

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 13 MAY 2022

HIGHLIGHTS

[Senate confirms new Coast Guard commandant—the first uniformed woman to lead a service](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 11 May 2022]

The Senate on Wednesday approved Adm. Linda Fagan to take over as the next Commandant of the Coast Guard, officially making her the first uniformed woman to lead a military branch. Fagan has been the vice commandant of the service since last June, when she became the first woman four-star admiral in Coast Guard history. She has served in the Coast Guard for 36 years. Her prior commands include leading Coast Guard Defense Force West and deputy commandant for operations, policy, and capability. During her confirmation hearing, Fagan pledged to “recruit people who reflect the diversity of the public we serve” and provide service members with “access to high quality housing, health care, and childcare.”

[U.S. civil rights enforcers warn employers against biased AI](#) [Matt O’Brien, *The Associated Press*, 12 May 2022]

The federal government said Thursday that artificial intelligence technology to screen new job candidates or monitor worker productivity can unfairly discriminate against people with disabilities, sending a warning to employers that the commonly used hiring tools could violate civil rights laws. The U.S. Justice Department and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission jointly [issued guidance](#) to employers to take care before using popular algorithmic tools meant to streamline the work of evaluating employees and job prospects—but which could also potentially run afoul of the Americans with Disabilities Act. “We are sounding an alarm regarding the dangers tied to blind reliance on AI and other technologies that we are seeing increasingly used by employers,” Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the department’s Civil Rights Division told reporters Thursday. “The use of AI is compounding the longstanding discrimination that jobseekers with disabilities face.”

[U.S. Navy Commissions First Female Tongan Officer](#) [Petty Officer 2nd Class Storm Henry, *Navy Press Office*, 11 May 2022]

Ensign Mary MeleNaite Tufui Likio “Fui” McCray commissioned as the first female Tongan officer in U.S. Navy history, April 29, 2022. Friends and family witnessed a commissioning ceremony at Amphibious Construction Battalion 1 that was full of Tongan heritage and saw McCray transition from her previous enlisted position as a Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class to an Ensign. “My parents came to Los Angeles in 1985 from Tonga and I was born in Long Beach, California,” McCray stated about her background. “Watching my immigrant parents grind every day to provide for us built a sense of hard work and perseverance in me, which I have carried through every challenge and responsibility I have had.” In meeting McCray, it was apparent what everyone in attendance knew: This moment was inevitable. Her dedication to duty was noticeable from childhood. McCray remembers when her father, an engineer, wanted to join the Army but was not allowed because his English was not proficient enough. McCray has a message for other Tongan females: “Now there is a living testimony that this is all possible. You can have a successful family, both professionally and personally, and you don’t have to limit yourself. Only you can limit yourself, and you are limitless.”

CULTURE

[Air Force puts good behavior front and center in revised guides for enlisted airmen](#) [Rachel S. Cohen, *Military Times*, 6 May 2022]

Three new documents have come out within the past three weeks, starting April 22 with an enlisted force development “blueprint,” a 32-page compilation of basic information about the Air Force, the larger organizations it serves and professional development resources. On Friday, the service also dropped new versions of “The Enlisted Force Structure” and “The Profession of Arms: Our Core Values,” commonly known as the “Brown Book” and “Blue Book.” New revisions to the “Blue Book” delve into the foundations of what it means to be an airman, including the oaths of service and code of conduct. Notably, it points out that sexual harassment and assault violate the service’s core values, and warns against stalking, bullying, political or ideological extremism and discrimination.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Atoll Celebrates Kwajalein Kamolol Day](#) [Jessica Dambruch, *Army News Service*, 12 May 2022]

Traditional leaders, distinguished guests and atoll community members celebrated the 78th annual Kwajalein Kamolol Day on Ebeye, Feb. 9, 2022, to commemorate the liberation of Kwajalein Atoll during World War II. This year’s weeklong celebration featured the presentation of a new Kwajalein Atoll flag designed by Irojlaplap and Kwajalein Atoll Sen. Michael Kabua, passed in a resolution by the Kwajalein Atoll local government and endorsed by the Republic of the Marshall Islands national government. The new design echoes the colors of the Marshall Islands’ flag and bears two green fronds and a symbolic white flower. Guests enjoyed musical performances by the Mon La Mike Band, the Kwajalein High School Marching Band from U.S. Army Garrison-Kwajalein Atoll and a special dance exhibition by Ebadōn Tōt Jepta. Special remarks were delivered by Irojlaplap and Kwajalein Sen. Michael Kabua; RMI President David Kabua; KALGOV Hirata Kabua; and U.S. Ambassador to the RMI Roxanne Cabral, who delivered the entirety of her remarks in Marshallese.

[Bigger Bonuses Pentagon’s Top Weapon to Combat Recruiting Crisis as Troops Head for the Exits](#)

[Thomas Novelly, Konstantin Toropin, Steve Beynon and Rebecca Kheel, *Military.com*, 13 May 2022]

Hints that the armed services might soon face a problem keeping their ranks full began quietly, with officials spending the last decade warning that a dwindling slice of the American public could serve. Only about one-quarter of young Americans are even eligible for service these days, a shrinking pool limited by an increasing number of potential recruits who are overweight or are screened out due to minor criminal infractions, including the use of recreational drugs such as marijuana. But what had been a slow-moving trend is reaching crisis levels, as a highly competitive job market converges with a mass of troops leaving as the coronavirus pandemic subsides, alarming military planners. “Not two years into a pandemic, and we have warning lights flashing,” Maj. Gen. Ed Thomas, the Air Force Recruiting Service commander, wrote in a memo—leaked in January—about the headwinds his team faces.

[Burial sites found at 53 Native American boarding schools, U.S. government says](#) [Brad Brooks, *Reuters*, 11 May 2022]

A U.S. government investigation into the dark history of Native American boarding schools has found “marked or unmarked burial sites” at 53 of them, Interior Secretary Deb Haaland said on Wednesday.

Haaland, the first Native American cabinet member, announced the investigation last year. In releasing preliminary findings during a press conference in Washington, she spoke through tears and in a choked-up voice. Until Wednesday, the U.S. government had yet to provide any true accounting of the legacy of the schools, which used education to change culture so tribal land could be taken. Families were forced to send their children to the schools. To compile Haaland's report, researchers located records on 408 schools that received federal funding from 1819 to 1969, and another 89 schools that did not receive money from the government. About half the schools were run for the government by or supported by churches of various denominations. Many children were abused at the schools, and tens of thousands were never heard from again, activists and researchers say.

[Culture, Partnerships Take Center Stage with Return of International Day](#) [Javier Chagoya, Navy Press Office, 12 May 2022]

The long-standing annual tradition of Naval Postgraduate School's (NPS) international students hosting International Day was revived enthusiastically May 7 in the school's academic quadrangle. Students from 28-nations came together, along with their U.S. counterparts to buoy the festival as an event that unites all countries. The International Day Festival has been around since the 1960s, and this festival serves both as celebration for its return and turning the page on the pandemic. And despite the limited audience and entertainment venues, visitors were only too excited to join in with the festivities. This year's festival was only open to the NPS community, as well as DOD access card holders, military retirees, and their families. According to International Executive Committee Co-Chair Lt. Col. Kristof Trier of Germany, says it's one of the greatest blessings of his stay in the U.S. that all the delegations can join their American friends, in the day-to-day work in exchange of ideas, opinions and laughter, and culture.

[Former Jacksonville Jaguars kicker sues team, alleges former coach Urban Meyer created hostile work environment](#) [Wayne Sterling, CNN, 12 May 2022]

Former Jacksonville Jaguars kicker Josh Lambo is suing the NFL team, alleging that former Jaguars head coach Urban Meyer created a "hostile work environment." The lawsuit alleges that Lambo informed the Jaguars about the incident through his agent, Richard Irvin, but the team "did not initiate an investigation" nor "intervene in the close working conditions" between the two. The suit claims that Meyer "initiated a pattern of harassment, and created a hostile work environment." The former coach threatened to cut Lambo, the suit asserts, "if he ever objected to his behavior or challenged his authority again." the complaint said that Meyer continued to harass the kicker verbally and used "intimidation tactics to distract [him] while he practiced kicks." Lambo "felt the stress" of the coach's "retaliatory actions, which affected [Lambo's] ability to sleep, practice, and perform his job as he had in previous seasons under different coaches," per the complaint.

["It made me feel low": Black students urge passage of Crown Act to end hair discrimination](#) [Janelle Griffith, NBC News, 7 May 2022]

In interviews with NBC News, the parents of two children singled out over their natural hairstyles or textures said their experiences highlight the necessity of the Crown Act, which would ban hair discrimination in workplaces, schools and other contexts. The name "Crown" stands for Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair. The act would allow Black people and others to wear their hair how they want without fear of being punished or targeted. More than a dozen states—including California, New Jersey and New York—have passed versions of the bill. Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman,

D-N.J., the lead sponsor of the Crown Act, said hair discrimination disproportionately affects Black people, and how a person wears their hair has no impact on their ability to do a job, obtain an education or compete in sports. She said the bill would amend civil rights laws to extend the definition of illegal discrimination to include natural hair or hairstyles that people wear to communicate or emulate the African or Black culture, such as Afros, braids, Bantu knots, locs and twists.

[Meet Raven Chacon, the first Native American to win the Pulitzer Prize for music](#) [Tom Huizenga, NPR, 10 May 2022]

*Raven Chacon’s *Voiceless Mass* received its world premiere Nov. 21, 2021 at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Milwaukee, Wis. Far from any kind of traditional Catholic mass, the piece was written by Chacon, a Diné composer, performer and installation artist from the Navajo Nation, for chamber orchestra and pipe organ—specifically for the pipe organ at St. John the Evangelist. This week, Chacon became the first Native American composer to win the Pulitzer prize for music. In its note on the award, the Pulitzer jury called *Voiceless Mass* a “mesmerizing, original work ... that evokes the weight of history in a church setting, a concentrated and powerful music expression with a haunting, visceral impact.” Until recent years, music Pulitzers have typically been handed to White men. But since 2013, five women have won the award, as has the hip-hop artist Kendrick Lamar.*

[Military families push the Army to “normalize parenthood”](#) [Mariel Padilla, *The 19th*, 12 May 2022]

A new directive addresses fertility treatment, pregnancy and postpartum recovery – issues that have long affected soldiers’ careers, marriages and home life. More than 10 percent of active-duty respondents said family-building challenges are a main reason why they’d leave the military, according to an annual military family lifestyle [survey conducted by Blue Star Families](#), a nonprofit founded in 2009 by military spouses. The Army’s new directive builds on congressional requirements and is designed to increase retention and “normalize parenthood,” according to the military branch. Staff Sgt. Nicole Pierce is one of authors of the directive, a single mother of two daughters and the founder and administrator of several Facebook groups for mothers in the military — including “The Army Mom Life,” which has more than 8,500 members and provided feedback to the military branch. The new policy “is a huge thing to improve quality of life,” Pierce said at an April 21 news conference announcing the directive.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Netflix alters corporate culture memo to stress the importance of artistic freedom](#) [Andrew Limbong, NPR, 13 May 2022]

*Anyone looking for a job at Netflix will be greeted with something different when they check out the [company’s statement on its internal culture](#). First reported by *Variety*, Netflix has added a section on “Artistic Expression,” that says the company may refuse to censor specific artists or voices. “As employees we support the principle that Netflix offers a diversity of stories, even if we find some titles counter to our own personal values,” the statement reads. “Depending on your role, you may need to work on titles you perceive to be harmful. If you’d find it hard to support our content breadth, Netflix may not be the best place for you.” This is a relatively major change compared to an archived version of the statement from as recently as April, that doesn’t have much to say about the actual content on the platform, and is more focused on interpersonal relationships at the company. One section reads “Representation Matters,” where the company promises to improve “so that everyone feels a sense of*

belonging at Netflix.” And another section addresses “Ethical Expectations,” where the company says it expects all employees to protect confidential information “whether or not it is marked ‘confidential.’”

[The regional accentism that secretly affects job prospects](#) [Christine Ro, *BBC News*, 8 May 2022]

Foreign-accent discrimination is rampant in professional settings. But discrimination can also extend to certain native speakers of a language, because of the judgements attached to particular accents. While many employers are becoming very sensitive to other types of bias, accent bias remains challenging to root out. But it doesn’t have to be this way. Whether they realise it or not, people infer a great deal about someone from the way they speak. People make assumptions not only about a person’s geographical origins, but potentially also their class background, from a giveaway twang or lilt, for example. Yet these assumptions aren’t necessarily accurate—and come laden with bias. One such bias is “similarity attraction”, which means that “we favour people who are like us”, explains Devyani Sharma, a sociolinguist at Queen Mary University of London. That favouritism means people may automatically view those with similar accents as more trustworthy. Unlike other markers of identity, like race and religion, accents generally aren’t legally protected characteristics. This makes it more likely that discrimination—whether conscious or unconscious—might occur in the workplace, without a means to address it.

[Standing the test of time](#) [Lance Cpl. Michelle Brudnicki, *Marine Corps News Service*, 13 May 2022]

On May 5, 2022, a group of proud women gathered in front of the historic 4th Battalion on Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island to unearth a time capsule that had been buried 10 years earlier, and to celebrate the persevering service of women in the Marine Corps. Some in attendance hadn’t been an active duty Marine in many years, but all had come with a clear expression of pride and belonging. Those in attendance on May 5th included members of the Women Marines Association, Marines assigned to various units across the depot, and the command team who buried the time capsule in 2012. As the box was hoisted out of the ground, the crowd cheered, excited to see the tattered wood still holding strong. SgtMaj. Robin Fortner (Ret.) was the Battalion SgtMaj at the time of the time capsule being buried, and was in attendance to open the box. She had placed multiple items in the time capsule all those years ago and has been an active advocate for women in the Marine Corps and their history since her enlistment in 1990.

DISCRIMINATION

[Appeals Board Rules That Feds Disclosing Discrimination Will Get No Whistleblower Protections](#) [Eric Katz, *Government Executive*, 11 May 2022]

Federal employees making allegations of discrimination by their agency, whether against themselves or others, are not entitled to whistleblower protections and cannot seek remedies through the same paths as others who shed a light on wrongdoing, an appeals board has ruled. The Merit Systems Protection Board, recently reconstituted after more than five years without a quorum on its central panel, overruled some of its own precedent in the decision, with its new members arguing its predecessors had erred in broadening the agency’s purview to include cases involving discrimination. Any matters related to sex, race, color religion or national origin are excluded from whistleblower protections, the board said. It added its new precedent reestablishes one previously held by the board and various federal courts. The claims fall squarely under Title Seven of the Civil Rights Act and therefore, going forward,

must be heard before EEOC. The opposite is also true, the board said, meaning proper whistleblowers cannot bring their claims before the commission.

DIVERSITY

[Army officer explains why diversity makes a difference on the battlefield](#) [Matthew Smith, *Task & Purpose*, 11 May 2022] [OPINION]

The summer of 2020's social unrest, stemming from real and perceived racial injustices, served as a shock to the system. Organizational leaders took to reassessing their organizational ethos and practices through the lens of inclusion. Such endeavors have compelled organizations, including the Army, to progress forward from long-standing processes and standards concerning inclusivity. These recent shifts away from longstanding norms to more inclusive practices have stirred and will continue to stir questions from our Soldiers. Thus, leaders at both the strategic and tactical levels should have a viable military answer to the question: "Why does inclusion matter to the Army?" Furthermore, we, as professionals, should ask: What type of inclusion matters most to military operations and how may we create an inclusive culture in our organization? To address the initial question, "Why does inclusion matter?" let's start with our understanding of how to win in a complex environment.

[Female A-10 pilot who averted catastrophe in landing disabled plane makes history with award](#) [Jennifer H. Svan, *Stars and Stripes*, 13 May 2022]

Capt. Taylor Bye kept her composure as her A-10C Thunderbolt II fell apart midflight during a routine sortie two years ago in Georgia, pulling off a "wheels up" belly landing without a cockpit canopy as punishing winds blew in her face. In recognition of the feat, Bye was presented Wednesday with the 2020 Koren Kolligian Jr. trophy at a Pentagon ceremony, becoming the first female recipient of the award since its creation in 1957, the Air Force said in a statement Thursday. Bye's A-10 began dismantling while she was preparing for a strafing run during an April 2020 training mission over Georgia at Moody Air Force Base's Grand Bay Range, according to the service. She escaped the crash without injury. The Air Force investigation report into the cause of the crash was not available Friday. Named for 1st Lt. Koren Kolligian Jr., an Air Force pilot declared missing when his plane disappeared off the California coast in 1955, the trophy recognizes crew members who avert or minimize the seriousness of injury or property damage in an aircraft mishap, according to the Air Force.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Senate confirms Lisa Cook to be the first Black woman on Fed board](#) [Ted Barrett and Ali Zaslav, *CNN*, 10 May 2022]

The Senate on Tuesday confirmed Lisa Cook to the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, becoming the first African American woman to be a member of the panel. In her confirmation hearing, Cook said she will bring "diverse perspectives" to the Fed that will allow it to better carry out its mission of fighting inflation and keeping unemployment low.

EXTREMISM

[6 Airmen Caught with Thousands of Rounds of Stolen Ammo, Federal Indictment Alleges](#) [Drew F. Lawrence, *Military.com*, 9 May 2022]

Six airmen had 14,000 rounds of stolen ammunition, mostly from Fairchild Air Force Base in Washington, according to federal court documents filed May 3. The ammunition was discovered after at least one of the airmen allegedly made online threats advocating for the violent overthrow of the federal government. The FBI's Seattle Division opened the investigation into the airmen last August after Staff Sgt. John I. Sanger began discussing acts of violence and advocating for the seizure of the U.S. Capitol. "They defrauded our election system and are still getting away with it," Sanger wrote in December 2020 under the social media moniker "problematicpatriot," according to the FBI's affidavit. "That means this system has run it's [sic] course. People have to die."

[Internet troll faces trial after Capitol riot plea fizzles](#) [The Associated Press, 11 May 2022]

A federal judge scheduled a trial next year for a far-right internet troll after the man, known to his social media followers as "Baked Alaska," balked at pleading guilty on Wednesday to a criminal charge stemming from the U.S. Capitol riot. U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan refused to accept a guilty plea by Anthime Gionet after he professed his innocence at the start of what was scheduled to be a plea agreement hearing. Instead, the judge set a March 2023 trial date for Gionet, who is charged with a misdemeanor count of parading, demonstrating or picketing inside a Capitol building. "If he wants a trial, he'll get a fair trial," Sullivan said. Gionet's lawyer has claimed he only went to Washington, D.C., to document what happened that day. Prosecutors disputed Gionet's contention that he is a member of the news media.

INTERNATIONAL

[The long struggle to return Cambodia's looted treasures](#) [Celia Hatton, BBC News, 12 May 2022]

Cambodia is calling on the UK government to help it recover antiquities it says were stolen from its temples. The country's culture minister says the Victoria & Albert and British Museums both have looted objects. The museums said they were transparent about items' origins. In a letter to her British counterpart Nadine Dorries, Cambodian culture minister, Phoeurng Sackona, says many important cultural treasures were stolen from sacred temples and "wrongfully ended up" in warehouses and institutions—including the two London museums. The Cambodians—who believe ancient statues hold the souls of their ancestors—have pinpointed that many of the stolen works passed through the hands of a rogue British art dealer, Douglas Latchford, who died in 2020.

[Malta retains top spot for "Rainbow Europe" rights, say activists](#) [Reuters, 12 May 2022]

A new dynamic has emerged in protecting the rights of the LGBTQ+ communities across Europe, but significant difficulties remain and youngsters are particularly vulnerable, activists said on Thursday. Malta retained its top spot on the "Rainbow Europe" for 2022 for respect of human rights and full equality, while Azerbaijan, Turkey, Russia and Armenia were at the bottom of rankings among 49 countries compiled by ILGA-Europe, an umbrella organisation for 600 rights advocacy groups. Denmark, France, Iceland and Montenegro also rose in the rankings, the [report](#), released on Thursday, said. The United Kingdom slipped for falling behind on its promises for reform, while Bulgaria and Romania were not far off from having the lowest rankings in the EU along with Poland.

[Taliban order Afghan women to cover faces again](#) [Reuters, 7 May 2022]

Afghanistan's Taliban government ordered women on Saturday to cover their faces in public, a return to a signature policy of their past hardline rule and an escalation of restrictions that are causing anger at

home and abroad. The ideal face covering was the all-encompassing blue burqa, the group said, referring to the garment that was obligatory for women in public during the Taliban's previous 1996-2001 rule. Most women in Afghanistan wear a headscarf for religious reasons but many in urban areas such as Kabul do not cover their faces. "It is interfering with women's private lives," Kabul-based women's rights advocate Mahbouba Seraj said of Saturday's decree. "Today we have lots of other problems, like suicide attacks, poverty ... People are dying every day, our girls can't go to school, women can't work ... But they just think and speak and make laws about hijab (women's Islamic dress)."

[TV presenter walks out of sport awards over sexism](#) [BBC News, 9 May 2022]

TV presenter Eilidh Barbour was among guests who left Sunday's Scottish Football Writers' Association (SFWA) gala dinner in Glasgow in protest. Ms. Barbour tweeted that she had "never felt so unwelcome in the industry" while others have described the jokes as "sexist, racist and homophobic". The SFWA said it apologised to anyone "offended or upset" by the speech. It has also promised to review and improve the format of the annual dinner, which involves the presentation of awards including player and manager of the year. The controversy centred on jokes made in a speech by Bill Copeland, a lawyer who works on the after-dinner speaking circuit. Kick it Out, a campaign against racism in football, and Women in Football issued a joint statement describing the remarks at the dinner as "sexist, racist and homophobic". It said: "Woman face sexism and misogyny in society and this is often exacerbated when they play a role in football or other sports—whether they're a player, a pundit or fan. That must change."

MISCELLANEOUS

[Census Hired Hundreds of Thousands to Conduct Its 2020 Count. It Didn't Vet A Lot of Them.](#) [Eric Katz, Government Executive, 12 May 2022]

Individuals with criminal records and others unsuitable for federal employment had direct interactions with Americans during the 2020 decennial census, according to a new report, as the agency conducting it failed to properly review the wave of employees it quickly brought on to carry out the count. The Census Bureau had hoped to recruit more than 2 million applicants for the recent enumeration and had sent out 900,000 job offers just before it began its work. Eleventh-hour adjustments and the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruptions throughout the process, leading to widespread complaints of management's chaotic approach from the agency's workers and stakeholders. According to a [new report from the Commerce Department's inspector general](#), that disorganization also led to inadequate background checks of applicants and a still-growing backlog of unaddressed investigations. CIS only employs four staffers, inhibiting it from quickly reducing the backlog. As the backlog continues to grow, Census is risking allowing employees with "major suitability issues" to stay on the rolls without receiving proper vetting.

[Federal Employees Can Now Receive Paid Time Off to Vote](#) [My Federal Retirement, 9 May 2022]

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently announced that federal employees may now receive up to four hours of administrative leave to vote in federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial elections. OPM also noted that federal employees may now use up to four hours of administrative leave per year to serve as non-partisan poll workers or observers. Historically, OPM guidance has provided administrative leave to federal employees on election day only. It also allowed employees to access paid

time off in limited circumstances based on employee’s work schedule and the polling hours in their community. “The [new guidance](#),” OPM wrote in statement, “recognizes that voting has evolved beyond a single election day and reduces barriers to voting by directing agencies to provide time off for employees to vote at any time the polls are open, either on election day or during an early voting period.”

[Why English learners see this mandatory exam as an “unjust” barrier to graduation](#) [Roby Chavez, PBS News, 2 May 2022]

Louisiana’s mandatory state testing is returning after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19. From the end of April through May, public school students in grades 3 through 12 must take the LEAP, the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program, which tests students on core concepts, including English, math and history or biology. While the test was on hold during the pandemic, there was about a 7-percent spike in the graduation rate among English learners. Advocates, pointing to that bump in graduations, have challenged the fairness of the test. The LEAP has proven to be a test few EL students can pass, especially for most newly arrived students, and state data illuminates the disparity. The [2019 state graduation rate](#) shows that 80 percent of all students in Louisiana earned a diploma, but only 41 percent of English Learners graduated. Furthermore, Louisiana had the second-worst high school graduation rate—[31 percent](#)—in the country for English learners for the 2017-2018 school year, according to the Office of English Language Acquisition, the federal office that supports ELs.

MISCONDUCT

[Ethical Behavior More Than Just Yearly Online Training](#) [C. Todd Lopez, DOD News Service, 12 May 2022]

Service members and civilians throughout the Defense Department complete an array of training sessions annually related to topics such as insider threats, anti-terrorism awareness and cyber security. All are important to the well-being of the department. But compliance with ethics standards—another topic with an annual training requirement—is important enough that Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III has drawn special attention to it this year. Service members and civilians across the Defense Department may be asked again this year to complete annual government ethics training. That training is developed to ensure employees know what is right, so they are always able to maintain and strengthen the trust the American people have in the U.S. military. “Ethics is a part of everything we do in the department,” Scott Thompson, director of the standards of conduct office within the Defense Department’s Office of General Counsel, said. “An important part of our ethics program is annual training...”

[What to Do If You’re Under Investigation in the Military](#) [Mike Eaton, Military.com, 10 May 2022]

[OPINION]

You feel sick in the pit of your stomach. You have just found out, either through the grapevine or by formal notification, that you are under investigation. Your first reaction is to take action and clear it up—fast! That makes sense, right? As service members, we are all trained to confront threats and to act decisively to deal with them. If you are under investigation, though, it is usually in your best interest to fight that urge. In general, there are four main categories of military investigation: property damage or loss, illness/injury in the line of duty, command-directed, and criminal. In many cases, there is overlap among the different types of investigations. For example, a property damage investigation may begin as

a command-directed investigation that reveals that misconduct or negligence was the cause of the loss, which in turn results in a referral for criminal investigation. Because these investigations can result in punishment, this article focuses on the steps you must take to protect yourself when faced with a command-directed or criminal investigation.

RACISM

[Air Force investigating racist text to airman saying he needed “White complexion” for assignment](#)

[David Roza, *Task & Purpose*, 9 May 2022]

Leaders at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona are investigating an incident where an airman allegedly told another airman that he was not being considered for a position because “the Air Force is looking for somebody of White complexion,” according to a text exchange shared on the popular Facebook page Air Force amn/snco/nco. “We won’t be sending your name up for [redacted] at the squadron,” a White technical sergeant allegedly texted a Black senior airman at the 56th Equipment Maintenance Squadron on Wednesday. When the senior airman asked for a specific reason why, the technical sergeant said, “We personally do not feel as if you are a good choice for the squadron. You currently have a shaving waiver which isn’t a professional image, and I think the air force is looking for somebody of White complexion and with the image that the air force needs.” According to the source, the senior airman’s chain of command and the wing’s Equal Opportunity and Inspector General offices started looking into the alleged text exchange soon after the screenshot was posted on Facebook.

[Delaware AG asks for federal civil rights review after HBCU team stopped by police](#) [Jonathan

Franklin, *NPR*, 12 May 2022]

Delaware Attorney General Kathy Jennings says she is “deeply troubled” following the news of the stop and search of a bus carrying members of the women’s lacrosse team of Delaware State University, a historically Black university, last month in Georgia. In a statement released Wednesday, Jennings called on officials in Georgia and at the U.S. Justice Department to investigate what members of the team say was racial profiling. According to the Liberty County Sheriff’s Office, the bus was stopped after officials say it had illegally traveled in the left lane. During the traffic stop, several of the players’ bags were searched after a narcotics-sniffing K-9 dog made what officials call an “open-air alert.” At a news conference Tuesday, Liberty County Sheriff William Bowman said deputies had stopped several vehicles the morning of the incident, finding contraband on another bus that was stopped. “At the time, or even the weeks following, we were not aware that this stop was received as a racial profiling,” Bowman said.

SEXISM

[In Texas prisons, men have access to significantly more higher education programs than women](#) [Nadra

Nittle, *The 19th*, 6 May 2022]

Already a high school graduate when she entered prison in Texas, Garza set out to obtain a higher education behind bars. That goal took the better part of her sentence to achieve. After a decade, she had earned two associate’s degrees. It took her five more years to earn a bachelor’s degree. Now a justice fellow for the national nonprofit Education Trust, which works toward education equity, Garza is raising awareness about the challenges of accessing post-secondary programs in prison, especially for women. A [recent Ed Trust report](#) that she coauthored identifies barriers, including gender disparities, that prevent incarcerated Texans from obtaining a higher education. Men in Texas prisons have access

to more than triple the number of higher education programs that women do, according to the Ed Trust report. While incarcerated men can earn master's degrees, women just have the option of obtaining bachelor's degrees.

SUICIDE

[Army Suicide Numbers for 2022 “Significantly Lower,” Army Secretary Says](#) [Elizabeth Howe, *Defense One*, 11 May 2022]

While it's still early in the year, the Army's suicide numbers for 2022 are “significantly lower” than they were last year, Army Secretary Christine Wormuth told Congress on Tuesday. However, key resources for some of the Army's installations hardest hit by suicides are on the Army's unfunded priorities list. In 2021, 176 soldiers are known to have died by suicide, the highest number since 9/11 and the highest rate per 100,000 service members since 1938. On Tuesday, Wormuth attributed that increase, at least in part, to the pandemic. “We're still looking at this data, but in my mind it's very clear that the pandemic has deepened this problem or contributed to this problem,” she said at the Senate Appropriations Committee Army budget hearing. Currently, the Army's suicide numbers are down 28 percent this year from last, 19 percent below the five-year average and 17 percent below the 10-year average for the total force, Army public affairs provided via email. And even before the pandemic, isolation was a problem in one of the Army's hardest-hit areas: Alaska.

[At-risk military teens foreshadow at-risk military future](#) [Lisa Smith-Molinari, *Stars and Stripes*, 13 May 2022]

In October 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Adolescent and Child Psychiatry, and the Children's Hospital Association [issued a joint statement](#), declaring a National State of Emergency in children's mental health due to dramatic increases in childhood mental health disorders, mental-health related emergency room visits and suicide attempts. “We are caring for young people with soaring rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, loneliness and suicidality that will have lasting impacts on them, their families and their communities,” the statement read, calling for immediate action to solve the crisis. If the general population of teens are experiencing dramatic increases in mental health problems, what about military teenagers? Does their unpredictable mobile lifestyle with frequent deployments and disruptions put them at even greater risk? The answer is a resounding yes, according to the [2022 Military Teen Experience Survey \(MTES\)](#) conducted by the National Military Family Association (NMFA) and Bloom: Empowering the Military Teen. “Military kids look just like any other kid, so you don't realize what's happening in their homes and the weight of the responsibilities that they're carrying. We learned that weight is heavier than we knew,” said Besa Pinchotti, NMFA's CEO.

[Influx of Calls to Suicide Prevention Hotline Could Test Some States](#) [Daniela Altimari, *Route Fifty*, 10 May 2022]

A new, three-digit number for mental health emergencies is set to roll out nationally in about nine weeks but some states still aren't ready to handle what experts predict could be a crush of calls. The federally-mandated 988 system will strengthen and expand the existing 10-digit National Suicide Prevention hotline. It's meant to make it easier for people in crisis to get the help they need without routing their calls through 911 public safety dispatchers. The phone line has widespread support among mental health advocates, but funding for comprehensive mental health services has lagged for years. And some

are worried that a surge in calls when the 988 system goes online won't be met with a corresponding increase in services to people once the immediate crisis is over.

VETERANS

[Puerto Rican WWI Navy hero from Merritt Island may get Medal of Honor 52 years after death](#) [Rick Neale, *Florida Today* (Viera, Fla.), 22 April 2022]

Frederick Riefkohl was the first Puerto Rican to graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy. A World War I hero who led a successful showdown with a German submarine. And a World War II ship commander who retired as a rear admiral—he even has his own Wikipedia page. But Riefkohl did not receive the Medal of Honor, America's highest award for valor in combat, to commemorate his WWI gallantry. Why? The former Merritt Island resident may have been unfairly discriminated against by military brass because of his island heritage, a team of Great War researchers says. Riefkohl is one of 214 WWI minority veterans identified thus far by the [Valor Medals Review Project](#), a Congress-authorized study spearheaded by Park University near Kansas City, Missouri. Park University officials say this is the first such systematic review of minority veterans of the Great War. Research will continue until 2025, when documentation supporting Medal of Honor nominations will be forwarded to the Department of Defense for possible action, including posthumous awards.

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