

## DEOMI NEWS LINKS 29 APRIL 2022

### HIGHLIGHTS

[Assaults, vandalism and harassment targeting Jewish communities and people are higher than ever, audit shows](#) [Nicole Chavez, CNN, 26 April 2022]

*The number of reports of assaults, vandalism and harassment targeting Jewish communities and individuals in the United States was the highest on record in 2021, the [Anti-Defamation League said Tuesday](#). A total of 2,717 anti-Semitic incidents were reported last year, an annual audit released by the ADL states. That was a 34% increase compared to the 2,026 incidents reported in 2020, the group said. The ADL has been tracking such incidents since 1979—and its previous reports have found that anti-Semitism in America has been on the rise for years. Jonathan Greenblatt, the ADL’s CEO and national director, said Jews in the U.S. are experiencing the most anti-Semitism they have seen in the past 40 years and it’s a “deeply troubling indicator of larger societal fissures.” Most of the incidents included in the report—1,776—were described as harassment, meaning one or more Jews or those perceived to be Jewish were the target of anti-Semitic slurs, stereotypes or conspiracy theories, the report states.*

[Federal Employees Are Growing Less Engaged and Less Satisfied With Their Jobs](#) [Erich Wagner, *Government Executive*, 28 April 2022]

*Federal employees reported decreases in both their engagement and job satisfaction when they responded to the government’s annual survey of workplace attitudes, although officials warned that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to color those results. The Office of Personnel Management on Thursday announced the [results of the 2021 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey](#), which for the second year in a row was conducted in an unusual fall solicitation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the federal government, employee engagement fell by 1 point from 72 out of 100 in 2020 to 71 last year, while the global satisfaction index, which seeks to measure federal employee morale, fell 5 points from 69 in 2020 to 64 last fall.*

[Navy secretary pulls sexual harassment investigative authority from unit commanders](#) [Andrew Dyer, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 22 April 2022]

*Unit commanders in the Navy and Marine Corps will no longer have investigative authority over sexual harassment allegations, [according to a department-wide message](#) sent Friday by Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro. Effective immediately, the message says, commanding officers must escalate complaints to the next higher-level commander, who will then appoint an investigating officer. That investigator should be from outside the command and “shall not be familiar with the subject or the complainant,” the message says. However, those complaints are still to be handled within the military chain of command. Last year the military stripped sexual assault investigations from commanders but left harassment up to commanders.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

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## CULTURE

[Air Force's new training aircraft pays tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen](#) [*Stars and Stripes*, 29 April 2022]

*The first new Air Force aircraft of a program expected to train a generation of airmen has rolled off the production line, complete with a paint job that honors the trailblazing World War II-era Tuskegee Airmen. The T-7A Red Hawk training aircraft was unveiled by Boeing at Lambert International Airport in St. Louis, and is one of 351 aircraft to be delivered under a \$9.2 billion contract signed in 2018, an Air Force statement said Thursday. The T-7A Red Hawk has its red tail symbol and name taken from the Curtiss P-40 Warhawk and the 99th Fighter Squadron, the first African American fighter squadron.*

[Air Force updates physical fitness testing guidelines for transgender airmen](#) [Jonathan Snyder, *Stars and Stripes*, 26 April 2022]

*The Air Force updated its requirements Thursday to permit transgender airmen to skip the annual physical fitness test while they undergo gender-confirmation surgery. The policy itself is actually not new, Bree Fram, president of Servicemembers, Partners and Allies for Respect and Tolerance for All, told Stars and Stripes by email Tuesday. But the update puts the information in a more commonly referenced document. The policy on transgender service members appeared in an Air Force policy memo published in April 2021. Updates on LGBTQ inclusiveness are nothing new for the Air Force. In December, airmen were given the option to use gender pronouns in their signature blocks. In mid-April, the Air Force said it will support airmen and their families with medical and legal help if they are affected by dozens of new state laws restricting LGBTQ rights.*

[For neurodivergent, non-speaking poets, collaboration is the basis of language](#) [Jeevika Verma, *NPR*, 29 April 2022]

*Adam Wolfond says that poetry is part of his body. "It is nature to me," he says through a speech-generating device. "And I think that non-speakers like me dance with language." Wolfond, 20, identifies as a non-speaking poet who has autism; he types and moves to communicate. He's neurodivergent, which means he has variations from what might be considered "typical"—in how his brain functions and processes information. In the United States, April is both National Poetry Month and Autism Acceptance Month. This convergence is appreciated by many poets who also identify as neurodivergent, among them Wolfond and Hannah Emerson. When Wolfond says poetry is in his body—he's pointing to a diversity of language that exists beyond the common speaking world. Neurodivergent poet Chris Martin met Wolfond a few years ago. Martin is the creator of [Unrestricted Interest](#), a program that features neurodivergent writers and helps them with their craft.*

[How the tobacco industry targeted Black Americans with menthol smokes](#) [Andrew Limbong, *NPR*, 29 April 2022]

*There's an ad for Newport cigarettes from 2011 that features a young Black couple, smiling and flirting over a plate of burger and fries. Beneath them simply reads the tagline "pleasure!" A different ad in this campaign has another young Black couple, smiling over a park fence by some*

*rafters while one of them holds a cigarette. Menthol cigarettes have been historically heavily marketed toward Black Americans. And that's had a strong enough impact that when the Food and Drug Administration proposed a ban on menthol cigarettes yesterday, the agency specifically noted that the move would save the lives of 92,000 to 238,000 African Americans. According to a [2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#), 85% of Black smokers preferred menthol cigarettes. The FDA had banned flavored cigarettes from being manufactured or sold in 2009. But menthol cigarettes slipped by because of a split in the Black Congressional Caucus—many of whom looked to campaign donations and support.*

[Researchers unearth the painful history of a Native boarding school in Missouri](#) [Gabrielle Hays, PBS News, 28 April 2022]

*In the last two years, Canada and several U.S. states have begun to recognize their histories with Native American boarding schools, institutions that set out to “assimilate” Native American children into westernized U.S. ways of life by stripping them of Indigenous tradition and culture. What would start with a small number of schools following the Indian Civilization Fund Act in 1819 would eventually grow to more than 350 “government-funded, and often church-run” schools across the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries, according to the [National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition](#). As legislation that would create a federal commission to explore the country’s history with boarding schools has stalled, efforts from others, such as the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, have continued. The Society of Jesus, widely known as the Jesuits, which ran a number of these schools, as well as local researchers are trying to provide a more complete picture of what life was like, before, during and after these schools existed.*

[Samsung 2am running advert is “not representing the truth” for women](#) [Rick Kelsey, BBC News, 28 April 2022]

*Samsung’s latest advert has been criticised by some women’s running groups and safety campaigners for being “unrealistic”. The film shows a young woman getting up at 02:00 to go for a run through the streets of a city alone. Samsung says the aim was to show runners working to their own schedules. But women’s safety group Reclaim These Streets has described it as “tone deaf” in light of the death of Ashling Murphy who was killed on a run in January. The 23-year-old’s death in Tullamore, Ireland, opened up the conversation about how unsafe some women feel running alone, especially at night. It sparked the hashtag #shewasonarun as posts and stories were shared about women being harassed while out running. [According to recent figures from the Office for National Statistics \(UK\)](#), half of all women have felt unsafe at some point walking alone in the dark. And running is no exception, according to the views shared online in response to the Samsung advert with some calling it “ridiculous” and “unrelatable”.*

[Space Force to launch its first guardians-only basic training in May](#) [Corey Dickstein, Stars and Stripes, 19 April 2022]

*The U.S. Space Force is set to train its new recruits separately from the Air Force for the first time next month when it launches its inaugural guardians-only Basic Military Training class, service officials said Tuesday. Chief Master Sgt. James Seballes, the top enlisted Guardian for Space Force’s Space Training and Readiness Command, or STARCOM, described the*

*forthcoming change as “small but important” for the youngest military service as it builds its own culture, independent from the Air Force. The first guardians-only recruit class will begin training next month at JBSA-Lackland, where they will be trained by a cadre entirely of Space Force instructors, Seballes said. The curriculum will center on topics unique to the Space Force and its mission to defend U.S. and allied space-based infrastructure from potential hostile action.*

## **DISCRIMINATION**

[Army sued over discharges of soldiers with addiction issues](#) [Dave Collins, *The Associated Press*, 28 April 2022]

*The U.S. Army is violating veterans’ rights, its own regulations and the Constitution by refusing to give soldiers with alcohol and drug use disorders honorable discharges that would qualify them for federal benefits, according to a lawsuit filed Thursday. Army veteran Mark Stevenson, with help from students at Yale Law School, is suing Army Secretary Christine Wormuth in federal court in Connecticut, seeking to force the military branch to upgrade the discharge statuses of himself and other veterans who were given less-than-honorable discharges because of misconduct related to their substance abuse disorders. The lawsuit is similar to previous ones filed by Yale’s Veterans Legal Services Clinic on behalf of former military members with post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health issues who were denied honorable discharges because of misconduct. Those cases resulted in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines agreeing to reconsider those discharge decisions based on new criteria that acknowledge mental health problems can affect behavior.*

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

[Oklahoma governor signs ban on nonbinary birth certificates](#) [Sean Murphy, *The Associated Press*, 26 April 2022]

*Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt signed a bill Tuesday explicitly prohibiting the use of nonbinary gender markers on state birth certificates, a ban experts say is the first of its kind in the nation. The bill followed a flap last year over the Oklahoma State Department of Health’s agreement in a civil case allowing a nonbinary option. The birth certificate in that case was issued to an Oklahoma-born Oregon resident who sued after the agency initially refused the request. People who are nonbinary do not identify with traditional male or female gender assignments. Many states only offer male or female gender options on birth certificates, but Oklahoma is the first to write the nonbinary prohibition into law, according to Lambda Legal, the civil rights group suing Oklahoma.*

[Post-Floyd probe finds discrimination by Minneapolis police](#) [Steve Karnowski and Mohamed Ibrahim, *The Associated Press*, 27 April 2022]

*The Minneapolis Police Department has engaged in a pattern of race discrimination for at least a decade, including stopping and arresting Black people at a higher rate than White people, using force more often on people of color and maintaining a culture where racist language is tolerated, a state investigation launched after George Floyd’s killing found. The [report released Wednesday by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights](#) following a nearly two-year investigation said the agency and the city would negotiate a court-enforceable agreement to address the long list of*

*problems identified in the report, with input from residents, officers, city staff and others. The report said police department data “demonstrates significant racial disparities with respect to officers’ use of force, traffic stops, searches, citations, and arrests.” And it said officers “used covert social media to surveil Black individuals and Black organizations, unrelated to criminal activity, and maintain an organizational culture where some officers and supervisors use racist, misogynistic, and disrespectful language with impunity.”*

[Justices limit discrimination claims for emotional distress](#) [The Associated Press, 28 April 2022]  
*The Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the dismissal of a discrimination lawsuit filed by a deaf, legally blind woman against a physical therapy business that wouldn’t provide an American Sign Language interpreter for her appointments. The current case began when the woman, Jane Cummings, asked for an ASL interpreter for physical therapy appointments to treat chronic back pain with Premier Rehab Keller, in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Cummings communicates primarily in ASL. But Premier Rehab said Cummings could “communicate with the therapist using written notes, lip reading, or gesturing,” [Chief Justice] Roberts wrote. She went elsewhere, but then sued the business, asking for a court order against Premier Rehab and damages for emotional distress. Lower courts dismissed the lawsuit.*

[Why the West is reckoning with caste bias now](#) [Meryl Sebastian, BBC News, 28 April 2022]  
*The U.S. states of Colorado and Michigan recently declared 14 April as Dr. BR Ambedkar Equity Day. Days before that, Canada’s British Columbia province also declared April as Dalit History Month. Ambedkar, the architect of India’s constitution, is the venerated leader of the Dalits (formerly untouchables), who suffered from their lowly position in the caste hierarchy. He was born on 14 April 1891. India’s constitution and courts have long recognised lower castes and Dalits as historically disadvantaged groups and offered protections in the form of quotas and anti-discriminatory laws. Now Dalit activists and academics, particularly in the U.S., are trying to bring in similar recognition in the West, where the Indian diaspora has often strived to be the “model minority”—aspiring, diligent immigrants who assimilate seamlessly into the country. Dalit activists say that for decades, discrimination practised by upper-caste Indians—especially in universities and technology firms—didn’t get attention. But over the past few years, many have been speaking out.*

## **DIVERSITY**

[102 marathons in 102 days: Amputee’s unofficial world record](#) [William J. Kole, The Associated Press, 28 April 2022]

*As Forrest Gump in the Oscar-winning 1994 film of the same name, lead actor Tom Hanks abruptly trots to a halt after more than three years of nonstop running and tells his followers: “I’m pretty tired—I think I’ll go home now.” Jacky Hunt-Broersma can relate. On Thursday, the amputee athlete achieved her goal of running 102 marathons in as many days, setting an unofficial women’s world record. Hunt-Broersma, 46, began her quest on Jan. 17, covering the classic 26.2-mile (42.2-kilometer) marathon distance on a loop course laid out near her home in Gilbert, Arizona, or on a treadmill indoors. Since then, it’s been “rinse and repeat” every day for*

*the South Africa native, who lost her left leg below the knee to a rare cancer and runs on a carbon-fiber prosthesis.*

[Airmen Aim to Promote Diversity in Aviation With Event at HBCU](#) [Greg Hadley, *Air Force Magazine*, 27 April 2022]

*An Air Force UH-1N helicopter will land near Cramton Auditorium on the campus of Howard University in Washington, D.C., on April 30, fulfilling one pilot's dream and perhaps sparking a few more. That's the hope of 1st Lt. Dontae Bell, a pilot with the 1st Helicopter Squadron at Joint Base Andrews, Md. Bell, along with others, helped organize the "We Fly Too" event showcasing diversity in aviation that will be highlighted by the UH-1's arrival and will include an appearance by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., the service's first Black Chief. Speaking during an April 26 webinar hosted by Private Air Media Group. The Air Force has continued to struggle with a lack of diversity in its aviation career fields—a [recent Air Force Inspector General report found](#) that the operations career field is the least diverse specialty code in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender, and the pilot specialty is the least diverse of them all. Roughly speaking, nine out of every 10 pilots in the military and in commercial industry are White, noted Lt. Col. Kenyatta Ruffin, an F-16 pilot.*

[Autistic people have been excluded from advocacy conversations. Julia Bascom is changing that.](#) [Sara Luterman, *The 19th*, 29 April 2022]

*April is Autism Acceptance Month, marked by hashtags, charity fundraising and celebrity parent interviews. Many articles will highlight autism hiring initiatives or, increasingly, famous people who are autistic themselves. You won't see Julia Bascom in most Autism Acceptance Month coverage or any major ad campaigns. This is somewhat by design—she prefers not to be interviewed. Autism can make speaking difficult or draining for some, Bascom said. Still, Bascom has had an outsized impact on the modern neurodiversity movement, responsible for leading autistic advocacy and political organizing at a national level. Bascom is the executive director of the [Autistic Self Advocacy Network \(ASAN\)](#), the largest nonprofit in the United States operated entirely by and for autistic people. Neurodiversity advocacy, the branch of the disability rights movement focused on the rights of people with cognitive disabilities, was once a fringe idea. In the past few years, it has gone mainstream.*

[First female B-52 squadron commander takes charge](#) [Rachel Nostrant, *Military Times*, 25 April 2022]

*The Air Force has officially welcomed its first female B-52 squadron commander at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana. Lt. Col. Vanessa Wilcox took command of the 96th Bomb Squadron, 2nd Operations Group, on April 21. "I am humbled and grateful for the opportunity to lead this historic squadron," Lt. Col. Wilcox told the Shreveport Times. "I'm proud to serve alongside the men and women of the 96th BS to build upon a legacy left by so many great Airmen over its 105-year tenure—First to bomb!" Wilcox is a B-52H Weapon Systems Officer and most recently served as the deputy group commander for the 2nd Mission Support Group and director of operations for the 20th Bomb Squadron. She has deployed multiple times to the Pacific area of operations.*

[GovExec Daily: Making DEIA Goals a Priority for Organizations](#) [Adam Butler and Ross Gianfortune, *Government Executive*, 27 April 2022] [PODCAST]

*The Biden administration has made diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility goals part of its Presidential management agenda, including releasing guidance for agencies to emphasize DEIA goals at agencies and in acquisition. Francine Katsoudas is Executive Vice President and Chief People, Policy & Purpose Officer of Cisco. In this role, she oversees critical functions that instill Cisco's conscious diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.*

[Meet three Black climbers taking representation to new heights on summits across Africa and around the world](#) [Michelle Cohan, *CNN*, 26 April 2022]

*Andrew Alexander King will never forget the first time he took on Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's tallest peak and the world's largest freestanding mountain, in 2018. But it wasn't the summit that surprised the climber. It was the greeting he received when he came down, as local mountain guides gathered around him in a celebratory dance. "It turns out they were excited because they'd never seen an African American climb," he tells CNN. "And I was kind of just blown away by that." According to the [American Alpine Club's inaugural 2019 State of Climbing report](#) only 1% of surveyed climbers identified as Black. "No one should be surprised to hear that climbing is dominated by White men," outdoor guide and author James Edward Mills wrote in the forward of the report; of the club members surveyed, 85% were White and 72% male. While this is a U.S.-based poll, and the first of its kind, the lack of non-White climbers is seen and felt worldwide—from Mt. Kilimanjaro to Mt. Everest.*

[White House nominates Franchetti for vice chief of naval operations](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz and Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 26 April 2022]

*The White House has nominated Vice Adm. Lisa Franchetti to become the next vice chief of naval operations. If confirmed, she would become just the second woman to serve as VCNO, the second-highest ranking officer in the Navy. Now-retired Adm. Michelle Howard held the position from 2014 to 2017. The nomination includes a promotion for Franchetti to become a four-star admiral as well. Franchetti currently serves as director for strategy, plans and policy on the Joint Staff. Before that, she commanded U.S. 6th Fleet and U.S. Naval Forces Korea, among other flag assignments.*

## **EXTREMISM**

[Jan. 6 rioter who re-enlisted in U.S. Army after attack pleads guilty](#) [Ryan J. Reilly, *NBC News*, 22 April 2022]

*A military veteran who re-enlisted in the U.S. Army after he stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6 pleaded guilty to a federal charge on Friday, admitting that he pepper sprayed police officers. James Mault was photographed wearing a helmet with an iron workers union sticker, identified by local union officials and subsequently lost his job, according to court documents. In October, after the FBI realized that Mault had been caught on tape assaulting officers, he and Mattice, were charged. Mault was arrested at Fort Bragg in North Carolina, where he was working as an artillery cannon crew member. Mault had previously enlisted in the military in 2013, and was an*

active-duty soldier until 2016, according to military records. He served in the Army reserve between 2016 and 2020.

[Michigan man faces hate crime charges after threatening BLM supporters, DOJ says](#) [Jonathan Franklin, NPR, 29 April 2022]

*A Michigan man was charged with hate crimes after he allegedly intimidated supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement by leaving handwritten notes and nooses around his community, the [Department of Justice](#) said. Kenneth Pilon, 61, has been charged with six counts of interfering with federally protected activities for incidents dating back to June and July 2020—which is when the wave of nationwide protests began after the murder of George Floyd. Pilon allegedly called nine Starbucks stores across Michigan, telling workers that answered his calls to tell the employees wearing Black Lives Matter T-shirts that “the only good n\*\*\*er is a dead n\*\*\*er,” according to the criminal complaint filed this week. The case is currently being investigated by the FBI and the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division is prosecuting the case.*

## HUMAN RELATIONS

[Are You Tired of Your Job or Is It Actually Burnout?](#) [Constance Noonan Hadley, *Futurity*, 20 April 2022]

*After two years of extraordinary stresses and pressures—and way too many back-to-back Zoom calls—many American employees are exhausted and heading for the exit door. A [2021 American Psychological Association study](#) found 79% of workers had experienced job-related stress in the past month. And, according to Willis Towers Watson’s 2022 Global Benefits Attitudes Survey, many are voting with their feet, walking away from their jobs and shaking up their careers: 44% of the nation’s workers are actively seeking new jobs or thinking about a fresh start. The media has called it the Great Resignation. Organizational psychologist Constance Noonan Hadley believes workplace culture could be a factor in declining worker health and the mass exodus. “Loneliness and burnout—both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic—are key drivers of the Great Resignation,” she says, “or Great Rethinking, as I like to call it.”*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[How 15 minutes of mental health hygiene can change your whole day](#) [Madeline Holcombe, CNN, 25 April 2022]

*[April is Stress Awareness Month] You brush your teeth twice a day to keep plaque from building up and see a dentist regularly for extra maintenance. It’s just good hygiene. But how often are you practicing mental hygiene? Whether you have a specific concern or are just trying to get through your day a little better, taking about 15 minutes each morning to maintain your mental health is something everyone could benefit from, said Broderick Sawyer, a clinical psychologist in Louisville, Kentucky. “This is the mental health equivalent of brushing your teeth before you need a root canal,” he said. The hygiene comes in the form of lowering levels of cortisol, the main stress hormone. An intentional daily practice for stress relief not only makes you feel better today—studies suggest it could improve your well-being later in life. Increased cortisol levels can lead to a number of physical health complications, [according to research from 2020](#).*

## INTERNATIONAL

[Actors Ajay Devgn and Kichcha Sudeepa argue over Hindi as national language](#) [BBC News, 28 April 2022]

*An online conversation between two Indian actors from competing film industries has reignited the debate on Hindi as India's national language. "Hindi will always be India's mother tongue and national language," Bollywood actor Ajay Devgn tweeted at Kannada actor Kichcha Sudeepa. The comment has invited backlash from people in southern India where the language is rarely spoken. Hindi is just one of India's 22 official languages. But the language has been a topic of heated discussion since earlier this month when Home Minister Amit Shah suggested people use it as an alternative to English. While Hindi is commonly spoken in the northern heartland of India, states in the eastern and southern parts of the country speak a variety of different languages.*

[Canada removes ban on blood donations from gay men](#) [BBC News, 28 April 2022]

*Canadian health officials have removed a ban on blood donations from gay men, one that has long been condemned as homophobic. The old rule prevented donations from men who have had sex with other men within three months of giving blood. Health Canada called the move "a significant milestone toward a more inclusive blood donation system". Countries around the world have been lifting similar bans in recent years. As of 30 September, prospective donors will not be asked about their sexual orientation during the screening process but instead about whether they engage in any higher-risk sexual behaviours. The policy change comes after Canadian Blood Services, which collects blood and blood product donations across most of the country, submitted a request last year to scrap the rule to Health Canada, which announced it had approved it on Thursday.*

[Israel halts for Holocaust day, honors 6 million Jews killed](#) [Laurie Kellman, *The Associated Press*, 28 April 2022]

*Sirens blared across Israel early Thursday as the country came to a standstill in an annual ritual honoring the 6 million Jews murdered during the Holocaust. People halted where they were walking, and drivers stopped their cars to get out of the vehicles as people bowed their heads in memory of the victims of the Nazi genocide. Ceremonies were planned throughout the day at Israel's national Holocaust memorial, parliament and elsewhere. Israel was founded in 1948 as a sanctuary for Jews in the wake of the Holocaust. About 165,000 survivors live in Israel, a dwindling population that is widely honored but struggling with poverty. Israel makes great effort to memorialize the victims of the Holocaust and make heroes of those who survived. Restaurants and places of entertainment remain closed on Holocaust memorial day, radios play somber music and TV stations devote their programming to documentaries and other Holocaust-related material.*

[Italian children should not automatically receive their father's surname, court says](#) [Dustin Jones, *NPR*, 28 April 2022]

*The longstanding tradition of a child automatically inheriting the father's surname may soon be ending in Italy. Italy's highest court ruled Wednesday that children should instead inherit both of*

*their parents' last names. Italy's Constitutional Courts ruled that the paternal practice of a child automatically and involuntarily inheriting the father's surname at birth was not only unconstitutional but "Discriminatory and harmful" to a child's identity, Reuters reported. Instead, the court said in a statement, both parents should be allowed to choose the child's last name. The new practice will allow both parents to assign their child's surname in an order they agree upon. If both parents decide to bestow a single surname to the child, that's OK as well. According to the court's statement, automatically assigning the father's surname was unconstitutional. The practice violates numerous articles of [Italy's Constitution](#), which protects the citizen's rights surrounding sex, race, religion and more, the court added.*

## MISCELLANEOUS

[Johnnie Jones, civil rights lawyer and WWII veteran, dies](#) [The Associated Press, 24 April 2022]

*Johnnie A. Jones Sr., a Louisiana civil rights attorney and World War II veteran who was wounded during the D-Day invasion of Normandy, has died. He became the Army's first African American warrant officer. During the June 6, 1944 invasion—as Jones came ashore on Omaha Beach—he came under fire from a German sniper. By the end of World War II, more than a million African Americans were in uniform including the famed Tuskegee Airmen and the 761st Tank Battalion. But they returned from the war only to encounter discrimination back home. Such events served as a call to action, to fight racism. He obtained a law degree and was recruited in 1953 to help organize a bus boycott in Baton Rouge and defend the participants. Jones also defended students arrested during sit-ins as civil rights protests gained momentum in the South. His car was bombed twice. It took decades for Jones' sacrifice and courage during World War II to be recognized. In 2021—at age 101—he finally received a Purple Heart, which is awarded to U.S. service members killed or wounded in action.*

[U.S. Enters International Initiative to Oppose Online Disinformation and Censorship](#) [Alexandria Kelley, Nextgov, 28 April 2022]

*The U.S. joined a new consortium of nations focused on keeping the global internet free from disinformation and censorship, largely a response to Russia's physical and digital invasion of Ukraine, where internet infrastructure is being attacked as part of the ongoing war. Announced on Wednesday in a National Security Council briefing, a senior administration official said that the U.S. is formally launching the Declaration for the Future of the Internet initiative in collaboration with over 50 other countries. Promoting human rights online is a priority of the initiative. The spokesperson said that the group has been in the making for about a year, as the U.S. worked in tandem with other "like minded" democratic countries to combat online misinformation.*

## MISCONDUCT

[Retired general faulted by Marines IG for racial slur during European commander posting](#) [John Vandiver, Stars and Stripes, 25 April 2022]

*A former commander of U.S. Marines in Europe who used a racial slur when speaking to junior troops violated the Corps' standards for leadership, an internal investigation determined. A*

*report by the Inspector General of the Marine Corps details the July 2020 incident, which ultimately led to Maj. Gen. Stephen Neary's dismissal as head of U.S. Marine Forces Europe and Africa. A copy of the report recently was provided to Stars and Stripes. "Neary failed to demonstrate exemplary conduct, as defined by the standard, through his insensitive comments and lack of awareness and appreciation for how divisive his use of a racial slur would be on his organization and offensive to his Marines," the report stated.*

## **RACISM**

[Harvard pledges \\$100M to research, atone for role in slavery](#) [Collin Binkley, *The Associated Press*, 26 April 2022]

*Harvard University is vowing to spend \$100 million to study and atone for its extensive ties with slavery, the school's president announced Tuesday, with plans to identify and support the descendants of enslaved people who labored at the Ivy League campus. President Lawrence Bacow announced the funding as [Harvard released a new report](#) detailing the many ways the college benefited from slavery and perpetuated racial inequality. But the report stops short of recommending direct financial reparations, and officials have no immediate plans for that kind of support. Harvard, the nation's oldest and wealthiest college, is the latest among a growing number of U.S. schools attempting to confront their involvement with slavery and also make amends for it. Using historical records, researchers were able to identify dozens of enslaved people by name, along with their connection to the university.*

## **RELIGION**

[After losing his job for praying on the field, ex-high school football coach brings case to Supreme Court](#) [Melissa Quinn, *CBS News*, 25 April 2022]

*It was after watching the sports film "Facing the Giants" that Joseph Kennedy, then a new coach for the Bremerton High School football team in Washington state, was inspired to pray. And so, after coaching his first game for the Bremerton Knights in August 2008, Kennedy walked to the 50-yard-line, "on the battlefield," the retired U.S. Marine says, and took a knee to offer a prayer of gratitude. After the Bremerton School District learned of Kennedy's post-game practice of praying at midfield in September 2015, it launched an investigation into whether he was complying with the school board's policy on religious-related activities and practices. Kennedy's court battle with the school district will come before a Supreme Court that has shifted further rightward since 2019, when the justices first spurned his request to hear his case. A decision from the Supreme Court is expected by the end of June.*

[Jewish troops who died in World War II finally receive Star of David headstones](#) [Davis Winkie, *Military Times*, 26 April 2022]

*Visitors to American World War II cemeteries in Europe often find themselves awestruck at the seemingly endless rows of crosses, each marking the final resting place of a U.S. service member who died while trying to liberate the western part of the continent from Nazi German occupation. But those crosses inspired a question for a friend of Shalom Lamm, a retired entrepreneur who leads [Operation Benjamin](#)—a non-profit dedicated to ensuring that Jewish soldiers who are*

*buried overseas have grave markers that reflect their faith. Lamm was talking with Rabbi Jacob Schacter, now the organization's treasurer, in 2014, when Schacter recounted a trip to the Normandy American Cemetery in France. The rabbi suspected that there were too few Stars of David among the crosses. Since then, Lamm, Schacter and others have banded together to identify Jewish-American troops who are mistakenly buried under the Christian cross.*

## **SEXISM**

[Why retiring from politics is more complicated for women](#) [Sara Luterman, *The 19th*, 22 April 2022]

*Over the past couple of years, there has been a stream of reporting and rumors about the mental capacity of Sen. Dianne Feinstein, who at 88, is currently one of the oldest members of Congress. Most recently, multiple colleagues told the San Francisco Chronicle that they no longer believe Feinstein is fit to serve, with one saying the senator forgot who they were multiple times during a conversation. Concerns about the cognitive capacity of elected officials are not new. In 1996, Kevin Sack wrote in *The New York Times* about then 93-year-old Senator Strom Thurmond's seeming confusion during a speech. Women in politics have historically started their careers later than men. "The gendered expectation is that you need to be home with your children," said Suzanne Chod, a professor of political science at North Central College who focuses on women in American politics. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, for example, didn't run for office until her youngest child had left for college. She was 47 years old.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT**

[How Vanessa Guillén's murder two years ago changed the military justice system](#) [Mariel Padilla, *The 19th*, 22 April 2022]

*Mayra Guillén began speaking out and calling for military justice reform because she didn't "want to ever see something like what happened with my sister happen to any other victims." Her sister's gruesome death sparked public outcry and legislative reform. Rep. Jackie Speier, a California Democrat who has been pushing for change in military sexual assault and harassment investigations for about a decade, called Vanessa's death an "impetus for many in Congress" to recognize that the military had deep-seated problems. On Friday, the two-year mark since Vanessa's murder, Speier introduced legislation that would ensure military sexual harassment complaints are investigated by independent prosecutors outside the chain of command. The new legislation, the Sexual Harassment Independent Investigations and Prosecutions Act, currently has bipartisan support in the House and is being sponsored in the Senate by Democrat Mazi Hirono of Hawaii. Speier said she plans to push the measure both as a standalone bill and as part of the 2023 NDAA.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Military judge convicts Air Force general of 2018 sexual assault](#) [Rachel S. Cohen, *Air Force Times*, 23 April 2022]

*A military judge convicted Maj. Gen. Bill Cooley of sexually assaulting his sister-in-law in 2018, closing out Saturday the historic first full court-martial of an Air Force general. Col. Christina Jimenez, who is presiding over the bench trial, is expected to sentence the former Air Force Research Laboratory commander on Monday. He faces up to seven years in jail, dismissal from the Air Force and withholding of pay, and a possible spot in the national sex offender database. This is the first time a military court has issued a verdict in a case involving an Air Force general. It's also the first time sexual assault charges have led to criminal prosecution for someone so high up in the chain of command.*

[\[UPDATE\]](#)

[Sexual Assaults in Military Continue to Rise, but Major Legal Reform Won't Take Effect for Years](#) [Jim Absher, *Military.com*, 22 April 2022]

*You may have heard a law made sexual harassment illegal in the military, but what does that mean? Sexual assault has always been illegal under Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice—Rape and Sexual Assault. Rather than made illegal by their own article, cases of sexual harassment were instead broadly covered under Article 134. Otherwise known as the General Article, it criminalizes “all disorders and neglects to the prejudice of good order and discipline in the armed forces, [and] all conduct of a nature to bring discredit upon the armed forces.” A law signed by President Joe Biden in early 2022 changed that. Public Law 117-81, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, contains language making sexual harassment a stand-alone crime under the UCMJ. This new law defined and codified sexual harassment, making it illegal under a new subsection of Article 134. While sexual harassment is now formally illegal under the UCMJ, there is no servicewide documented procedure for safe and anonymous reporting of it, like there exists for sexual assault.*

## SUICIDE

[Overseas service members appear at higher risk of attempting suicide, report finds](#) [John Vandiver, *Stars and Stripes*, 29 April 2022]

*Cultural isolation, family separations and lack of mental health support are among the factors that could explain why service members overseas appear more at risk to attempt suicide than their counterparts in the continental U.S., [a new government report says](#). Meanwhile, easier access to guns explains why troops based in the U.S. account for a higher percentage of suicide deaths, a Government Accountability Office report released Thursday said. The GAO's review was prompted by 2021 directive from Congress to examine factors involved in the rising number of suicides within the military, which has struggled to counter an upward trend in such deaths.*

[Top sailor to USS George Washington crew: at least you're not in a foxhole](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Military Times*, 26 April 2022]

*As sailors assigned to the aircraft carrier George Washington cope with three suicides among their shipmates in the past two weeks, and as the ship continues a lengthy and extended maintenance overhaul in the desolation of Newport News, Virginia—resulting at times in no power or working bathrooms for those living onboard—the Navy's top enlisted sailor brought a blunt message during a visit Friday. Things could be worse. During an all-hands call, Master*

*Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Russell Smith admitted that working and living aboard a carrier undergoing such maintenance is tough. He said that Big Navy could do a better job to “manage expectations” about how bad it can be when it comes to working bathrooms, food and living in a construction zone. “What you’re not doing is sleeping in a foxhole like a Marine might be doing,” he said, adding that much of the crew goes home each night, something that can’t be said for a deployed carrier.*