

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 25 MARCH 2022

HIGHLIGHTS

[Gendered Scoring, No More Leg Tucks: Army Unveils New Fitness Test. Here's What You Need to Know.](#) [Steve Beynon and Thomas Novelly, *Military.com*, 23 March 2022]

The Army unveiled its controversial new fitness test on Wednesday, a dramatically revamped set of requirements for soldiers that replace standards created in 1983 after years of limbo and broad skepticism from many in the service, including the secretary of the Army. The most significant changes to the six-event ACFT is that it no longer is meant to prepare soldiers for combat but instead built as a general fitness assessment. It will also have different scoring standards for men and women across different age groups, in most cases lowering them, following a congressionally mandated report from Rand Corp, a Washington D.C.-based think-tank that found nearly half of the service's women could not pass earlier standards for the test. Pass rates among officers are slightly higher with 72% of women passing, compared to 96% of men on active duty.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Study: Christians, Jews and Muslims encounter workplace discrimination differently](#) [Alejandra Molina, *Religion News Service*, 16 March 2022]

Christians, Jews and Muslims encounter workplace discrimination, but they experience it differently, according to a [new report by Rice University's Religion and Public Life Program](#). While Muslims and Jews say they've felt targeted by anti-Islamic and antisemitic rhetoric, it's most often in the context of being seen as part of a larger group, they said in the study. Whereas evangelical Christians say they more often feel singled out when taking an individual stand based on their moral views, the report found. Rachel Schneider, one of the report's authors, said they learned that people often experienced workplace discrimination in the form of microaggressions—such as stereotyping and othering—not just in the hiring, firing and promotion process. As for the nonreligious, respondents felt compelled to downplay or hide their identities.

[Trust in the Federal Government is Low, But Views of Feds Are Mostly Positive](#) [Courtney Bubl , *Government Executive*, 23 March 2022]

Only four in 10 people trust the federal government to do what's right, according to a new survey, but Americans have a more favorable view when asked specifically about the people and institutions that make up the bureaucracy. Low trust in the federal government is nothing new as previous studies from Gallup and the Pew Research Center have shown. But a [report](#) released on Tuesday by the nonprofit Partnership for Public Service and Freedman Consulting seeks to focus less on the "Washington" sentiment and more on the agencies and people inside the federal government, drawing its conclusions from a survey, focus groups and online discussion panels. This comes as the Biden administration is working to implement the president's executive order on improving agencies' customer service and the president's management agenda, both of which mention specifically rebuilding the public's trust in the government.

CULTURE

[Anne Frank betrayal book pulled after findings discredited](#) [BBC News, 22 March 2022]

A book that claimed to have solved the question of who betrayed Anne Frank has been recalled by its Dutch publisher after its findings were discredited. The book's investigating team suggested a Jewish man called Arnold van den Bergh was responsible for her and her family's arrests during World War Two. But since it was published in January, the work has been widely criticised. Now a new report by a team of World War Two experts and historians has said its research does not stand up to scrutiny. The publisher offered its "sincere apologies" to those offended by the book's content, while the granddaughter of Van den Bergh has called on HarperCollins to drop the English-language edition. "With this story, you are exploiting the story of Anne Frank, you are falsifying history and you are contributing to great injustice," she said.

[Black socks, ombré nail polish officially approved for Marines in cammies](#) [Philip Athey, *Marine Corps Times*, 23 March 2022]

A recent Marine Corps uniform board has approved black socks and ombré nail polish in the combat utility uniform, slightly longer hair for all Marines and special characters on nametapes. Updated maternity uniforms are now rolling out for pregnant Marines. But the Marine Corps remains the only service branch to not allow ponytails for women in uniforms other than the physical training uniform. The changes, made official Wednesday [in an all-Marine message](#), were made in an effort to "positively impact diversity, equity, and inclusion," said 1st Lt. Phillip Parker, a spokesman for Marine Corps Training and Education Command. Marines who have apostrophes, accent marks, tildes or hyphens in their last names finally will get to display them on their name tapes, according to the MARADMIN.

[Bridgerton: South Asian faces on TV "makes me happy"](#) [Paige Neal-Holder and Steffan Powell, BBC News, 21 March 2022]

Hit period drama Bridgerton returns for a second series on Friday—with two of its lead characters portrayed by actresses of South Asian heritage. "If you've not seen yourself on screen before, why would you ever want to go for that role?" Laraib Waheed tells us. The lack of South Asian actors in prominent television roles, she says, makes people like her worry their dream career is "not realistic". But the 19-year-old is optimistic that things are beginning to change. "You've suddenly got representation from not one, but two South Asian women and it's a period drama which traditionally you'd only see White cast members in." What's rare about this, according to Laraib, is that usually when South Asian actors do get on screen they tend "to be in a supporting role or playing a stereotype". "When I see any person of colour on screen, especially if they are South Asian, it lights something up in me because you just don't see it."

[Coast Guard Academy Leaders Shouldn't Make Diversity a "Side Issue," a New Report Says](#) [Erich Wagner, *Government Executive*, 23 March 2022]

The U.S. Coast Guard Academy is hard at work improving its "cultural competence" and boosting diversity, equity and inclusion for employees and cadets, but needs to be more proactive

and ensure these initiatives remain a priority even when other issues demand attention, according to a [new report](#) from the National Academy of Public Administration. The report, dated February 2022 but published Tuesday, was commissioned by Congress as part of the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act. Although the U.S. Coast Guard is a branch of the armed services, it is also a component agency within the Homeland Security Department. NAPA applauded the academy for implementing a litany of initiatives and policies aimed at improving its approach to diversity, equity and inclusion both for employees and cadets. But the organization said that the academy needs to do a better job to ensure that diversity is a central focus of leaders and to be more proactive on the issue.

[Disney employees across the U.S. are walking out today. Here's why.](#) [Daniel Arkin, NBC News, 22 March 2022]

Walt Disney Co. employees at corporate locations across the U.S. plan to get up from their desks and head to the exits Tuesday to protest CEO Bob Chapek's response to Florida legislation that LGBTQ advocates have dubbed the "Don't Say Gay" bill. LGBTQ workers and allies are expected to participate in a general walkout at office locations in California, Florida and elsewhere, a group of employees announced last week on a website that calls out Chapek by name. In recent weeks, Chapek has come under intense internal criticism and public scrutiny for not having taken a more forceful stand against HB 1557, a bill that would prohibit instruction about "sexual orientation or gender identity" in kindergarten through the third grade in Florida. Chapek drew pointed criticism for saying in a [companywide memo](#) March 7 that the corporation can make the "biggest impact" by "creating a more inclusive world through the inspiring content we produce."

[Finding older recruits would help Army deal with enlistment shortages, study finds](#) [John Vandiver, Stars and Stripes, 17 March 2022]

The U.S. Army, faced with an increasingly difficult recruiting environment, should target older Americans for service rather than focusing almost exclusively on high schoolers and recent graduates, an Army-commissioned survey said. "In the coming years, devoting more resources toward recruiting older individuals may help in the Army's effort to reach its targeted end-strength goals," the Rand Corp. think tank said in [a report released](#) this week. The study, which focuses on ways to attract more people over the age of 21, comes as the military grapples with trying to win new members in the midst of historically low unemployment. The study was commissioned after the Army in 2018 missed its recruiting goal for the first time since 2005, falling short of its target of 76,500 by about 6,500 soldiers, or around 8.5%. Although the Army has subsequently met targets, its goals have been "substantially reduced," Rand said.

[First but not last: Black girls see themselves in court pick](#) [Annie Ma, The Associated Press, 20 March 2022]

In 2013, as she watched President Barack Obama's second inauguration, 7-year-old Veronica Bofah decided she wanted to be just like him. She would go to Harvard and one day be president, too. Now 17, Bofah has shifted her sights from the presidency to law school. The teenager from Charlotte, North Carolina, wants to represent vulnerable people like immigrants and children who are at a disadvantage when it comes to navigating the legal system. To see Ketanji Brown

Jackson, a Black woman and former public defender, nominated to the Supreme Court, felt both empowering and affirming of her own path forward. For Black girls, the possibility of Jackson being the first Black woman on the Supreme Court is a moment of promise, hope and the breaking of yet another barrier. But while the symbolism resonates deeply, many are hungry for deeper change that goes beyond just representation.

[Foundation honors Army women with Hall of Fame induction](#) [Todd South, *Army Times*, 23 March 2022]

Some rose to the rank of general, some carried their passion for the military beyond the uniform, most of them broke multiple barriers and all of them are women who served in the U.S. Army. Opening the Army Women’s Foundation Hall of Fame [induction ceremony](#) on March 22 at the National Museum of the U.S. Army, the foundation president, retired Brig. Gen. Anne Macdonald, framed it clearly. The women honored were critical members of the Army, “who have changed the course of history through their service.” The Army Women’s Foundation is a nonprofit organization established in 1969 that recognizes women “who have served in the Army or the Armed Forces and contributed extraordinary service,” through its honors and scholarship programs.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Hello Girls inspire Signal Soldier of today](#) [2nd Lt. Annie Beckman, *U.S. Army News Service*, 11 March 2022] [COMMENTARY]

Being a Signal Corps officer in the 46th Aviation Support Battalion allows me to see how Army aviation units operate from a support and signal perspective, while having the opportunity to see our organization’s leaders exemplifying what it means to selflessly and dutifully serve. This month I am celebrating the women who pursued or continue to pursue their vocational aspirations in the military, but I am particularly inspired by the first female Soldiers of the U.S. Army Signal Corps: The Hello Girls. The Hello Girls consisted of 223 women that served as telephone and switchboard operators during World War I for the American Expeditionary Forces. Their commitment to their duty of keeping the flow of information moving was highlighted by their refusal to abandon their positions, even when the buildings they worked in had caught on fire. The women evacuated only when threatened with courts martial, and then returned to duty in the still-smoking building an hour later so that the front lines could effectively communicate with their higher headquarters. Grace Banker, the chief operator, received a Distinguished Service Cross for her actions.

[Support for LGBTQ+ rights on the rise: poll](#) [Brooke Migdon, *The Hill*, 22 March 2022]

More Americans than ever say they support nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people, new research shows, even as legislation seeking to curb LGBTQ+ rights particularly transgender rights—is being considered in state legislatures across the country. Support for nondiscrimination protections is the highest it has ever been—overall and across state, religious and political party affiliation—[according to a poll conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute \(PRRI\)](#). Roughly 80 percent of Americans say they favored laws that would protect LGBTQ+ people against discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing. Around 41 percent of Americans say they strongly support nondiscrimination protections. Still,

20 percent of Americans say they oppose these laws, including 7 percent who say they are strongly opposed to them.

[Thousands of American immigrant stories will be archived in the Library of Congress](#) [Carmen Sesin, *NBC News*, 22 March 2022]

After more than a decade documenting thousands of interviews for the [Immigrant Archive Project](#), which he founded, Tony Hernández is finally getting his wish: The Library of Congress will archive his work. The Library of Congress will include the Immigrant Archive Project in the Handbook of Latin American Studies Web Archive, part of a larger collection of historically and culturally significant websites that the library has designated for preservation. Hernández, 59, said the immigrant story was “the quintessentially American story.” While the project first focused on Latino immigrants, it was eventually expanded to include immigrants from Asia, Africa and Europe, including Holocaust survivors.

[Trailblazing women in Savannah during Women’s History Month](#) [U.S. Fleet Forces Command News Service, 18 March 2022]

A delegation of Navy Fleet Outreach Ambassadors arrived in Savannah this week representing a wide-range of Navy commands and communities to participate in Navy Week Savannah. The Fleet Outreach Ambassador Team (FLOAT) for this Navy Week is comprised of an all-female team of Sailors who were hand-selected by their commanding officers to share their experiences and stories with the Savannah community. “Each Navy Week, we send request nominees to serve as Ambassadors to represent just a few of the best Sailors from across our Fleet. When we pulsed our Fleet leaders, it was eye-watering to see that all of the nominees submitted for the Savannah program were women,” explained Capt. Sarah Self-Kyler, U.S. Fleet Forces Command Public Affairs Officer. “Women are, and continue to be a very influential and integral part of our Navy, and it’s wonderful to see them sharing their stories with their community and future generations.” The FLOAT program provides an opportunity for the best Sailors to engage with their local community and share their experiences in the Navy.

DISCRIMINATION

[Black, Female Maryland Guardsmen Dismissed from Officer Training at Higher Rates](#) [Rebecca Kheel, *Military.com*, 21 March 2022]

Black people and women were more likely to be dismissed from the Maryland Army National Guard Officer Candidate School than their White and male counterparts over the last five years, according to data provided to Congress and obtained by Military.com. From 2017 to 2021, 34 out of 85 Black candidates, or about 40%, were dismissed from the Maryland Army National Guard's Officer Candidate School, which provides training to become a commissioned officer, according to a letter the Maryland National Guard sent to lawmakers in December. By comparison, 32 of 153 White candidates, or about 21%, were dismissed during that time, according to the letter. Meanwhile, 27 out of 67 women, or about 40%, were dismissed from OCS during the same time period, compared with 59 out of 255 men, or about 23%.

[Black women allege Google’s “racist culture” in lawsuit against the company](#) [Curtis Bunn, *NBC News*, 22 March 2022]

Google fosters a work environment that marginalizes Black employees, denies people of color advancement opportunities and ignores sexual harassment claims, among other indiscretions, according to plaintiffs in a class-action lawsuit filed against the company in California this week. At a press conference in San Francisco on Monday, attorney Ben Crump and two former employees of the search engine behemoth detailed what they called a “racist culture” at the enterprise headquartered in Mountain View, California. April Curley, a former diversity recruiter hired by Google to lure Black workers from historically Black colleges and universities, filed the lawsuit against the company, saying that during her six-year stint she witnessed people of color, including herself, typecast into jobs with no upward mobility or passed over altogether. Although she brought in 500 Black young workers to Google, she was not promoted during her time at the company, from 2014 to 2020, she said.

[Federal judge rules Kim Davis violated rights when she refused to marry same-sex couples in 2015](#) [Claudia Dominguez and Veronica Stracqualursi, *CNN*, 19 March 2022]

A federal judge said Friday that former Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis violated two same-sex couples’ constitutional rights when she refused to marry them while in office in 2015. In court documents filed Friday, U.S. District Judge David Bunning dismissed Davis’ motion for summary judgment in civil suits brought against her by two same-sex couples to whom she had refused to grant marriage licenses. A jury will now decide what damages to award the plaintiffs, according to the judge’s opinion. “It is this Court’s opinion that Davis violated Plaintiffs’ constitutional right to marry and the only remaining issue is the issue of damages,” Bunning, who serves on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky, wrote in a memorandum and opinion. The couples suing Davis—David Ermold and David Moore, and James Yates and William Smith—were denied marriage licenses multiple times by Davis or her office. Both couples were later granted marriage licenses by a deputy clerk in September 2015, while Davis was in jail for five days.

[Why so many LGBTQ+ scientists leave physics](#) [Mike Silver, *Futurity*, 21 March 2022]

Women and trans people are most likely to experience harassment, according to the research, which comes as physics as a discipline attempts to grapple with equity and inclusion issues. The study’s authors found that the two biggest factors that influence a person’s decision to leave physics are the overall climate of the organization they belong to and more specifically observing exclusionary behavior. It [will appear in the journal Physical Review of Physics Education Research](#). “People feel shunned, excluded, and they were continually having to readjust and twist themselves to fit into the physics community,” says Ramón Barthelemy, assistant professor of physics at the University of Utah and co-lead author of the study. “LGBT+ people are inherently a part of this field. If you want physics to be a place that anyone can participate, we have to talk about these issues.”

DIVERSITY

[How pairing “female engagement teams” with battle-tested grunts changed the U.S. military forever](#) [Kelsey Baker, *Task & Purpose*, 21 March 2022]

Marine Lance Cpl. Kate Mannion was gutted when she found out she wouldn't be deploying with her military police unit to Afghanistan in 2010. The problem was that Kate was a woman. And in 2010, women weren't legally allowed in combat arms positions, nor could they attach to combat units in any way—not even in supporting roles, such as communications or logistics. Her leadership eventually found a loophole. Kate would join one of the new Female Engagement Teams (FET) assigned to the region. Afghan culture forbade male service members from interacting at all with local women, making information gathering impossible. FETs bridged that gap. Women have managed to access military service throughout history, though their service has usually been strictly confined to the day's cultural norms. But the use of FETs, and the pairing of women and men enduring the hardships of ground combat, have changed the debate over whether women can serve in ground combat roles. The fact is that they have, and with more women now serving in the Army and Marine infantry and as Rangers and special operators, they'll continue to do so.

[OPM Launches a Toolkit to Attract More Women to the SES](#) [Erich Wagner, *Government Executive*, 21 March 2022]

The Office of Personnel Management last week published a “toolkit” for agencies to use to try to boost the number of women in the Senior Executive Service as part of its efforts to improve diversity across all levels of the federal workforce. In 2014, OPM developed a training program entitled Executive Women In Motion in an effort to attract high-level General Schedule employees into the federal government's cadre of career executives. The toolkit essentially provides a guide for agencies to conduct their own version of the program. “This program promotes the advancement of women and men in the Senior Executive Service through interagency mentoring, collaboration and knowledge-sharing sessions that are designed to increase employees' interest in pursuing a career in the Senior Executive Service,” wrote OPM Director Kiran Ahuja in a [memo](#) announcing the toolkit's release.

[Ramstein Air Base squadron shows some “girl solidarity” amid flurry of C-130 flights](#) [Jennifer H. Svan, *Stars and Stripes*, 21 March 2022]

The C-130s out of Ramstein are working overtime to support the rapid movement of tens of thousands of troops and help transport thousands of tons of supplies to central and Eastern Europe, as part of a NATO reassurance mission that began in the weeks before Russia's new invasion of Ukraine. All three of the planes on Friday's mission earned an unusual distinction: they flew the first training formation with all-women crew members in the squadron's history, which goes back to World War II. Capt. Tiffany Haines, who led the group of 17 women with Capt. Megan Kraynak as her co-pilot, said flying with another female pilot isn't uncommon. “But as far as a whole airplane full of women ... especially a full-blown formation full of women, that's extremely rare and also very rewarding,” she said. The all-female formation was organized in recognition of Women's History Month.

[To Retain Women, Workplaces Need To Fight Burnout](#) [Melissa De Witte, *Futurity*, 16 March 2022]

Coming out of the pandemic is an opportunity to build more equitable workplaces—but only if employers act now. Otherwise, burnout is likely going to either drive women out of the paid workforce entirely or cause them to dial back their careers, potentially setting back gender equality by a whole generation, says Correll, professor of sociology at Stanford University and director of the Stanford VMware Women’s Leadership Innovation Lab. Since the very beginning of the pandemic, Correll and her team have been running focus groups with employees from across the country to learn how remote work is transforming their workplace culture and norms. While employees note many benefits of remote work and report a desire to keep working remotely in the future, the expectations that employees be “always on” for work and for family has also led to an increase in feelings of burnout—so much so that many, especially women, are leaving or considering leaving their jobs, Correll says.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

EXTREMISM

[Army Vet Turned FBI Informant Testifies About Plot to Abduct Governor](#) [Ed White, *The Associated Press*, 18 March 2022]

A group plotting to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer talked about abducting her before the 2020 election because they believed she might join President Joe Biden’s administration and suddenly get extra security, an FBI informant testified Friday. The disclosure was one of many details offered by Dan Chappel, so far the biggest witness in the trial of four men charged with a kidnapping conspiracy. The Army veteran explained how he went from simply looking for camaraderie among gun-rights guys to becoming a covert operative winning the confidence of extremists and recording hours of conversations. Chappel made key recordings during trips to scout Whitmer’s second home and a nearby bridge where a bomb might distract police during an abduction. Chappel, 35, helped introduce at trial profane, violent and seemingly incriminating recordings to support the government’s insistence that the group was committed to snatching Whitmer without any improper influence from the FBI.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

HUMAN RELATIONS

[How examining our regrets can make for a more meaningful life](#) [Elise Hu, *NPR*, 22 March 2022]

Instead of the all-too-familiar notion of living a life with no regrets, what if we embraced them? What if we used the past as a guide for better living? That’s what author Daniel H. Pink asks us to consider, after spending years researching human regret—an emotion distinct from sadness or disappointment because of the agency involved in it. A journalist and author of several non-fiction books, including [The Power of Regret: How Looking Backward Moves Us Forward](#), Pink got curious about regret and decided to compile data on it in a qualitative way—he surveyed regret all over the world, asking anyone to write in with their regrets, ultimately receiving tens of thousands of stories and missives with which he could compile, classify, analyze and recognize patterns.

[Inside the ethical beauty boom](#) [Bel Jacobs, *BBC News Culture*, 15 March 2022]

Rituals of beauty, well-being and self-care permeate cultures across history, encompassing ideas of identity and expression, transformation and restoration, cleansing and healing, culture and worth. From a nurturing new face cream to online meditation, beauty and wellbeing provide survival mechanisms, opportunities to take stock and rebalance during anxiety-filled times. The pandemic has seen a spike in mental health issues—with 76 million more cases of anxiety, and 53 million more cases of depressive disorder, according to Unicef and Gallup. In troubled times, some beauty professionals have responded imaginatively. When A-list makeup artist Lee Pycroft noticed rising stress levels among her clients, she retrained as a psychotherapist. She now offers combined makeovers and therapy. “Makeupfulness” is where makeup and mindfulness merge.

INTERNATIONAL

[British royals’ Jamaica visit stirs demands for slavery reparations](#) [Kate Chappell and Brian Ellsworth, *Reuters*, 23 March 2022]

Britain’s Prince William and his wife Kate arrived in Jamaica on Tuesday as part of a week-long Caribbean tour, hours after activists protested to demand reparations for slavery amid growing scrutiny of the British Empire’s colonial legacy. “There are historical wrongs and they need to be addressed,” said Dr. Rosalea Hamilton, an economist and activist who helped organize the rally where demonstrators read out 60 reasons for reparations. Jamaica celebrates 60 years of independence in August.

[“Fashioning Masculinities:” Tracing the history of gender-fluid menswear](#) [Leah Dolan, *CNN*, 21 March 2022]

A long cape in a light-catching dusty pink; a floral brocaded silk robe with a cinched waist—these are some of the most subversive items featured in the new exhibition “Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear,” at London’s Victoria and Albert museum. But this distinctly feminine menswear isn’t the work of today’s new-gen fashion designers—they are historical artifacts from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. While each element flows rhythmically onto the next, this is not your typical journey through history. While “Fashioning Masculinities” centers on menswear, gender fluidity is the bedrock of much of what is on show. It’s a school of thought that promotes authentic living (and dressing), says gender-fluid designer Harris Reed, who features in the exhibition. “I’ve gone into my craft because I didn’t want to make another box for what a woman is or a man is, or even for what a non-binary person is,” Reed told CNN. “You are creating something for that body, for that being. It’s about living without boundaries and without borders.”

[In Hungary, the arts are being suppressed by the government, a new report says](#) [Anastasia Tsioulcas, *NPR*, 21 March 2022]

A new report says that the leader of Hungary, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, and his populist, right-wing agenda that centers Christian and nationalist ideas have created “existential crises” among individual artists and cultural institutions in Hungary. The report, which is called “Systematic Suppression: Hungary’s Arts & Culture in Crisis,” was issued Monday by the [Artistic Freedom Initiative](#), an organization that connects international artists at risk with pro bono immigration representation and assistance with resettlement abroad. One example cited is

the musical Billy Elliot, which staged at the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest in 2018. After the Billy Elliot run was criticized intensely by pro-Orbán media outlets, including the newspaper Magyar Idők—which called the musical “pointed and unrestrained gay propaganda”—the opera theater’s general director, Szilveszter Ókovács, canceled the last 15 shows.

[S. Korean slavery victim seeks UN justice as time runs out](#) [Kim Tong-Hyung, *The Associated Press*, 21 March 2022]

Thirty years after going public with her story of abduction, rape and forced prostitution by Japan’s wartime military, Lee Yong-soo fears she’s running out of time to get closure to her ordeal. The 93-year-old is the face of a dwindling group of South Korean sexual slavery survivors who have been demanding since the early 1990s that the Japanese government fully accept culpability and offer an unequivocal apology. Her latest and possibly final—push is to persuade the governments of South Korea and Japan to settle their decades-long impasse over sexual slavery by seeking judgement of the United Nations. Lee leads an international group of sexual slavery survivors and advocates—including those from the Philippines, China, Indonesia, Australia and East Timor—who sent a petition U.N. human rights investigators last week to press Seoul and Tokyo to jointly refer the issue to U.N.’s International Court of Justice.

MISCELLANEOUS

[A 96-year-old Holocaust survivor was killed when Russian forces shelled his home](#) [Rachel Treisman, *NPR*, 21 March 2022]

Among the victims of Russia's war in Ukraine is a Holocaust survivor who devoted his life to preserving its history. Boris Romantschenko survived four concentration camps including Buchenwald, Dora and Bergen Belsen. The 96-year-old was killed last week when Russian forces shelled his apartment building in Kharkiv, the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation said in a tweet. It also said, according to an English translation, that he “campaigns intensively for the memory of the Nazi crimes and was vice president of the Buchenwald-Dora International Committee.” Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who is Jewish, said in a tweet at the time that it was “history repeating.”

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Duty to protect: It’s time to remove barriers to autism services for military children](#) [Kristi Cabiao, *Military Times*, 18 March 2022] [COMMENTARY]

“I have to tell you; I’m struggling.” These are the words texted to me by a military spouse and mother to a son with autism. The week before this text, her 10-year-old son had lost access to applied behavior analysis, or ABA, services. The family has been unable to locate another ABA provider that accepts Tricare. This mom isn’t alone in her struggle. In one week, I’ve heard this same story from military families across the United States. Another mother in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, told a reporter at the Fayetteville Observer, “I would sell a kidney for my child, and I really just do not know what to do.” These military families face the same struggle: accessing ABA for their children.

[It Just Got Easier for Feds to Vote and Work at Polls](#) [Courtney Bubl , *Government Executive*, 24 March 2022]

The White House announced on Thursday expanded leave options for federal employees to vote and work at the polls. The announcement follows President Biden’s [executive order](#) from March 2021 aimed at increasing access to voting. In [new guidance](#), the Office of Personnel Management said that federal employees can receive up to four hours of administrative leave to vote in federal, state, local, tribal and territorial elections, which can be used on election day or for early voting. Also, federal employees may use up to four hours of administrative leave per year to work as non-partisan poll workers or observers. The new guidance goes beyond previous accommodations and leave options OPM has offered in the past for voting and individuals serving as non-partisan election officials, such as it doesn’t just allow time off on election day itself and allows leave rather than excused absences for election officials. Ahuja noted in the guidance that more and more private companies have started giving their employees time off to vote in recent years. The American Federation of Government Employees applauded the move.

[Madeleine Albright, first woman to serve as U.S. secretary of state, dies at 84](#) [Sophie Reardon and Caroline Linton, *CBS News*, 23 March 2022]

Madeleine Albright, the 64th U.S. secretary of state and the first woman to ever serve in the role, has died of cancer, her family said. She was 84. Albright rose in American politics before becoming the secretary of state under former President Bill Clinton in 1997. She received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012. Clinton and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton released a statement Wednesday calling Albright “an extraordinary human being.” “Few leaders have been so perfectly suited for the times in which they served,” the Clintons said. “As a child in war-torn Europe, Madeleine and her family were twice forced to flee their home. When the end of the Cold War ushered in a new era of global interdependence, she became America’s voice at the U.N., then took the helm at the State Department, where she was a passionate force for freedom, democracy, and human rights.” The White House announced in a statement on Wednesday that flags would be flown at half-staff through Sunday.

[Posting POW footage on social media may constitute human rights violation](#) [Sarah Sicard, *Military Times*, 22 March 2022]

*Showing videos of POWs, regardless of the content or under what conditions it is obtained, is a violation of international law, experts say. “Articles 13 and 14 of the third Geneva Convention protect POWs from insult and from becoming the object of public curiosity,” Leila Sadat, special adviser on crimes against humanity to the International Criminal Court, told *Military Times*. The articles of the Geneva Convention that cover the rights of POWs require governments to protect them from “insults and public curiosity.” “Likewise, prisoners of war must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity,” the document reads. Social media did not exist when the third Geneva Convention was ratified in 1949, but its articles were designed to encompass future conflicts, according to Julia Grignon, associate professor of law at Laval University and a co-director of the clinic of international criminal and humanitarian law.*

RACISM

[Couple charged with hate crime in alleged murder of Black Navy veteran](#) [Alejandra O’Connell-Domenech, *The Hill*, 22 March 2022]

A White man and woman accused of killing a young Black man at a California gas station have been charged with committing a hate crime. Christina Lyn Garner, 42, and Jeremy Wayne Jones, 49, were arraigned last Friday and charged with the fatal stabbing and shooting of 30-year-old Stockton, Calif., resident Justin Peoples and with the intent to kill Peoples because of his race. Law enforcement said Peoples was stabbed multiple times and shot once at a Chevron gas station in Tracy, Calif., about 20 miles south of Stockton, right after 9 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15, according to a [statement](#) from the San Joaquin County District Attorney’s office. Peoples’ father, Maurice Peoples, told CBS San Francisco that his son was a father of two and had served in the U.S. Navy. Images released by the DA’s office show a number of White supremacist tattoos on Jones, including the words “White” and “pride” and a design that looks like a swastika.

[Racist language may soon be gone from Alabama’s constitution](#) [Megan Thompson, *PBS News*, 19 March 2022]

When Alabama’s state constitution was written in 1901 by 155 White men, their goal was to “establish White supremacy in this state.” The document has been hotly debated ever since. Earlier this month, the state legislature took an important step: voting unanimously to delete the racist language that remains in the document. Most people might not think often about their state constitution, but Alabama’s governing document has been hotly debated since it was written in 1901. Earlier this month, the Alabama Senate passed some important changes to the constitution that will be on the ballot for voters this fall.

RELIGION

[The state of faith](#) [Kelsey Dallas, *Deseret News (Salt Lake City, Utah)*, 21 March 2022]

We’ve all heard the headlines. Church membership is dropping. Secularization is rising. Religious activities no longer anchor the average American’s social life. And yet a [new survey](#) from the Deseret News and Marist Poll shows that the story of faith in America is far more complicated—and nuanced—than a simple narrative of decline. Among many groups, faith is thriving, resilient and even on the rise. The vast majority of Americans still believe in a higher power, and a majority believe in the biblical God. Despite the common assumption that Democrats are godless, nearly two-thirds of members of the party believe in God and 24% attend church at least once a week. Furthermore, most people continue to see faith as a good thing. Nearly 7 in 10 U.S. adults think the country would be better off if Americans prayed for each other. Just 37% say it’s hard for people who don’t believe in God and people who do believe in God to get along, the new poll reports.

[U.S. Air Force permits Indian origin Hindu airman to wear Tilak while in uniform](#) [*WION Web News*, 23 March 2022]

In the United States Air Force, an Indian-origin member has been permitted to wear a Tilak while on duty. Darshan Shah, a U.S. Air Force airman stationed at FE Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming, has been granted a religious waiver allowing him to wear a Tilak Chandlo while on

duty. On February 22, 2022, he was given permission to wear a Tilak Chandlo while in uniform for the first time. “My friends from Texas, California, New Jersey, and New York are messaging me and my parents that they are very happy something like this happened in the Air Force,” said Shah. Shah was raised in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, in a Gujarati family that adheres to the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottan Swaminarayan Sanstha, or BAPS. This sect’s religious symbol is a red dot, or “Chandlo,” encircled by an orange U-shaped tilak. Since starting basic military training in June 2020, he has been seeking a waiver to allow him to wear the Tilak Chandlo in uniform.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

SEXISM

[An emphasis on brilliance creates a toxic, dog-eat-dog workplace atmosphere that discourages women](#) [Andrea Vial, *The Conversation*, 23 March 2022]

Workplaces that emphasize brilliance are perceived to have a [masculine work culture](#) that undermines gender diversity, according to a [new investigation](#) I conducted with colleagues Andrei Cimpian, Melis Muradoglu and George Newman. We wanted to understand why women are underrepresented in fields that [prize raw intellectual talent](#)—what some people call “brilliance.” This includes many academic disciplines, such as philosophy, mathematics and economics, and industries like information technology. Despite the [stereotype equating brilliance with men](#), women’s continued underrepresentation in these fields is not due to gender differences in intellectual ability. For instance, [girls are about half of the gifted student population in the U.S.](#) Why do fewer women go on to enter these professions? Our research identifies a possible reason. We found someone who believed brilliance was required for success in academia and other professional contexts was more likely to perceive these work environments as having a [“masculinity contest culture”](#)—a dog-eat-dog atmosphere of ruthless competition that glorifies the more negative aspects of masculinity, like aggression.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Carrying the weight: The undue burdens that female troops endure every day](#) [Robert Moser, *Task & Purpose*, 23 March 2022] [OPINION]

Many Soldiers might not realize how damaging a daily diet of microaggressions can be; I know many men I have talked to certainly do not. But when my friend was asked in a meeting if the “curtains matched the drapes,” she was handed a burden for which she never asked. Same for the woman whose sexual harassment report was swept under the rug by her battalion commander. Ditto for the one who wasn’t given access to a female restroom for months, or the one who was asked out on a date in her final counseling with her commander, or the one who was told her skirt was unprofessional at her promotion board. And I don’t even have to mention the female officers who stress about what civilian clothes to wear on post that won’t draw looks, the female Soldiers who don’t feel safe in the barracks, the female NCOs whose authority isn’t respected. The service members who are blamed for being pregnant or called “aggressive” in meetings.

[Women Pay More for Transportation Than Men](#) [Andrew Claudio, *Route Fifty*, 21 March 2022]

Women are often subjected to gender-based price discrimination known as the “pink tax,” causing them to be charged more for transportation than men, [according to a white paper](#) by New York University’s Rudin Transportation Center and several groups. The pink tax is a form of gender-based price discrimination concerning the upcharge women pay for specific products or services. The term is typically used with cosmetic and personal care products and services, like dry cleaning and haircuts, but it is also prevalent in transportation, the report says. Women are three times as likely to be concerned for their safety on shared modes of transit, so they choose longer, more costly or less-efficient options. Also, women face “gender-based trauma” that can result in their preference for cars and taxis and not mass transit or bikes. More than 65 individuals participated in the workshops from 45 organizations, including from the transportation industry, universities, advocacy groups, law enforcement and housing authorities, to discuss solutions to the women’s transit problem, the report says.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Is “pornified” culture preventing military efforts to combat sex crimes?](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Military Times*, 21 March 2022] [COMMENTARY]

Thanks to the ever-expanding archive of internet pornography, erotica is available anytime and anywhere. But is our “pornified” culture impeding the military’s efforts to combat sexual harassment and assault, while stymying the goal of becoming a truly inclusive force for all? That’s what Coast Guard attorney and Cmdr. Joel Coito suggested last month in [an article published in the University of Florida Levin College of Law’s Journal of Law and Public Policy](#). Coito wrote the article in an academic capacity and was sure to note that his position does not reflect that of the Coast Guard or U.S. Government. In “Toward a Pornography-Free Military: ‘Good Order and Discipline’ Through a Culture of Respect,” one of Coito’s main BLUFs is that porn consumption in America has reached “pandemic proportions” due to its anytime-availability—citing studies showing that 64 percent of people between 13 and 24 “actively seek out pornography on a weekly basis.” Coito notes that Congressional and military leaders have led “robust efforts” to address sex crimes in the ranks, but that “these sweeping efforts have overlooked pornography and its corrosive effect on good order and discipline.”

[What Happened at the Stables?](#) [Olivia Carville, *Bloomberg News*, 10 March 2022]

It’s early November, and Maggie Kehring, a 19-year-old equestrian who’s represented the U.S. in international competition, is making her first appearance at a West Coast show since the arrest of her coach, Rich Fellers, five months earlier. She’d accused Fellers, a former Olympic rider, of sexual abuse, claiming he groomed her into a relationship while she was training at his show jumping stable near Portland, Ore. By 15, she was living on her own in a small apartment near Fellers’ barn, training daily, sharing meals with his family, and traveling to horse shows as a rising star on the U.S. junior circuit. That was her world until December 2019, when she got a call from Fellers, who was then 60. She was 16. He told her he was falling in love with her. “You’re not a little girl anymore, Maggie,” she remembers him saying. “I’m crazy about you.” She was too shocked to speak. She’d never even had a boyfriend. “I put the phone down and was filled with fear,” she says. “I knew I couldn’t leave that barn. He was supposed to be the one to help me get to the Olympics.”

SUICIDE

[Alaska Army Leaders Scramble for Help After Spike in Suicides](#) [Steve Beynon, *Military.com*, 18 March 2022]

Last year, at least 11 soldiers died by suicide in Alaska. Another six deaths are still under investigation. That grim number has sounded the alarm across the Army as it looks to recruit volunteers to bolster its arctic forces amid a newly revamped focus on training for frigid climates after the post-9/11 wars. The number of troops dying by suicide in Alaska has seen a significant spike in recent years. In 2020, seven soldiers took their own lives; eight in 2019; and three in 2018. Alaska has for years been the state with the highest suicide rate among the general population. Military.com interviewed numerous Alaska-based soldiers ranging from privates to senior leaders and found no evidence of systemic poor or abusive leadership. Instead, soldiers pointed to the isolated region, far from home with time zone differences and travel expenses making it hard to keep in contact with loved ones. Nearly all the soldiers who spoke to Military.com requested anonymity to speak freely on the subject and avoid retaliation.

[An independent commission will review the military's suicide prevention efforts](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 22 March 2022]

Despite more than a decade's worth of effort to prevent suicides among service members, the numbers continue to rise, including a 16-percent jump during 2020. To get a better idea of the scope of the issue, Congress mandated an independent review commission in the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act and, on Tuesday, the [Pentagon announced](#) it would begin getting it off the ground. The commission will study suicide prevention and behavioral health programs across the services, including site visits, focus groups, interviews and a confidential survey of troops at every location visited, much in the same way an independent review commission on sexual assault went about its mandate last year. Despite more access to behavioral health resources than ever before, some service members still struggle to push through their concerns about seeking treatment, while others experience long waits to access care on their bases.

VETERANS

[French government to honor Montgomery World War II vet](#) [Edie Schmierbach, *The Free Press (Mankato, Minn.)*, 21 March 2022]

Arnold J. "Buck" Zahratka's war medals and wedding pictures are displayed throughout his Montgomery, Minn., apartment. The 96-year-old World War II vet likes to have them in view while seated in his living room recliner. His war mementos include black-and-white photographs and several medals for his military service. During an interview at his home, he volunteered several details from his life experiences; however, Zahratka plans to "keep his comments short" if asked to say a few words Wednesday during a public event. A representative of the French government will be in town from Chicago to decorate him as a member of its National Order of the Legion of Honor. Consul Gen. Yannick Tagand, on behalf of President Emmanuel Macron, will decorate Zahratka with the medal 10 a.m. Wednesday during a ceremony at the Montgomery American Legion Post 79.

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[Retired Navy photographer aims to capture World War II veterans' images before they're lost to history](#) [Pam Kragen, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 20 March 2022]

After retiring from a long career as a military photographer, Mickey Strand began looking for some personal photo projects he could do to expand his portraiture skills. One of the subjects he landed on was an easy choice: photographing other local veterans who had served in World War II. "Obviously, this was something close to my heart," said the 54-year-old Strand, who spent 24 years in the U.S. Navy, retiring as the Leading Chief of Navy Combat Camera Group Pacific in 2009. Since July 2017, Strand has photographed more than 100 World War II vets, taking their pictures as well as recording audio interviews of their war experiences that he turns into a brief written biography on the project's website, veteransportrait.com. Strand said he is honored to hear these war stories and spend time photographing these heroic men and women. But the reality is that Strand is in a race against time.

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