

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 26 AUGUST 2022

HIGHLIGHTS

[Applications to Service Academies Plummet Amid Recruitment and Pandemic Woes](#) [Thomas Novelty, *Military.com*, 19 August 2022]

Applications to the service academies dropped significantly this past year—ranging from 10% to nearly 30%—as the military continues to grapple with recruitment woes amid a national dip in college enrollment across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic. This past year, 8,393 people applied to be a part of the Air Force Academy’s class of 2026, a 28% drop from the year before. Officials point to strict COVID-19 rules across the country that didn’t allow them to host or attend many in-person recruiting events to drum up interest. And it’s not just the Air Force Academy seeing the decline. The U.S. Naval Academy saw a 20% application drop for the recently reported Class of 2026, according to Elizabeth B. Wrightson, an academy spokeswoman.

[Biden marks Slavery Remembrance Day: “Great nations don’t hide from their history”](#) [Caroline Vakil, *The Hill*, 20 August 2022]

*President Biden commemorated Slavery Remembrance Day on Saturday, saying in a statement that “great nations don’t hide from their history.” The president said he was “honored” to sign legislation last year making Juneteenth, which marks the day the last enslaved African Americans were told slavery had ended and the Civil War was no more, a federal holiday. Biden also recognized Rep. Al Green (D-Texas) and Sen. Elizabeth Warren among the lawmakers who have pushed to establish Slavery Remembrance Day, on August 20th. “This date was chosen because on August 20, 1619, a slave ship, *The White Lion*, arrived in Point Comfort near Norfolk, VA with the first 20 enslaved Africans brought to the English-speaking American colonies,” Green said in a statement following the passage of the bill in the House.*

[\[PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT\]](#) [\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[DOD Announces Appointments to the Defense Advisory Committee for the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct](#) [DOD News, 26 August 2022]

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III has appointed 14 members to the Defense Advisory Committee for the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct. Members were sworn-in ahead of the DAC-PSM’s first public meeting held on August 22, 2022. The [DAC-PSM](#) is composed of leaders in their field appointed by the Secretary of Defense to provide independent advice and recommendations on the prevention of sexual misconduct involving members of the Armed Forces and the Coast Guard as well as at their respective military academies. The DAC-PSM’s diverse membership reflects a variety of expertise related to the Committee’s mission. Members have expertise in prevention of sexual assault and behaviors on the sexual assault continuum of harm; adverse behaviors, including the prevention of suicide and the prevention of substance abuse; change of culture of large organizations; and implementation science.

SPECIAL: WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY, 26 AUGUST

[A Proclamation on Women's Equality Day, 2022](#) [Joseph R. Biden, Jr., *White House Press Office*, 25 August 2022]

On August 26, 1920, after decades of hard-fought advocacy, women won the right to vote, and our Nation moved one step closer to living out our sacred ideal that all people are created equal. On Women's Equality Day, we honor the movement for universal suffrage that led to the 19th Amendment, celebrate the progress of women over the years, and renew our commitment to advancing gender equity and protecting women's rights. On Women's Equality Day, we celebrate the trailblazers who fought to deliver a better future for America's daughters. We recognize the work that remains to ensure that everyone can fully participate in our democracy and make fundamental choices about their health and bodies. We strive to uphold our Nation's promise of equality for all people.

[All-Black Women American Airlines crew honors flying pioneer Bessie Coleman](#) [Matthew Griffin, *The Dallas Morning News*, 22 August 2022]

To honor the legacy of Bessie Coleman, the first Black woman to earn a pilot's license, American Airlines operated a flight earlier this month from DFW International Airport to Phoenix with a crew of all Black women. Coleman earned her pilot's license in 1921, traveling to France to do so because of discrimination at U.S. flight schools, according to PBS. She set an example for others to follow in the aviation industry, American noted in a [news release](#). American hosted Gigi Coleman, Bessie Coleman's great-niece, on the flight. "I am grateful for American Airlines to give us this opportunity to highlight my great-aunt's accomplishments in the field of aviation," Gigi Coleman said in the video. Bessie Coleman, born in 1892 to a family of sharecroppers in East Texas, first became interested in aviation after hearing stories from soldiers returning from World War I. She completed flight school despite being the only student of color in her class and training in an unreliable and dangerous biplane.

[Biden nominates Kim Cheatle to lead Secret Service](#) [Luke Barr, *ABC News*, 24 August 2022]

President Joe Biden on Wednesday nominated Kim Cheatle to lead the United States Secret Service, the White House announced. "Kim has had a long and distinguished career at the Secret Service, having risen through the ranks during her 27 years with the agency, becoming the first woman in the role of Assistant Director of protective operations," Biden said in a statement. Prior to leaving the agency for the private sector, Cheatle not only served in leadership roles in Washington, D.C. but also around the country for the agency. "She has deep knowledge and understanding of the Agency's missions to investigate and protect. I am confident that her skillset, combined with her fresh perspective, will ensure the Secret Service builds on its strong foundation to grow and evolve into an even more effective agency," Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in a statement on Wednesday.

[Brigadier General Sandra Best, first woman to be general in Minnesota National Guard, to retire](#) [Reg Chapman, *CBS News*, 23 August 2022]

The first woman promoted to the rank of general in the Minnesota National Guard is retiring. Brigadier General Sandra Best served nearly 40 years in the guard and paved the way for other women to reach ranks they never imagined they could. She used her position to lift up men and women in the Minnesota National Guard and after 38 years of service, many of them gathered at the St. Paul Armory to wish her well in her retirement. Best says she never imagined her career would take her to such heights. "It was really leaders above me who saw something that I didn't even see myself," Best said. "And so the

mentors and coaches throughout my career have been invaluable to me getting to where I am today." During her time in the guard, Best focused on diversifying the ranks, work she knows will continue after her retirement.

[First Woman Rabbi Is Honored in New Graphic Novel, Decades After She Perished in Holocaust](#)

[Naama Riba, *Haaretz.com*, 21 July 2022]

For several months, Noa Mishkin, a graduate student in the Program in Visual Communication of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, drew historical illustrations for each day of the year. Last year, on December 27 she entered Wikipedia and searched for an event that suited that day. She was surprised to discover that on that very date in 1935, a woman was ordained as a rabbi for the first time. Regina Jonas was born in 1902 to a low-income religious family in Berlin. At the age of 22, she began studying at the city's beit midrash, a prestigious Jewish study hall that certified rabbis and trained teachers in various Torah subjects. During the war, Jonas and her mother were sent to the Theresienstadt concentration camp. There she engaged in organizing mutual aid and assisting the new prisoners in their acclimatization process. She also delivered sermons and gave lectures that helped ease their despair. The Theresienstadt Archive preserves a handwritten list of 23 topics on which she delivered her sermons, entitled "Lectures by the One and Only Woman Rabbi, Regina Jonas."

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Illinois National Guard Celebrates Women's Equality Day](#) [Sgt. Trenton Fouche, *DVIDS*, 18 August 2022]

Women's Equality Day was established in 1971 by Congress, celebrating the 19th Amendment which, when ratified in August 1920, granted women the right to vote. Since then, the holiday has gone on to encapsulate the significance of women in their pursuit for equality. Celebrated on August 26, Soldiers, Airmen and civilians of the Illinois National Guard all recognize the significance of this day and the importance of female representation within our ranks. Women hold key leadership roles throughout the Illinois National Guard. This has helped ensure that the voices of women are heard. Despite this initiative, there have still been challenges. Far too often, women feel they must go above and beyond to combat prejudice and stereotypes. In addition to women reaching prominent roles within the military, programs have continued to be instituted, ensuring women are able to advance personally and professionally.

[The Independent Spirit Awards moves toward gender-neutral acting categories](#) [Neda Ulaby, *NPR*, 24 August 2022]

In what's an emerging trend, the Independent Spirit Awards have announced that its acting categories will no longer be defined by gender. Rather than "best actor" or "best supporting actress," for example, awards will be given to 'best lead performance' and "best supporting performance." "We're thrilled to join the other festivals and award shows that are already moving to celebrate great acting without reference to gender," Film Independent President Josh Welsh said in a statement. "We're also happy to welcome non-binary performers into the Spirit Awards without forcing them to choose to identify as male or female." That was the position Asia Kate-Dillion found themselves in when the non-binary actor was asked by Showtime in 2017 if they wanted to be submitted for best actor or best actress. "It's erasure," Dillion told NPR in 2021. "It's exclusionary, and it continues to uphold a binary that is, ultimately, really dangerous."

[Statue honors once-enslaved woman who won freedom in court](#) [Mark Pratt, *The Associated Press*, 21 August 2022]

The story of an enslaved woman who went to court to win her freedom more than 80 years before the Emancipation Proclamation had been pushed to the fringes of history. A group of civic leaders, activists and historians hope that ended Sunday in the quiet Massachusetts town of Sheffield with the unveiling of a bronze statue of the woman who chose the name Elizabeth Freeman when she shed the chains of slavery 241 years ago to the day. The enslaved woman, known as Bett, could not read or write, but she listened. And what she heard did not make sense. While she toiled in bondage in the household of Col. John Ashley, he and other prominent citizens of Sheffield met to discuss their grievances about British tyranny. In 1773, they wrote in what are known as the Sheffield Resolves that “Mankind in a state of nature are equal, free, and independent of each other.” It is believed that Bett, after hearing a public reading of the constitution, walked roughly 5 miles from the Ashley household to the home of attorney Theodore Sedgwick, one of the citizens who drafted the Sheffield Resolves, and asked him to represent her in her legal quest for freedom, said Paul O’Brien, president of the Sheffield Historical Society.

[Team Canada’s Sarah Nurse first woman to be on cover of EA Sports NHL video game](#) [Vanessa Lee and Alexandra Mae Jones, *CTV*, 24 August 2022]

A superstar for Team Canada, Sarah Nurse has become one of the biggest names in women’s hockey. After racking up a record 18 points at the winter Olympics this past February, she is making history yet again—on the cover of NHL 23, as the first woman to be featured on a cover for the EA Sports NHL video game franchise. EA Sports revealed in a tweet Wednesday that Nurse would be on the cover of the latest iteration of the popular game series, alongside Anaheim Ducks forward Trevor Zegras. “We have our first female on the cover, which I’m so honoured is me,” Nurse told TSN. “Women are in this game. So now little girls can dream of being in an NHL video game and dream of being a professional hockey player.”

[Women’s Equality Day Spotlight: Angela Johnson](#) [DLA Aviation Public Affairs, 22 August 2022]

Women’s Equality Day takes place in the U.S. each year on Aug. 26. This year’s national theme is “Celebrating Women’s Right to Vote.” The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave most women the right to vote, was passed by Congress in 1919. Men and women of color were not given the right to do so until later with the Indian Citizenship Act giving Native-Americans the right to vote in 1924, and the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 granted all Asian Americans the right to become citizens and vote. However, it was not until 1965 that the Voting Rights Act, which was signed into law on August 6, 1965, made voting possible for African American women. Defense Logistics Aviation’s Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Office, along with the DLA Aviation Engineering Directorate’s special emphasis planning team, will recognize Women’s Equality Day and women’s contributions to the agency’s global mission in providing logistics support to America’s warfighters throughout the entire month of August.

CULTURE

[Air Force and Space Force Consider Testing Out Beards](#) [Thomas Novelly, *Military.com*, 22 August 2022]

*The Department of the Air Force is discussing a pilot program that would allow airmen and Guardians to grow beards, one of the most requested changes to uniform and grooming standards among service members. The potential test comes as other service branches have crafted policies that limit shaving for troops—particularly African American men—who suffer from painful ingrown hairs. Beards are allowed in the Air Force only with a religious or medical waiver. Some African American service members said that obtaining a shaving profile harmed their careers. A survey conducted for a 2021 study for the journal *Military Medicine* showed that, of those who had received shaving waivers, 21.4% said it had a negative impact on their careers. But an alarming 63% of those who said it had harmed their careers or created negative bias within their unit were African American.*

[Base Neighborhood Named for Army Officer Changed Because of His “Brutal Acts” Against Native Americans](#) [Thomas Novelly, *Military.com*, 24 August 2022]

Officials at Fairchild Air Force Base in Washington state announced they are renaming an on-base housing neighborhood previously named for a 19th century Army officer who fought against Native Americans. The 92nd Air Refueling Wing’s residential neighborhood, Fort Wright Village, and a street, Fort Wright Oval, were both named for Col. George Wright, an Army officer who fought against Native Americans and then later fought for the Union during the Civil War. Officials pointed to the officer’s actions during the American Frontier Wars as the reason for the change. Wright’s tactics included ordering his men to seize an estimated 700 horses from local tribes and slaughter them, as well as ordering Native Americans to be hanged—some of them in front of their families, [according to Washington State University magazine](#). The neighborhood and street will be renamed to Lilac Village and Willow Loop. The Willow Loop signs have already been put up, and the Lilac Village sign will be installed between Aug. 22 and Sept. 5, [according to an Air Force press release](#).

[Black August uplifted as alternative Black History Month](#) [Almaz Abedje, *The Associated Press*, 25 August 2022]

For Jonathan Peter Jackson, a direct relative of two prominent members of the Black Panther Party, revolutionary thought and family history have always been intertwined, particularly in August. That’s the month in 1971 when his uncle, the famed Panther George Jackson, was killed during an uprising at San Quentin State Prison in California. A revolutionary whose words resonated inside and out of the prison walls, he was a published author, activist and radical thought leader. To many, February is the month dedicated to celebrating Black Americans’ contributions to a country where they were once enslaved. But Black History Month has an alternative: It’s called Black August. First celebrated in 1979, Black August was created to commemorate Jackson’s fight for Black liberation. Fifty-one years since his death, Black August is now a monthlong awareness campaign and celebration dedicated to Black freedom fighters, revolutionaries, radicals and political prisoners, both living and deceased.

[Construction set to begin on first U.S. Coast Guard Museum](#) [The Associated Press, 19 August 2022]

Construction is set to begin on a long-awaited national museum that will honor the U.S. Coast Guard. A special keel-laying ceremony, a term that’s usually used to celebrate construction of a cutter, was held on Friday at the museum’s riverfront site in New London, Connecticut, about 40 miles south of Providence, Rhode Island. The Coast Guard and Space Force are the only two branches of the U.S. military without their own museums. A facility honoring the Coast Guard was first proposed in 2001 but the project became delayed over the years, due to funding and other issues. The Coast Guard Academy is located in New London. The new museum, which will include immersive and interactive exhibits, is expected to open sometime in 2024.

[Half of Air Force Advanced STEM Billets Go Unfilled or Require Waivers](#) [Amanda Miller, *Air Force Magazine*, 21 August 2022]

Half of the Air Force's billets that call for advanced academic degrees in science, technology, engineering, or math are either unfilled or filled by someone who doesn't hold the degree. At the same time, the Air Force has the fewest general officers with advanced STEM degrees in 30 years. A group from the Air Force Research Laboratory [quantified the deficiencies in STEM officers](#) as part of their effort to implement the Air Force's "Science and Technology Strategy: Strengthening USAF Science and Technology for 2030 and Beyond" from 2019 to 2021, according to a news release. The group made recommendations about improving the pipeline of uniformed personnel with technical backgrounds, and a number of efforts are helping the service to build more technically savvy forces.

[Marine Corps hits its retention goals for the first time in a decade](#) [Peter Musurlian, *Federal News Network*, 22 August 2022]

The Marine Corps hit its retention goals for the first time in a decade. The Marine Corps said the first year of the [Commandant's Retention Program](#) doubled the amount of top-tier service members it wanted to keep compared to last year. The initiative offers a streamlined retention process and gives some incentives for returning Marines. The service said it saw about half of the 2,500 Marines it selected for retention stay in the Corps. The Marine Corps is currently undergoing an overhaul to make it a lighter and more agile force with more skilled and experienced personnel. The service said increased retention helps with that goal.

[Michael K. Williams' memoir "Scenes From My Life" shows how he turned trauma into art](#) [Eric Deggans, *NPR*, 23 August 2022]

From the first line of the introduction to his memoir, ["Scenes From My Life,"](#) actor and activist Michael K. Williams addresses the reader with stark honesty and resolve. "Way before I was anything or anyone, I was an addict," he wrote. "That was my identity, what people thought of me, if they thought of me at all. Into my mid-20s, I was on the verge of being discarded, like so many of my brothers and sisters who never got a chance to be something else. But through God's grace, I am still here." Unfortunately, Michael Kenneth Williams isn't here anymore. He was found dead in his home of a drug overdose on Sept. 6 last year. Raised in a Brooklyn housing project, Williams started as a dancer and model—inspired by dancing along to the Rhythm Nation video until he knew all the moves, and eventually landing jobs with artists like Crystal Waters and Madonna. He thought his performing life was over when his face was slashed during a bar fight. But instead, it led to an acting career playing legendarily tough-yet-sensitive Black men—bringing dignity and a compelling presence to the kind of characters who are often overlooked and underestimated in the real world.

[Military faces generational challenges as it struggles to meet recruiting targets](#) [Rose L. Thayer, *Stars and Stripes*, 23 August 2022]

With just over a month left in the fiscal year, the Army, the largest service, expects to reach only 52% of its recruiting goal for a shortfall of 12,000 to 15,000 recruits. The Air Force, Navy and Marines say they expect to meet their targets but describe this fiscal year, which ends Sept. 30, as among the most difficult since the end of the draft in 1973. "We're going to make (the) goal" of 26,151 recruits, said Col. Jason Scott, vice commander of Air Force Recruiting Service. "We're going to land on fumes, though." The Navy wouldn't say how close it is to its target of 33,400 active-duty recruits, and the Marines said its figures would not be available until the fiscal year ends. The military traditionally struggles with

recruiting when unemployment is low, but new generational challenges have emerged. An estimated 71% of young Americans are unfit for military service, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The major reasons are obesity, education deficits, criminal records and drug use.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Native Hawaiians gain more authority over future of sacred mountain, astronomy site](#) [Audrey McAvoy, *The Associated Press*, 20 August 2022]

For more than 50 years, telescopes and the needs of astronomers have dominated the summit of Mauna Kea, a mountain sacred to Native Hawaiians that's also one of the finest places in the world to study the night sky. That's now changing with a new state law saying Mauna Kea must be protected for future generations and that science must be balanced with culture and the environment. Native Hawaiian cultural experts will have voting seats on a new governing body, instead of merely advising the summit's managers as they do now. The shift comes after thousands of protesters camped on the mountain three years ago to block the construction of a state-of-the-art observatory, jolting policymakers and astronomers into realizing the status quo had to change. There's a lot at stake: Native Hawaiian advocates want to protect a site of great spiritual importance. Astronomers hope they'll be able to renew leases for state land underneath their observatories, due to expire in 11 years, and continue making revolutionary scientific discoveries for decades to come.

[Navy's top officer says morale high aboard Rota-based destroyers, following critical Pentagon report in March](#) [Alison Bath, *Stars and Stripes*, 24 August 2022]

The Navy is becoming more adept at balancing the well-being of sailors on destroyers deployed to Europe with the demands of defending U.S. and NATO interests, according to the service's top officer. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday told Stars and Stripes that the crews aboard the ships are benefiting from modifications to their training schedules and a shift in focus to the work that commanding officers believe is most important to the ship and its mission. His comments came in the wake of a highly critical March study ordered by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin that cited significant concerns about the capabilities at Rota for preventing sexual assault, harassment and suicide. The Defense Department's March evaluation report, which reviewed 20 stateside and overseas U.S. military installations in 2021, found that Rota and Army garrisons in Germany had the most areas of concern identified in the report. Sailors stationed there reported bullying, sexual harassment, mental health issues and relationship problems but couldn't seek help because of mission needs, according to the report.

[A new exhibit in LA explores the complicated history of Black Cinema](#) [Mandalit Del Barco, *NPR*, 21 August 2022]

*The Academy Museum in Los Angeles is celebrating key moments in Black cinema, from the 1890s until 1971. Its new exhibition, "Regeneration," includes a clip of Hattie McDaniel, the first Black woman to win an Academy Award, as she gives her 1940 acceptance speech. Seven gallery spaces feature performances and costumes such as Lena Horne's gown and home movies of the Nicholas Brothers. One room shows a staircase painted with the word "colored," recreating segregated movie theaters back in the day pointing Black and Brown audiences to the balconies. "It's the earliest known image of Black people kissing on film," says Jacqueline Stewart, the Academy Museum's director and president. The exhibition has two prints of *Something Good- Negro Kiss*, recently found in USC's film archive and Norway. Stewart figures the film was a novelty among the genre of "kiss" films that were popular at that time.*

[North Carolina mayor under investigation after livestreaming teardown of Confederate monument](#)

[Olafimihan Oshin, *The Hill*, 24 August 2022]

A mayor of a North Carolina town is under investigation by federal authorities after livestreaming the teardown of a Confederate monument. In a Facebook Live video posted on Sunday, Enfield, N.C., Mayor Mondale Robinson livestreamed the teardown of a Confederate monument that had stood in the town for over 90 years, instructing a volunteer driving a tractor to push the main piece of the monument to the ground. “Yessir,” Robinson yelled during the live stream. “Death to the Confederacy around here! Not in my town, not on my watch.” Earlier this month, the town’s board of commissioners voted 4-1 in favor of removing the 10-foot monument from the town’s Randolph Park area, The Washington Post reported. But Robinson, who was elected as Enfield’s mayor earlier this year, may have violated a state law that outlined initial procedures for monument removal.

[R&B Hall of Fame headed to small Mississippi Delta town](#) [Michael Goldberg, *The Associated Press*, 24 August 2022]

A small town in the Mississippi Delta that has ties to the civil rights movement will soon be home to the National Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame. Project planners hope to finish building the facility in the town of Marks in two or three years, Velma Wilson, director of economic tourism and development for Quitman County, told The Associated Press on Tuesday. Marks is the county seat of Quitman County and has a population of fewer than 2,000 people. The project is the culmination of a 50-year effort to build a hall of fame for R&B musicians such as James Brown, Aretha Franklin and B.B. King. Marks appealed to Robinson due to its civil rights history. Martin Luther King Jr. chose the town in 1968 as the starting point for his Poor People’s Campaign, which demanded economic justice for poor Americans of all backgrounds. On March 31, 1968, in what would be his final Sunday sermon before his assassination, King described the poverty-stricken families he encountered in Marks.

[This Gay Marine Vet Just Made a Movie Based on His Life in the Corps During “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”](#) [James Barber, *Military.com*, 24 August 2022]

“The Inspection” is a new feature about a young man who turns his life around in the Marine Corps after being kicked out of the house as a teen for being gay and living homeless for several years. Marine veteran Elegance Bratton wrote and directed the movie, which is based on his own real-life experiences. The movie will get its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival in September and a prestigious closing night screening at the New York Film Festival in October before A24 releases “The Inspection” in theaters on Nov. 18, 2022. Bratton served in the Corps during the military’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” era, and the movie draws on those experiences. Jeremy Pope, best known for his role in the Netflix series “Hollywood” and set to play World War II Army veteran Sammy Davis Jr. in the upcoming biopic “Scandalous!,” plays Ellis French, the character based on Bratton.

[\[TRAILER\]](#)

[U.S. Army Rappers Take Center Stage at Historic Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo](#) [Amethyst Tate, *People.com*, 24 August 2022]

The United States Army Field Band now has its first hip-hop artists in U.S. Military History—and they’ve been performing throughout August at The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Staff Sergeant Nicholas Feemster and Staff Sergeant Lamar Riddick rapped in front of thousands in Scotland for the world-class event that began Aug. 5 and ended on Wednesday. The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo provides a platform for both military and cultural acts from around the globe to connect through their

voices and music. In an interview with Forces News, Feemster and Riddick spoke about the significance their rap music is bringing to the military. “It’s using music to reach the people and to unite the country to show our support as soldiers to our civilians, so we’re happy to be that and be the representation of the rap community,” said Riddick.

[Wampanoag descendants revive history of Native culture on Martha’s Vineyard](#) [Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Anne Azzi Davenport, *PBS News*, 23 August 2022] [VIDEO WITH TRANSCRIPT]

Martha’s Vineyard, with its beautiful shorelines and farmland, has long been a summer destination. But most visitors know little about the history of its Wampanoag people. A group on the island is reviving that history by educating children and adults about the Native culture and traditions, while also aiming to protect our increasingly challenged planet. Special correspondent Charlayne Hunter-Gault reports for our Race Matters Solutions and arts and culture series, Canvas.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

DISCRIMINATION

[3 Arkansas officers suspended after video captures beating](#) [Andrew DeMillo, *The Associated Press*, 23 August 2022]

Federal authorities said Monday they have started a civil rights investigation following the suspension of three Arkansas law enforcement officers after a video posted on social media showed two of them beating a man while a third officer held him on the ground. The officers were responding to a report of a man making threats outside a convenience store Sunday in the small town of Mulberry, about 140 miles (220 kilometers) northwest of Little Rock, near the border with Oklahoma, authorities said. Arkansas State Police said the agency would investigate the use of force. State police identified the suspect as Randal Worcester, 27, of Goose Creek, South Carolina. Worcester is White, according to jail booking information, and the three officers involved also appear to be White.

[Black couple sues after they say home valuation rises nearly \\$300,000 when shown by White colleague](#) [Justin Gamble and Virginia Langmaid, *CNN*, 19 August 2022]

A Maryland couple has sued a local real estate appraiser and an online mortgage loan provider, alleging that the housing appraisal they received was unfairly low due to their race, in violation of the Fair Housing Act, after a second appraisal returned a result nearly \$300,000 higher. Nathan Connolly and Shani Mott filed suit against 20/20 Valuations LLC, its owner Shane Lanham, and loanDepot.com on Monday, alleging the defendants 20/20 Valuations LLC and its owner “discriminated against Plaintiffs by dramatically undervaluing their home in an appraisal because of Plaintiffs’ race and their home’s location adjacent to a Black census block, notwithstanding that it is also located within Homeland, an affluent, mostly White neighborhood,” and loanDepot.com discriminated against them by relying on that appraisal in denying their refinance loan.

[“Don’t say Trans” policy passes in North Texas school district](#) [Steven Monacelli, *Texas Observer Magazine*, 23 August 2022]

The parking lot was packed Monday evening when I arrived at the administrative headquarters of the Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District (GCISD), from which I graduated over a decade ago. Four pop-up tents had been set up in the parking lot by conservative activist groups who held a tailgate party ahead of the meeting. Immediately outside the building entrance, a handful of students from the district held protest signs. “Our existence is not a controversy,” one sign read. “Let trans kids

live, we aren't threats," said another. What drew both groups to the suburban school district meeting in Tarrant County was a 36-page document of proposed district policies that was publicly released only 72 hours earlier. The proposals were championed by the school board's four-member conservative majority, recently elected with the help of a flood of dark money, part of a nationwide trend in which crusading reactionaries have turned school boards into perches from which to wage war on literature, queer children, and non-existent curricula. Most controversially, the GCISD policies include a total ban on employees engaging in any discussion of what the district defines as "gender fluidity."

[Minneapolis teacher contract race language ignites firestorm](#) [Steve Karnowski, *The Associated Press*, 21 August 2022]

When Minneapolis teachers settled a 14-day strike in March, they celebrated a groundbreaking provision in their new contract that was meant to shield teachers of color from seniority-based layoffs and help ensure that students from racial minorities have teachers who look like them. Months later, conservative media outlets have erupted with denunciations of the policy as racist and unconstitutional discrimination against White educators. One legal group is looking to recruit teachers and taxpayers willing to sue to throw out the language. The teachers union paints the dispute as a ginned-up controversy when there's no imminent danger of anyone losing their job. Meanwhile, the feud is unfolding just months ahead of arguments in a pair of U.S. Supreme Court cases that could reshape affirmative action. Advocates say students from racial minorities perform better when their educators include teachers and support staff of color, and that it's especially critical in a district that suffers from stubborn achievement gaps.

[People of color at "New York Times" get lower ratings in job reviews, union says](#) [David Folkenflik, *NPR*, 23 August 2022]

An analysis of comprehensive data for roughly 1,000 The New York Times employees conducted by members of the union that represents its newsroom found that Black and Latino staffers are far less likely than their White peers to receive strong job ratings. There are financial consequences to job ratings because they influence the size of employee bonuses, the NewsGuild union says. But staffers tell NPR the differential is even more important because it indicates an underlying systemic problem that the paper is failing to address. It is demoralizing, they say, and contributes to the premature departure of some colleagues. The guild's [study](#), released today, comes amidst uneasy negotiations over the newspaper's contract with the NewsGuild. The paper is still operating under the terms of the last one, which expired in 2021.

DIVERSITY

[College students are increasingly identifying beyond "she" and "he"](#) [Genny Beemyn, *The Conversation*, 22 August 2022]

When students today fill out their college applications, they are not just identifying as "she" or "he." More than 3% of incoming college students use a different set of pronouns. That's according to my analysis of the more than 1.2 million applications submitted for the 2022-23 school year through the Common App, an online application platform used by more than 900 colleges. While 3% may not seem like a lot, it represents nearly 37,000 students. It is also indicative of a growing number of young people who identify outside of a gender binary—that is, they do not identify as female or male. For example, the percentage of college students who indicated that they are nonbinary on one national survey has more than tripled from 1.4% in 2016 to 5.1 in 2022. In analyzing the data from the Common App, I

found that 2.2% of students—more than 26,000 individuals—who applied to college for this fall identified as transgender or nonbinary.

[This Gen-Z Value Could Spell Trouble for Spec Ops Community](#) [Elizabeth Howe, *Defense One*, 24 August 2022]

What Gen Z and millennials want doesn't exactly line up with what today's military leaders offer—and a new report suggests there might be particular implications for the Pentagon's special operations forces. A study conducted by the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) compared the leadership traits valued by three groups: today's special operators, Gen Z and millennials, and the strategic thinkers envisioning tomorrow's battlefield. CNA found a lot of overlap. Eleven traits span all three: character, creativity, flexibility, determination, competence, relationship builder, trustworthiness, problem-solver, approachability, empowerment, risk-taker. Gen Z likes to know “why they're being asked to do something,” Schroden said, “as opposed to just being ordered to do it and saluting and doing it because they were ordered to do it.”

EXTREMISM

[2 men convicted in plot to kidnap Michigan Gov. Whitmer](#) [Joey Cappelletti and Ed White, *The Associated Press*, 23 August 2022]

A jury on Tuesday convicted two men of conspiring to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in 2020, a swift victory for prosecutors in a plot that was broken up by the FBI and described as a rallying cry for a U.S. civil war by anti-government extremists. Adam Fox and Barry Croft Jr. were also found guilty of conspiring to obtain a weapon of mass destruction, namely a bomb to blow up a bridge and stymie police if the kidnapping could be pulled off at Whitmer's vacation home. The FBI turned it into a major domestic terrorism case with two more informants and two undercover agents embedded in the group. Evidence showed the group had many gripes, particularly over COVID-19 restrictions imposed by Whitmer early in the pandemic.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[2 Ohio fraternity members sentenced in hazing death of Bowling Green State University student](#) [Jennifer Henderson, *CNN*, 19 August 2022]

Two Ohio fraternity members have been sentenced in the hazing death of Bowling Green State University student Stone Foltz. Jacob Krinn and Troy Henricksen were sentenced to 42 days in jail, followed by 28 days of house arrest, and placed on two years of probation with conditions, according to a release from Wood County Prosecuting Attorney Paul Dobson. Foltz, 20, died in March 2021 from alcohol intoxication that prosecutors alleged stemmed from a hazing incident for the Pi Kappa Alpha International Fraternity's Delta Beta Chapter in Bowling Green, CNN previously reported. An autopsy showed that Foltz, a sophomore, had a blood alcohol content of .35, which is more than four times the legal limit. Foltz's death has also led to a wrongful-death lawsuit against the fraternity, the expulsion of three students and the suspension of 17. The fraternity was also permanently expelled from the university. The lawsuit, filed last year by Foltz's family in Franklin County Common Pleas Court, alleges that Foltz experienced “extensive hazing,” including being “forced to drink an extraordinary amount of alcohol in a short period of time” during a fraternity event.

[DOJ: 5 Florida “B Squad” members arrested in connection with Jan. 6 Capitol riots](#) [Mark Boxley, *Spectrum News 13 (Orlando, Fla.)*, 24 August 2022]

Five Florida men—and “self-styled militia members”—have been arrested in connection with the Jan. 6, 2020, attack on the U.S. Capitol, the Department of Justice announced Wednesday. The men were identified as Benjamin Cole, 38, of Leesburg; John Edward Crowley, 50, of Windermere; Brian Preller, 33, of Mount Dora; Jonathan Rockholt, 38, of Palm Coast; and Tyler Bensch, 20, of Casselberry. Cole, Crowley, Preller and Rockholt allegedly “participated in at least one attempt by rioters to force their way into the Capitol through the line of police officers,” a statement of facts court filing in the case said. The document also included three photos, purported to be of Cole on the day of the Jan. 6, 2020, riots, wearing a green baseball cap with the words “pedophile hunter” and a backpack with the words “Three Percenter” on it. Photos of men identified by investigators as Rockholt and Bensch also showed patches court documents say are associated with the “violent extremist” Three Percenters movement.

[Police arrest suspect after swastikas found painted on Atlanta’s Rainbow Crosswalks](#) [Devon M. Sayers, Alta Spells and Chuck Johnston, CNN, 19 August 2022]

A suspect is in custody who is suspected of defacing the city’s rainbow crosswalks with swastikas on two separate occasions, according to TaSheena Brown, spokeswoman with the Atlanta Police Department. According to police, investigators went to an apartment of the suspect and tried to make contact with the individual, later requesting a SWAT team for assistance. Police say the first incident happened on Wednesday, August 17. Two days later, police say the suspect defaced the crosswalk again at around 1:45 a.m. The rainbow crosswalks are located at the intersection of 10th Street and Piedmont Avenue in Atlanta’s midtown community, in front of the site of the city’s first LGBTQ+ bookstore. The crosswalks were originally installed ahead of the 2015 Pride festival. The city of Atlanta made the rainbow crosswalks a permanent feature in 2017 as a “remembrance of the 49 LGBTQ+ lives lost in the horrific 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting,” the Mayor’s Division of LGBTQ Affairs said on its website.

[Prosecutors Ask for 17-Year Jail Sentence for Vet Who Assaulted a Cop with Marine Corps Flag on Jan. 6](#) [Konstantin Toropin, Military.com, 25 August 2022]

Federal prosecutors have asked that a former Marine and retired New York Police Department officer receive a 17-year sentence for his actions during the riot at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021—actions that included him assaulting another police officer with a Marine Corps flagpole he had brought along. Thomas Webster, 56, was one of the first people to be charged for his role in the violence the day Congress was set to certify the results of the presidential election. He was arrested on six charges on Feb. 21, 2021. He was found guilty on all counts—all but one were felonies—on May 2, 2022. “Not only did he pack his NYPD-issued bulletproof vest, but he also packed his ‘off duty’ firearm ... [and] his military-issued rucksack containing Meals Ready-to-Eat, water bottles, and Gatorade,” they state in a sentencing memo. Confronted by police, Webster challenged Metropolitan Police Department Officer Noah Rathbun to a fight before breaking through the police barricade, tackling Rathbun to the ground and choking him.

[“Stay Vigilant:” Agencies Issue Warnings, Take New Steps to Combat Wave of Threats Against Feds](#) [Eric Katz, Government Executive, 23 August 2022]

Federal agencies are taking precautions to protect employees in the face of growing threats against them, announcing security reviews and encouraging other steps to stave off potential danger. The threats, issued largely through social media, appeared to ramp up following rhetoric from conservative officials after a search for documents at President Trump’s residence in Mar-a-Lago and the passage of a recent Democratic measure that will provide new staff and authorities to several agencies. Some lawmakers and employee groups subsequently sounded the alarm on the rising hazards federal

employees were facing and the Biden administration has subsequently heeded the call to boost security efforts. Attorney General Merrick Garland and FBI Director Christopher Wray have condemned the harassment and employee groups have called on lawmakers to tone down their rhetoric. He cited examples of posts in which individuals called on followers to "be ready for combat" and said FBI personnel "deserve to die."

HUMAN RELATIONS

[How your family shapes your body image](#) [Melissa Hogenboom, *BBC News*, 22 August 2022]

Comments about our looks from our loved ones and friends can cause lifelong insecurities. How can we teach kids to feel confident about their bodies instead? When we think about our relationship with our bodies, it's often hard to pinpoint precisely where our satisfaction or dissatisfaction comes from. If we cast our minds back to our childhood, however, we may remember a collection of off-hand comments or observations. None of them may seem hugely impactful in themselves. And yet, their cumulative effect can be surprisingly potent. Whether it comes in the form of compliments or criticism, that kind of attention to body shapes can lay down beliefs and insecurities that are hard to shake off. The consequences can be tremendously damaging, as research shows, with [family attitudes](#) and [derogatory comments about weight](#) linked to mental health problems and eating disorders. In addition, the [broader stigmatisation](#) of overweight children has increased—affecting their [self-esteem and of course, body image](#).

INTERNATIONAL

[As India turns 75, Muslim girls are suing to wear the hijab—and protect secularism](#) [Lauren Frayer, *NPR*, 24 August 2022]

Ayesha Shifa is a 16-year-old with a passion for playing badminton with her younger siblings, and a knack for crunching numbers. She loves math and wants to be an accountant. But her dreams — and those of millions of Indian Muslim girls like her—are on hold, thanks to a new rule her school imposed last winter. In early February, parents of all the Muslim students at Shifa's public high school in southwest India were called into a meeting. The principal told them their daughters could no longer wear the hijab, or Muslim headscarf, in class. They'd have to remove it or stay home from school. More than one in six Indians is Muslim. They're the biggest minority in this Hindu-majority country. "I want to wear my hijab and get an education," she says, her soft voice gaining volume. "I don't want to have to choose." With that resolve, the day after the principal's meeting Shifa tried to enter the Government Pre-University College for Girls as usual, wearing her navy-blue headscarf. But when she was told by school administrators to take it off or be banned from school, she refused to do so—and she hired a lawyer.

[End of Singapore's gay sex ban is small step in Asia-Pacific](#) [The Associated Press, 22 August 2022]

Singapore's decision to decriminalize sex between men is being hailed as a step in the right direction for LGBTQ rights in the Asia-Pacific region, a vast area of nearly 5 billion people with different laws and attitudes. Although many places have decriminalized sexual acts between people of the same sex, only a few allow same-sex marriage, partnerships or unions. Singapore tempered its decision by saying it will amend its constitution to prevent such unions from ever taking place. Many of the region's bans on sex between men were instituted under British colonial rule in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the laws describe such acts as violations against the "order of nature."

MISCELLANEOUS

[From Book Stacks to Psychosis and Food Stamps, Librarians Confront a New Workplace](#) [Rachel Scheier, *Kaiser Health News*, 23 August 2022]

Libraries have long been one of society's great equalizers, offering knowledge to anyone who craves it. As public buildings, often with long hours, they also have become orderly havens for people with nowhere else to go. In recent years, amid unrelenting demand for safety-net services, libraries have been asked by community leaders to formalize that role, expanding beyond books and computers to providing on-site outreach and support for people living on the streets. In big cities and small towns, many now offer help accessing housing, food stamps, medical care, and sometimes even showers or haircuts. Librarians, in turn, have been called on to play the role of welfare workers, first responders, therapists, and security guards. Librarians are divided about those evolving duties. Although many embrace the new role—some voluntarily carry the opioid overdose reversal drug naloxone—others feel overwhelmed and unprepared for regular run-ins with aggressive or unstable patrons.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Lauded trumpeter and composer jaimie branch dies at 39](#) [Nate Chinen, *NPR*, 24 August 2022]

jaimie branch, a trumpeter who combined punk ferocity with advanced technique in her version of improvised music, earning acclaim within and well outside of jazz circles, died on Monday night at her home in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn, N.Y. at the age of 39. branch could conjure a world of personal expression with her trumpet, sounding brash and conflagratory one moment, bleary and contemplative the next. What she always conveyed with her horn, in any setting, was an absolute whole-body conviction. One reason she became a beloved linchpin of the creative music community over the last decade was this spirit of gutsy intensity. Her demeanor, by comparison, was often hilariously profane and ultracasual—qualities she hinted at with a preferred moniker, jaimie breezy branch (no caps). As WBEZ's Nereida Moreno reported in 2019, branch took focused aim at the resurgence of nativist and racist ideologies with "prayer for amerikkka," a piece from FLY or DIE II so titled because, as she told Moreno at the time, "this country was really founded on genocide and slavery, so let's just be real about that."

[Lawmaker Pushes for Legislative Branch Employees to Have the Same Rights as Other Feds](#) [Eric Katz, *Government Executive*, 25 August 2022]

Congressional staff on Capitol Hill could soon have many of the same rights as federal employees in the executive branch under a new bill that would institute whistleblower and other protections. The 2022 Congress Leads by Example Act (H.R. 8743) would provide general whistleblower protections and anti-retaliation measures that federal workers enjoy, but have to date excluded those in the legislative branch. It would also give congressional workers more power to fight against retaliation for their disclosures to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The measure would require more thorough recordkeeping for congressional staff to ensure the employees are not vulnerable to various types of retaliation. Congressional offices would be prohibited from retaliating against employees if their wages are being garnished or if they are involved in bankruptcy proceedings. Federal employees generally enjoy extensive protections against whistleblower reprisal and can take their claims to the Office of Special Counsel as well as the Merit Systems Protection Board.

[Life expectancy drops by almost 2 years](#) [Julia Mueller, *The Hill*, 23 August 2022]

Overall life expectancy in the United States dropped by 1.8 years from 2019 to 2020, new data shows. The decline affected all 50 states and Washington, D.C., according to a new National Vital Statistics report, and ranged from as little as 0.2 years in some states to as many as 3 years in others. The National Center for Health Statistics and its Division of Vital Statistics attributed the dips to the COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in drug overdose deaths. The drop is the largest year-to-year change in more than 75 years, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said last year. New York state experienced the biggest decrease, dropping 3 years, and D.C. was a close runner-up at 2.7 years.

MISCONDUCT

[Navy director traded insider info in exchange for bribes and prostitution, feds say](#) [Alison Cutler, *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, N.C.), 23 August 2022]

*Fernando Xavier Monroy, who worked as the director of operations of the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command Office in Busan, South Korea, is accused of engaging in a conspiracy to commit bribery with a South Korea-based company, according to a news release from the Department of Justice. Monroy conspired with a civilian captain of a Navy ship and a business owner to direct business to DK Marine, a company that provided services for the U.S. Navy, according to prosecutors. The scheme focused on when the Navy ship was scheduled for a port visit to Chinhae, South Korea in late 2013. In exchange for "steering" Navy business toward DK Marine during the visit, Monroy was given bribes by a co-conspirator, including cash, personal travel expenses, meals, alcoholic beverages and prostitution services, the release said. Investigators accuse DK Marine's owner, Sun Yol Kim, of paying for "'room salons,' where the services of prostitutes could be hired," for Monroy at least 10 times, according to *Military.com*.*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

RACISM

[Parents of two Black children accuse Texas elementary school of ignoring children's claims of bullying and abuse](#) [Maya Brown, *NBC News*, 25 August 2022]

The parents of two Black children who attended a Texas elementary school filed a lawsuit against the Clear Creek Independent School District last month accusing school officials of ignoring claims of bullying and abuse. In the lawsuit filed on July 28, the parents, Chanda Jackson and Tatiawana Jackson, allege that officials from North Pointe Elementary School in Houston either ignored or failed to follow guidelines when handling incidents of "racial discrimination" at the school, which created a "hostile environment" for their children. Filed in U.S. District Court in Galveston, the lawsuit alleges that on separate occasions in 2019, one of the victims, identified as "John Doe," was attacked by other students, including being choked, punched in the eye and tripped. It also says John Doe was "punished" by an unnamed teacher who refused to let him use the restroom, causing the student to "wet his pants" on multiple occasions. The lawsuit alleges that White students were not given the same treatment.

RELIGION

[Federal court order in COVID-19 vaccine case delays court-martial for Japan-based Marine](#) [Jonathan Snyder, *Stars and Stripes*, 23 August 2022]

A federal judge's order in Florida means an indefinite trial delay for a Japan-based Marine who allegedly skipped two flights stateside to face discharge for refusing a COVID-19 vaccine. A military judge agreed on Monday to delay a special court-martial for Lance Cpl. Catherine Arnett, 24, of Fort Worth, Texas, set to begin the next day at MCAS Iwakuni, Arnett told Stars and Stripes on Monday. Arnett said her defense lawyer, Marine Capt. Brentt McGee, moved last week to delay her two-day trial indefinitely based on Thursday's order by U.S District Court Judge Steven Merryday in Tampa, Fla. Ruling in a pending federal case, Merryday temporarily barred the Department of Defense and Marine Corps from punishing Marines who refused the vaccine on religious grounds. The Marines approved only 11 of 3,733 requests it received for religious exceptions, according to the update. Another 545 administrative or medical exemptions were approved.

[How harshly should DOD punish political, religious proselytizing?](#) [Sarah Sicard, *Military Times*, 23 August 2022]

An Army Reserve major in North Carolina received an administrative punishment akin to a “slap on the wrist” after he shared his religious and political opinions in a YouTube video in late July—prompting both him and a longtime activist to cry foul, but for different reasons. Maj. Jamie Schwandt received a Developmental Counseling Form on Aug. 5, saying that his YouTube video discussing abortion and transgender issues was prejudicial to good order and discipline. Mikey Weinstein, who runs a watchdog group often fighting alleged Christian proselytizing in the military, said this light punishment is another example of military leaders being afraid to tackle religious or political proselytizing in the service. However, as Weinstein, founder of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation and a former Air Force judge advocate, points out, a counseling form is hardly punishment at all. The fact that the punishment was so light has far-reaching consequences and perpetuates the idea that proselytizing of a particular religion or political viewpoint among U.S. troops will be tolerated by the military, according to Weinstein.

[Student gets uniform violation for wearing hijab at Massachusetts charter school](#) [CBS News, 22 August 2022]

A Massachusetts charter school where an eighth grade student was written up for a uniform infraction for wearing a hijab says it understands its “handling of the situation came across as insensitive.” A family member of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School student posted on social media a picture of the “School Uniform Compliance Form” the student received from a teacher for the hijab on Thursday. In the description of the infraction, the headscarf worn by Muslim women was misspelled as “jihad.” The school said in an emailed statement that it allows students to wear religious attire “as an expression of their sincerely held beliefs,” but asks students to provide a letter “expressing this desire from a member of their clergy.” School Superintendent Alex Dan said there were no consequences given to the student and that the form sent home was meant to start the conversation with the family about obtaining a religious accommodation. But Dan acknowledged that the situation was mishandled.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Patient Found Crying on Side of Road After Fort Bragg Counselor's Assault, Feds Say](#) [Julia Marnin, *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, N.C.), 24 August 2022]

A 20-year-old patient was found crying on the side of the road after being assaulted by a Fort Bragg substance abuse counselor, federal prosecutors say. Now the former counselor is going to prison after requesting a “lenient sentence” regarding what he described was a “bad decision” made within the

grounds of the North Carolina U.S. Army base, court documents show. A judge sentenced Harrell Lenear Jamison, 48, to one year and one day in federal prison after he pleaded guilty to sexual contact without consent in April, according to a news release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina. Jamison worked as a counselor for the center after serving in the U.S. Army for roughly six years, court documents state. Fort Bragg's Womack Army Medical Center, where its substance abuse clinic is located, cares for active duty Army members, retirees and their family.

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SUICIDE

[Suicides from firearms prompt movement to address mental health stigmas](#) [William Brangham, PBS News, 23 August 2022] [VIDEO WITH TRANSCRIPT]

A new poll out today finds that most Americans, 71 percent, believe gun laws should be stricter, and one in five now say that they, a family member or a close friend has experienced gun violence or been threatened by it in the past five years. Among Black Americans, that number jumps to more than 50 percent. At the same time, 60 percent say it's still important that people can own guns for personal protection. When it comes to gun deaths in America, suicide is still the leading cause. William Brangham recently went to Wyoming, the state with the highest suicide rate, to look at a movement trying to change the conversation around mental health and firearms.

VETERANS

[Commission will study why veterans are more likely than non-veterans to get in trouble with the law](#) [Courtney Kube, NBC News, 23 August 2022]

A think tank says that military veterans are more likely than the rest of the public to be arrested and has launched a new commission to determine why and how the problem can be addressed. A [preliminary report released Tuesday by the Council on Criminal Justice](#) think tank found that about one-third of veterans say they have been arrested at least once, compared to fewer than one-fifth of all nonveterans, citing Justice Department data from 2015. The report, called the Preliminary Assessment of Veterans in the Criminal Justice System and released Tuesday, also said Justice Department data showed that about 8% of all U.S. inmates, or about 181,500, were military veterans. The preliminary assessment identified multiple risk factors that contribute to incarceration for veterans, including combat-related trauma and post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injuries, substance abuse, adverse childhood experiences and sexual trauma while in the military.

[New feature expands Veterans' ability to customize VA profile](#) [VA News, 15 August 2022]

Imagine you're on your way to a VA Medical Center (VAMC) or other VA facility for treatment, a procedure, or regular checkup. What types of information would you want VA physicians and staff to know? You definitely want them to know what brings you in and your medical or treatment history. At the very least, you'd probably hope that upon walking in they would know your chosen name and gender. Every patient's preference about what information they'd like to share with VA frontline staff is unique. That's why VA's Office of Information and Technology and the Veterans Health Administration's LGBTQ+ Health Program partnered to empower Veterans to designate their preferred name and gender identity on their VA.gov profile. The feature is the latest in a series of updates to VA.gov, which serves as the central hub from which Veterans can access and provide information related to their health, benefit, memorial, and other VA services.

[One Native veteran's new mission: Fill in the gaps of VA care on his reservation](#) [Quil Lawrence, NPR, 24 August 2022]

When Jestin Dupree got out of the Army in 2014 after 17 years, he was tired. "I ended up doing five tours of duty overseas. I went to Bosnia in 2001, Afghanistan in 2003, Iraq in 2005, Iraq in 2007. And then [Iraq] again in 2010," he says, "My body was ... the 'check engine' light came on." And when he tried to get care, he says, it wasn't easy. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, American Indians and Alaska Natives serve in the military at proportional rates higher than any other group, but they often have trouble accessing care because VA facilities are far away or backlogged. It took Dupree six months to get an appointment, he says, and when he did, the therapist wasn't a vet, he wasn't Native, and it didn't go well. What did make Dupree feel better was helping other veterans. He took a job with the tribal government checking on the vets who live all over the reservation, which stretches for 90 miles along U.S. Route 2 in northeastern Montana. "Life's a little slower, but in turn, I enjoy going to meet these other veterans. A lot of 'em don't know the help that's available for them," says Dupree.