[Investigation into gender disparities finds NCAA “significantly” undervalues women's basketball](#)

[Paul Myerberg, USA TODAY, 3 August 2021]

A [report released Tuesday](#) by a law firm hired by the NCAA to investigate gender disparities among the governing body's championship events found that the NCAA “prioritizes men's basketball, contributing to gender inequity,” and that internal support systems and television contracts contribute to the NCAA “significantly undervaluing women's basketball as an asset.” The report comes after social-media posts outlined the differences between the treatment of athletes at the men's and women's NCAA tournaments, with teams at the men's tournament given better food, workout areas, recreation space and gifts compared to their counterparts in the women's bracket. Among the conclusions made by Kaplan Hecker & Fink LLP, which specializes in employment and discrimination matters, including Title IX and gender equity cases, was that the NCAA's model for revenue distribution “prioritizes and rewards investment in men's basketball,” impacting the experience for student-athletes in women's sports.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Air Force turns to virtual reality to combat sexual assault](#) [Scott Maucione, *Federal News Network*, 2 August 2021]

The Defense Department is facing a reckoning when it comes to sexual assault and harassment in the military. The Air Force is now employing new technologies in its prevention training in hopes of combating fatigue and getting airmen to retain knowledge better. Air Mobility Command (AMC) is piloting a virtual reality program for its military and civilian employees' mandatory sexual assault prevention and response training (SAPR). "The goal is of this training is to create an immersive, engaging training where airmen are not on their cell phones, they're not zoning out, they're not texting, they're actually having to pay attention," said Carmen Schott, AMC SAPR program manager. "When you're in the virtual realm, you are there and you have to be involved. You have to be present and use your voice to talk to an airman in need right in front of you. It puts airmen in that experience and helps increase skills and knowledge and abilities on how to answer some of these questions about the sexual assault programs. "During the training, airmen wear a virtual reality helmet. The headset transports the airman into a lunchroom, where a fellow airman—played by an actor—is confiding in them. The trainee's job is to convince the actor to get help.

[Civilian convicted of sexual assault on Kirtland Air Force Base](#) [Elise Kaplan, *The Albuquerque Journal* (Albuquerque, N.M.), 3 August 2021]

A 45-year-old civilian was convicted last week of sexually assaulting a woman on Kirtland Air Force Base in the summer of 2019. A federal jury found Zechariah Freeman guilty of sexual abuse on July 30. A spokesman for the U.S. Attorneys Office in New Mexico said Freeman will remain in custody until sentencing, which has not yet been scheduled. He faces up to life in prison and will be required to register as a sex offender. "According to the indictment and other court records, on the evening of June 15, 2019, Freeman, a civilian, attended a gathering at a house on Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, where the victim was also present," spokesman Scott Howell wrote in a Tuesday news release. "In the early morning hours of June 16, 2019, Freeman sexually abused the victim while she was physically incapable of declining or communicating her unwillingness to participate."

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Feds indict junior sailor for cyberstalking](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Navy Times*, 5 August 2021]

A San Diego-based junior sailor was indicted on a federal charge of cyberstalking after authorities say he posted explicit videos of a woman to Pornhub without her consent, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California. Seaman Sergio Reinaldo Williams, 36, assigned to Beachmaster Unit 1, is set to go before a judge Friday for a detention hearing, officials said. According to his indictment, filed in late July but unsealed this week, Williams' actions started on Oct. 11, 2020, when he sent a Facebook message to the niece of a woman referred to as "Victim A" that contained several photos of that woman, who is a civilian. A day after sending the messages, on Oct. 12, prosecutors allege Williams registered for an account with the pornographic website Pornhub. He then uploaded several explicit videos of the woman, the indictment states. That same

day, he messaged the woman's son on Instagram. He went on to send images of the Pornhub videos to the victim's niece and capped off Oct. 12 by texting the victim with a proposition, according to the indictment. "U want it over with and this fade away, unblock me and video me," he wrote, according to the indictment.

[Frontier Airlines Passenger Taped To Seat After Allegedly Groping And Assaulting Crew](#) [Dustin Jones, NPR, 4 August 2021]

A passenger aboard a Frontier Airlines flight has been charged with three counts of battery. The passenger is accused of inappropriately touching two female flight attendants and punching a male attendant on Saturday. The flight crew then restrained the unruly passenger and used tape to ensure he stayed seated for the remainder of the flight. While traveling from Philadelphia to Miami, Maxwell Wilkinson Berry, 22, was caught on camera shouting at the flight crew and other passengers. "My parents are worth more than f***** 2 million goddamn dollars!" Berry shouted. He continued to cry out, hollering at everyone within earshot, and declared that his grandfather is an attorney. Miami-Dade Police charged Berry with three misdemeanor counts of battery, according to the police report. The Miami Herald reported that Berry had been drinking.

[Investigation finds Cuomo sexually harassed several women, violated laws](#) [Tal Axelrod, The Hill, 3 August 2021]

An investigation found that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) sexually harassed several women, including some who worked in his office, and violated state and federal laws, state Attorney General Letitia James (D) announced Tuesday. The independent inquiry launched by James also found Cuomo and his aides retaliated against a former employee who came forward with allegations. "The independent investigation has concluded that Gov. Andrew Cuomo sexually harassed multiple women, and in doing so violated federal and state law," James said at a press conference. The bombshell [report](#) that accompanied James's press conference marks the culmination of a months-long investigation conducted by Anne Clark and Joon Kim, two attorneys deputized by James's office in March to run the independent inquiry. "Specifically, the investigation found that Gov. Andrew Cuomo sexually harassed current and former New York state employees by engaging in unwelcome and nonconsensual touching and making numerous offensive comments of a suggestive and sexual nature that created a hostile work environment for women," she added.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Okinawa police arrest American base worker on attempted rape allegation](#) [Mari Higa, Stars and Stripes, 3 August 2021]

An American civilian working on a U.S. Marine Corps base in Japan was arrested Friday on suspicion of attempted rape, an Okinawa Prefectural Police spokesman said Monday. Rushane Joel McKoy, 25, of Chatan Town, was taken into custody at 2:14 p.m. Friday and is being held at the Okinawa Police Station, the spokesman said in a phone interview. "The suspect in question is an Army and Air Force Exchange Service associate at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma," an AAFES spokesman, Army Staff Sgt. Mark Kauffman, said in an email Tuesday. "AAFES takes allegations of misconduct seriously and is fully cooperating with this ongoing investigation." McKoy is accused of trying to force an Okinawa woman in her 30s to have sexual intercourse

around 5:50 a.m. April 17, the spokesman said. The base worker “admitted to the allegation,” according to the police spokesman, who spoke anonymously in line with department rules.

[Sexual assault prevention starts on day one, Army senior leaders say](#) [Thomas Brading, *Army News Service*, 30 July 2021]

While leaders continue to expect a lot from their Soldiers, the Army should get “back to the basics of taking care of our people”, the Army secretary said Tuesday during an event for the Resiliency Program Improvement Forum. “As our great Army undertakes a fundamental strategic shift, from 20 years of counterterrorism operations to competing effectively against and deterring conflict with China and Russia, we’re also grappling with a host of harmful behaviors that are hurting our people,” said Secretary of the Army Christine E. Wormuth during the event. Wormuth and other Army leaders spoke to members from across the SHARP program on the importance of prevention efforts in the fight against those behaviors. Another stop Wormuth recently made was to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, the Army’s largest center for basic combat training, where last week she witnessed new trainees arrive. The trainees learned about the SHARP program and how to prevent sexual assault during the earliest stages of training, because “inculcating Army values and an Army culture that puts people first starts on day one,” she said.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

SUICIDE

[Senior Green Berets debunk mental health rumors, fight stigma in podcast series](#) [Davis Winkie, *Army Times*, 5 August 2021]

This article discusses suicide and mental health. If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts, contact the National Suicide Lifeline at 800-273-8255 or the Veterans and Military Crisis line by calling 1-800-273-8255 and pressing 1, or by sending a text to 838255.

*The Army’s special operations community has borne the brunt of twenty years of war, training and deploying at what a then-senior commander called an “unsustainable” pace. That has led to destructive effects on the mental health of many soldiers, according to two senior special forces NCOs who discussed the topic in a [podcast](#) released Wednesday by 1st Special Forces Command. The podcast featured 1st Sgt. Joshua Thompson, a 19-year special operations veteran assigned to the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, and Master Sgt. Chris Copper, a Green Beret and former Ranger currently serving as the senior enlisted advisor for 1st Special Forces Command’s human performance and wellness initiative. The two Green Berets have a combined total of 14 combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan between them. But they weren’t there to talk about their resumes. They were there to share their personal stories, fight rumors and offer resources for soldiers who might want to seek help. Copper will host a special series of the command’s podcast, *The Indigenous Approach*, devoted to destigmatizing mental health issues in the Army special operations community.*

VETERANS

[K9s for Warriors in Ponte Vedra marks 10 years of matching veterans with companion dogs](#) [Colleen Michele Jones, *St. Augustine Record (St. Augustine, Fla.)*, 6 August 2021]

When the late Shari Duval founded [K9s for Warriors](#) in 2011, she saw the potential to help heal the often invisible wounds of veterans returning home with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Ten years later, the organization has grown in a way that even Duval, who lost her battle with cancer in February, probably never could have imagined. Though K9s for Warriors is based here in Northeast Florida, the nonprofit's reach continues to expand each year, making the program the nation's largest provider of service dogs to military veterans with PTSD, traumatic brain injury and/or military sexual trauma. Duval's son, Brett Simon, served two tours in Iraq working for the Army as a bomb dog handler and struggled to transition back to civilian life when he returned home to Ponte Vedra. At Tuesday's event, K9s for Warriors CEO Rory Diamond called the organization a "lifesaving" program, saying its goal was to "put ourselves out of business by ending veteran suicide." "What we do works, and now it's our goal to get it into the hands of everyone who needs it," Diamond said.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[VA expands "PRIDE In All Who Served" program for LGBTQ+ Veterans](#) [Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, VA.gov, 29 July 2021]

The Department of Veterans Affairs grows its PRIDE In All Who Served (PRIDE) program to include 10 additional VA locations across the country where classes are available. PRIDE is a 10-week health education program focused on reducing health care disparities among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Veterans. "LGBTQ+ Veterans are at an increased risk for health care disparities, especially suicide, due in part to discrimination and difficulty accessing health care," said VA clinical psychologist and creator of the PRIDE Program Tiffany Lange Psy.D. "PRIDE focuses on improving overall wellness, increasing social connectedness and empowering LGBTQ+ Veterans to engage in VHA services relevant to their personal health care needs." Every VA hospital has an LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator onsite to assist LGBTQ+ Veterans accessing VA services available to them. Established in 2016, PRIDE is the first program developed to care for LGBTQ+ individuals, both within VA and in the community. PRIDE was developed with support from the VHA Innovators Network and expansion is currently assisted by the Diffusion of Excellence and has been designated a "National Best Practice".