

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 5 MAY 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

[1st Woman to Take Top Enlisted Job at Army Special Ops](#) [Steve Beynon and Drew F. Lawrence, *Military.com*, 28 April 2023]

The Army's Special Operations Command will appoint its first female command sergeant major Monday, a service spokesperson confirmed to Military.com. Command Sgt. Maj. JoAnn Naumann—the current senior enlisted adviser for Special Operations-Korea—has been tapped to lead the organization, which historically has been dominated by men. Naumann's appointment comes at a time when Army leaders are talking about diversifying the service's leadership. She also broke barriers as the first woman in a command team position with Special Operations Command, according to an Army press release last year.

[Biden is expected to tap Air Force chief to be nation's next top military officer](#) [Lara Seligman, Paul McLeary and Alexander Ward, *Politico*, 4 May 2023]

President Joe Biden is expected to nominate Gen. C.Q. Brown, the Air Force's top officer and the first Black person to lead any branch of the military, to succeed Gen. Mark Milley as the next Joint Chiefs chair, three people familiar with the discussion said on Thursday. If confirmed, Brown would become the second Black Joint Chiefs chair in the nation's history, after the late Colin Powell.

[DOD Hosts Monthlong Celebration of Military Spouses](#) [DOD News Service, 4 May 2023]

The Defense Department will celebrate Military Spouse Appreciation Month in May with a monthlong series of virtual events designed to help spouses meet career and personal goals. While each service branch will honor military spouses throughout May with installation-level events, the DOD's Military Community and Family Policy and Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program will offer "MilSpouse Month 2023." This initiative encompasses Military Spouse Appreciation Month and a [series of events](#) that focus on career preparation, self-care, family well-being and networking.

[Pentagon set to implement law requiring them to provide mental health services after lengthy delay](#) [Oren Liebermann, *CNN*, 3 May 2023]

The Pentagon is set to implement a law that requires them to provide mental health services for troops after a delay of more than a year, according to a defense official with knowledge of the matter. The law is named the Brandon Act after Brandon Caserta, a 21-year-old sailor who took his own life at Naval Air Station Norfolk in June 2018. In letters to his parents and to his friends, Caserta said he was constantly hazed and bullied in the Navy, and he saw no other way out. Passed into law as part of the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the Brandon Act requires the military to provide a mental health evaluation if a service member self-reports a problem or seeks help.

[Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall's message on sexual assault, harassment](#) [*Air Force News Service*, 2 May 2023] [VIDEO]

Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall shares his message on sexual assault and sexual harassment—improving our one team to strengthen our one fight.

CULTURE

[Barbie unveils Anna May Wong doll for AAPI Heritage Month](#) [Terry Tang, *The Associated Press*, 1 May 2023]

Six months after she was immortalized with a U.S. quarter, Asian American Hollywood trailblazer Anna May Wong has received another accolade affirming her icon status—her own Barbie. Mattel announced Monday the release of an Anna May Wong doll for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. “As the first Asian American actor to lead a U.S. television show, whose perseverance broke down barriers for her gender and AAPI community in film and TV, Anna May Wong is the perfect fit for our Barbie Inspiring Women Series,” Lisa McKnight, an executive vice president at Mattel, said in a statement.

[The chronically online third culture is redefining Asian America](#) [Sakshi Venkatraman, *NBC News*, 1 May 2023]

It’s a new era in Asian America, and the TikTok generation is running it. What was once a burning thirst for representation has been satiated, even drowned, on the internet, young people said. And for a generation of Asian Americans raised on social media, whose culture has always been ill-defined, stereotyped, asterisked, relegated to the sidelines and viewed in the shadow of Whiteness, coming into their own means putting a heritage they once tried to bury on full display.

[French immersion school for Indigenous students is a Louisiana first](#) [Chelsea Brasted, *Axios*, 2 May 2023]

Louisiana’s first-ever French immersion school serving a primarily Indigenous population is due to open this fall, marking a major moment in the state’s complicated history with its French language history. For decades, it was illegal to educate Louisiana students in French and culturally frowned upon to even speak it, but the effort to protect the state’s unique language heritage for Indigenous students is paying off. “Our dialects are an immaterial cultural heritage worth preserving,” École Pointe-au-Chien interim president Will McGrew tells Axios. “This school is one of the unique communities where that can happen.”

[Hawaii’s Native language nearly vanished—this is the fight to bring it back](#) [Allie Yang, *National Geographic*, 2 May 2023]

On a crisp morning on the island of O‘ahu, fidgeting students at Pū‘ōhala Elementary gather on a field as lush mountains behind them peek out from the mist. Their day starts with chants in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, the islands’ Native language, reiterating values of respect and justice that their teachers hope will guide them through their education, and throughout their lives. Like most kids their age, they’re not concerned with their grand legacy or the significance of the language they’re learning. Still, they have a weighty charge: to receive the torch and ensure the security of ‘ōlelo for future generations. It was only 50 years ago that the language peered over the edge of extinction. Though the situation is much improved, in many ways ‘ōlelo is still on life support.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[How this Iranian American ballerina is spotlighting social injustices in Iran](#) [Julia Griffin, *PBS News*, 2 May 2023]

Golden State Ballet principal dancer Tara Ghassemieh is used to taking command of the stage. From the Sugar Plum Fairy to the Black Swan, she's tackled her share of lead and featured roles. But recently, she stepped into a new role: pacifist-activist. Ghassemieh is half Persian, the daughter of an American mother and Iranian father who fled his home country just before the 1979 revolution. She also says she is the first and only Iranian American principal ballet dancer in the United States. After the revolution, public performances of Western arts were deemed to be a punishable offense. That means Ghassemieh's core passion is also a liability.

[Navy drops Confederate namesake from Naval Academy residence](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Navy Times*, 2 May 2023]

The official quarters of the Naval Academy's superintendent are being renamed to honor the Navy's first flag officer, the military's latest step in removing the names of Confederate troops from bases and facilities. Going forward, the superintendent's residence will be known as Farragut House, after Adm. David Glasgow Farragut, a Civil War hero who became the first naval officer appointed rear admiral, vice admiral and admiral in the 1800s, according to the Navy. Born the son of a Spanish immigrant in 1801, Farragut was appointed a midshipman at the tender age of 9 and later coined the iconic phrase, "damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!"

["No space for me." Some nonbinary actors withdraw from awards over gendered categories](#) [Brooke Baitinger, *The Kansas City Star*, (Kansas City, Mo.), 3 May 2023]

*More nonbinary actors are stepping out into the spotlight and gaining recognition for commendable acting performances. But that spotlight also uncovers the industry's complicated history with gendered performance awards. Rather than deny their nonbinary identity, some actors are opting to boycott gendered awards altogether. Liv Hewson, who plays goalkeeper Van on Showtime's wildly popular "Yellowjackets", told *Variety* they were left with no choice but to forgo consideration for an Emmy award because the Television Academy separates acting categories into binary genders, leaving no space for nonbinary actors like them.*

[Opera Ebony broke boundaries in classical music for 50 years—but what comes next?](#) [Brandon Gates, *NPR*, 29 April 2023]

For half a century, Opera Ebony has been one of the guiding lights for Black performers looking to make their mark on the opera world. Born out of a necessity to develop talent often overlooked, the company gave many of its singers a much-needed break in the industry. Opera Ebony's endurance is remarkable, said Professor Naomi Andre, who works on opera and issues surrounding gender, voice, and race at UNC-Chapel Hill. "I mean 50 years! That's huge for American opera companies." Andre pointed out that when Opera Ebony started in 1973, some Black women opera singers, such as Marian Anderson and Leontyne Price, had become household names. But it was harder at that time, she said, for Black male performers to be cast in operas with White female singers on stage.

[Photographer Matika Wilbur set out to take portraits of every Native American tribe—these are the results](#) [Jacqui Palumbo, *CNN*, 29 April 2023]

Over a decade ago, when Matika Wilbur began photographing all 562 federally recognized tribal nations in the U.S. (a number which has since grown to 574), she wanted to make a comprehensive portrait of contemporary Indigenous life—one that not only corrected harmful, persistent stereotypes, but could be used as a positive resource for the youngest Native American generation. [Project 562](#) is staggering in its scope, representing the Miccosukee Tribe in the Everglades all the way to the Siberian

Yupik people far off the Alaska coast. Through its interviews, the project delves deeply into kinship and love, displacement and reconnection, the generational impacts of colonialism and racism, environmental justice and activism, and inclusion and belonging.

[She fought to change hair-braiding law. Now, Boise refugee owns one of Idaho's first salons](#) [Sally Krutzig, *Idaho Statesman* (Boise, Idaho), 14 April 2023]

One year ago, Sonia Ekemon, 41, led the fight to make it legal for Idahoans to braid hair without a cosmetology license. After the law passed in March 2022, Ekemon launched one of Idaho's first hair braiding salons. And business has been booming. Though she has lived in Boise for 23 years, Ekemon's connection to braiding began when she was just 12 years old, living in a Benin refugee camp after escaping Togo. More than 200,000 Togolese fled to neighboring countries in the 1990s to escape violent government crackdowns against democratic reforms, according to the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants.

["A Small Light" tells a lesser known side of the Anne Frank WWII story](#) [Sarah Sicard, *Military Times*, 3 May 2023]

World War II movies and shows often focus on conflicts on the battlefield, but every once in a while, a piece of film captures the struggles of civilians mired in war's grey areas—the spaces between decision makers and troops. "A Small Light" does just that. While most Americans may be familiar with story of Anne Frank, whose diary shed light on the deplorable treatment of Jewish people under Nazi rule, the story of the brave woman who hid Frank and her family is lesser known. Miep Gies, an ordinary woman, performed an extraordinary act of courage in hiding the Frank family from the Gestapo.

[\[TRAILER\]](#)

DISCRIMINATION

[2 states launch an investigation of the NFL over gender discrimination and harassment](#) [Jonathan Franklin, *NPR*, 4 May 2023]

The attorneys general of California and New York have opened a joint investigation regarding allegations of workplace discrimination at the NFL—citing lawsuits filed by employees that detail sex, racial and age bias, sexual harassment and a hostile work environment. California Attorney General Rob Bonta and New York Attorney General Letitia James said Thursday that they have subpoenaed the NFL, which has corporate offices in both states, for documents as part of their examination into the league's workplace culture. The two attorneys general say they are exercising their legal authority to seek information from the NFL regarding the allegations of gender pay disparities, harassment as well as gender and race discrimination.

[Disability groups claim California's assisted suicide law discriminates against them](#) [Joseph Shapiro, *NPR*, 27 April 2023]

A group of people with disabilities is suing to upend California's assisted suicide law, saying the bias they faced trying to get health care during the pandemic shows the system is too quick to offer death as an appropriate outcome. The lawsuit, filed against state officials and agencies, argues that California's 7-year-old law that allows terminally ill people to choose to get lethal drugs to end their life—the [End of Life Option Act](#)—puts disabled people at greater risk of being coerced into seeking assisted suicide. The lawsuit says people with disabilities often face a denial of the medical care they need and, as a result, may be quick to seek assisted suicide as an option.

[Kansas will legally define gender as sex at birth. What that means for transgender rights](#) [Kynala Phillips and Katie Bernard, *The Kansas City Star* (Kansas City, Mo.), 2 May 2023]

Republican lawmakers in Kansas passed a sweeping law last week that will restrict the kinds of public spaces and services transgender and nonbinary Kansans will have access to, overriding a veto from Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly. Referred to by supporters as the “women’s bill of rights,” the law is the first of its kind passed in the U.S. and is set to take effect in July. It defines man and woman in state statute based solely on reproductive capability, meaning that the state will legally recognize gender only in the binary terms of sex assigned at birth: either male or female.

[White men in similar DOD civilian tech jobs earning more than women and minorities, study finds](#) [John Vandiver, *Stars and Stripes*, 1 May 2023]

White men in high-tech Defense Department jobs earn more than their counterparts with similar skill sets, raising concerns about bias in career fields that are a Pentagon recruiting priority, a new study found. The disparities held even after researchers at the Rand Corp. accounted for differences in worker and organizational conditions, such as duty locations and other criteria that could skew the results, the think tank said in its review of military personnel records. The [report, which was released Thursday](#), found “a significant unexplained compensation difference among White men and all other demographic groups,” adding that the pay inequities are “especially prevalent when White men are compared with Black men and women.”

DIVERSITY

[Chief Diversity Officers Need to Be Prepared to Manage](#) [Adam Butler and Ross Gianfortune, *Government Executive*, 28 April 2023] [PODCAST]

Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility are principles that the Biden administration has amplified since it came into office. In June 2021, the president signed an executive order establishing a directive to agencies to seek opportunities to establish or elevate Chief Diversity Officers. Recently, Accenture Federal Services and the Partnership for Public Service launched the Chief Diversity Officer Bootcamp to provide agencies with more of a pipeline of public servants with proper training.

[Female Army Reserve Soldier Receives Ranger Tab](#) [Sgt. 1st Class Jerimiah Richardson, *Army News Service*, 1 May 2023]

“Anyone can do it, if you set your mind to it.” Many children grow up hearing such platitudes, and most of us stop believing in them by the time we are young adults. This is not the case for 1st Lt. Anna Zaccaria of the U.S. Army Reserve, 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry. She always knew that she really could do whatever she set her mind to do. On Friday, April 28th, Zaccaria joined the short list of women who have pinned the coveted U.S. Army Ranger Tab. She graduated from the grueling course without any need for recycling or retraining. Zaccaria is also the first female Army Reserve Infantry Officer to pin the Ranger Tab. Prior to Ranger school, she completed the Infantry Basic Officer Leader Course (IBOLC), which is touted as another extremely challenging course for soldiers. While there, she became the first female Soldier to ever win the prestigious Iron Man Award.

[A Historic Female Unit Will Be Deactivated as the Marine Corps Continues Integrating the Force](#) [Konstantin Toropin, *Military.com*, 3 May 2023]

The Marine Corps has announced that it is deactivating a historic training battalion at Parris Island as a sign that it is making serious progress toward integrating men and women into a single training pipeline at its iconic training base. In a press release issued Wednesday, the Corps announced that it will deactivate the 4th Recruit Training Battalion—a unit that has trained female Marines since 1986—in a ceremony on June 15, 2023. The 2020 NDAA required the Corps stop separating trainees by gender at Parris Island within five years and at its recruit depot in San Diego within eight. By contrast, the Navy has been training women alongside men since the 1990s.

[Like our military branches, we should glory in diversity and inclusion](#) [Art Kellermann, *The Washington Post*, 3 May 2023] [OPINION]

The assertion by Virginia’s chief diversity officer, Martin D. Brown, to Virginia Military Institute cadets that “DEI is dead” was not only wrong; it disregards America’s military history [[“Va. diversity chief talks down ‘equity’ in VMI visit,” front page, April 28](#)].

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Riding the “vomit comet” with first disabled astronaut John McFall](#) [BBC News, 3 May 2023]

John McFall is the European Space Agency’s first ever para-astronaut, selected to study how feasible it is for someone with a physical disability to live and work in space. BBC News joined him on board a parabolic flight, where he experienced weightlessness for the first time.

EXTREMISM

[Former FBI agent that compared police to Nazis charged for Jan. 6 involvement](#) [Stephen Neukam, *The Hill*, 3 May 2023]

A former FBI supervisory agent has been charged by federal authorities on allegations that he joined a mob that stormed the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 6, 2021, calling police officers Nazis and encouraging rioters to kill them. Jared L. Wise, 50, the former agent, was arrested Monday and charged with four misdemeanor counts related to his actions, including trespassing and disrupting the orderly conduct of government. According to a [criminal complaint](#), Wise told police officers at the Capitol “You guys are disgusting—you are the Nazi. You are the Gestapo.”

[Veterans found guilty of seditious conspiracy in U.S. Capitol attack](#) [Nikki Wentling, *Military Times*, 4 May 2023]

Four members of the neo-fascist Proud Boys, three of whom have military backgrounds, were convicted Thursday of a plot to attack the U.S. Capitol—a significant milestone in the Jan. 6, 2021 cases that again highlighted the participation of veterans and service members, and created a new wave of disinformation. Former Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrío, along with members Ethan Nordean, Joseph Biggs and Zachary Rehl, were convicted by a jury in Washington, D.C., of seditious conspiracy—a charge that carries a prison sentence of up to 20 years.

HUMAN RELATIONS

[Loneliness poses risks as deadly as smoking, surgeon general warns](#) [Amanda Seitz, *The Associated Press*, 2 May 2023]

Widespread loneliness in the U.S. poses health risks as deadly as smoking a dozen cigarettes daily, costing the health industry billions of dollars annually, the U.S. surgeon general said Tuesday in

declaring the latest public health epidemic. About half of U.S. adults say they've experienced loneliness, Dr. Vivek Murthy said in a [report](#) from his office. Research shows that Americans, who have become less engaged with worship houses, community organizations and even their own family members in recent decades, have steadily reported an increase in feelings of loneliness. The number of single households has also doubled over the last 60 years.

[We asked, you answered: What's your secret to staying optimistic in gloomy times?](#) [Carmen Drahl, Marc Silver, Ben de la Cruz and Gisele Grayson, *NPR*, 30 April 2023]

A few weeks ago, we published the thoughts of a few global advocates and activists on how they find the hope when things seem hopeless. We asked our readers to share their optimistic strategies and they really, really did—nearly 100 wonderful responses. Stay optimistic! [Here's a selection](#) of the themes and thoughts and thank you to everybody who wrote in.

INTERNATIONAL

[Broken by the bends: the deadly toll on Honduras's Indigenous lobster divers](#) [Jeff Ernst, *The Guardian*, 2 May 2023]

On the main avenue of Puerto Lempira, a man sits outside a restaurant in a wooden, hand-propelled cart and waves to another man ambling by in a cart of his own. A block down, a man in a wheelchair is pushed by a young woman past a man on crutches. At a corner, a pair of men clutching canes lounge in the shade. It could be a description of a retirement community. But the men are of all ages, and such scenes are common across the coast of Gracias a Dios, an Indigenous territory in north-east Honduras, where decades of unsafe fishing practices have disabled thousands who dive the Caribbean Sea to harvest marine life.

[Eurovision 2023: Contest inspires Ukraine's LGBT troops](#) [Jack Lamport, *BBC News*, 30 April 2023]

As 2022 Eurovision winner, Ukraine is guaranteed a place in the Eurovision final on 13 May. When TVORCHI takes the stage in host city Liverpool, it will be a moment to savour for the country's LGBT troops. "I didn't know if I would make it," says Antonina Romanova, a soldier who has been fighting on Ukraine's front line. This is the reality for Antonina, who identifies as non-binary and who, with her partner of nine years Oleksandr, took the decision to leave their lives as theatre directors in Kyiv and fight the Russian army. "Another world" is how Oleksandr describes it.

[Nigerian hijab-wearing chef seeks to break stereotypes about Muslim women](#) [Reuters, 4 May 2023]

Nigerian Sherifah Yunus Olokodana looks like any Muslim woman with a veil that only exposes her eyes, but the entrepreneur who has carved a niche as a chef in Lagos is seeking to break stereotypes about hijab-wearing women in the country. Nigeria is almost evenly divided between the largely Christian south and mainly Muslim north, where cultural norms often discourage women to get into business. Olokodana, a Yoruba Muslim from the southwest, has been a pastry chef for nearly two decades and sells food spices, but she said she still faced prejudice.

[Uganda parliament passes harsh anti-LGBTQ bill mostly unchanged](#) [Reuters, 2 May 2023]

Uganda's parliament on Tuesday passed one of the world's strictest anti-LGBTQ bills mostly unchanged, including provision for long jail terms and the death penalty, after the president requested some parts of the original legislation be toned down. The new bill retains most of the harshest measures of the legislation adopted in March, which drew condemnation from the United States, European Union,

United Nations and major corporations. It allows a 20-year sentence for promoting homosexuality, which activists say could criminalise any advocacy for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer citizens.

MISCELLANEOUS

[Basketball legend Rivers, longtime Globetrotter, dies at 73](#) [*The Associated Press*, 30 April 2023]

Larry “Gator” Rivers, who helped integrate high school basketball in Georgia before playing for the Harlem Globetrotters and becoming a county commissioner in his native Savannah, died Saturday at age 73. Rivers was a sophomore on the all-Black Beach High School team that won the first Georgia High School Association basketball tournament to include Black and White players in 1967. He went on to play and coach for 16 years with the Harlem Globetrotters, reuniting for a time with high school coach Russell Ellington.

[Civil War Soldier Receives Funeral Honors at Arlington Cemetery](#) [*DOD News Service*, 28 April 2023]

Arlington National Cemetery conducted a rare funeral service for a Civil War soldier this week, providing military funeral honors with funeral escort for Army Maj. Isaac Hart. Maj. Hart served in the Union army from 1861 to 1866 with the 3rd Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, the 23rd Massachusetts Infantry Regiment and the 2nd United States Colored Troops Regiment Cavalry. Hart, whose remains were recently discovered on a shelf of unclaimed remains at a Cincinnati cemetery, was the first Civil War soldier to receive military funeral honors at Arlington National Cemetery since 2018.

[Lawmakers Push for Review of How the Pentagon Grapples with Mental Health](#) [*Patricia Kime, Military.com*, 2 May 2023]

A bill introduced Friday in the House would create a task force to investigate military mental health and the Pentagon’s varied approaches to supporting and treating affected troops and their family members. Under the bill, sponsored by Navy veteran Rep. Guy Reschenthaler, R-Pa., and Rep. Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., the task force would assess the extent of military mental health issues, examine all current programs and medical staffing, and make recommendations for improvements. Nearly 15% of all active-duty service members had a known mental health condition in 2021, according to the most recent figures published by the Defense Health Agency.

[Leading scientist says he had to “blow the whistle” on dangers of AI](#) [*Ines Kagubare, The Hill*, 3 May 2023]

Geoffrey Hinton, a former Google executive and a leading pioneer of artificial intelligence, said he had to “blow the whistle” on the risks of AI because the new technology he helped build is becoming smarter than he had anticipated. Hinton says he recently left Google after more than a decade at the company so he could speak freely about the dangers of AI, including how it could create unintended consequences, such as sowing disinformation or replacing human workers. In his interview with CNN, Hinton explained that AI is rapidly advancing and that people will soon “not be able to know what is true anymore.”

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[A Lot of Managers Don’t Like Working With Gen Z](#) [*Adam Butler and Ross Gianfortune, Government Executive*, 4 May 2023] [PODCAST]

The generation born after 1996, commonly called “Gen Z” or “Zoomers,” are now entering the workforce and bringing with them the unique characteristics that any generation brings to the workplace. Managing across generations is never easy, but according to a new survey from ResumeBuilder.com, managers are having some trouble working with Gen Z. Stacie Haller is chief career advisor at ResumeBuilder.com. She’s spent over 30 years in staffing and recruiting, career counseling, and job search coaching. She joined the podcast to discuss the ResumeBuilder.com survey on how managers perceive the Zoomer generation in the workplace.

[Majority of VA Whistleblowers Report Retaliation After Calling Out Agency Wrongdoing](#) [Patricia Kime, Military.com, 4 May 2023]

The Department of Veterans Affairs continues to struggle to protect whistleblowers in its ranks, with two-thirds of whistleblowers reporting allegations of retaliation from 2018 to 2022, the [Government Accountability Office](#) has found. Overall, allegations of retaliation against all federal whistleblowers declined from 2018 to 2022, but cases at the VA involving retaliation rose during the time frame, according to a GAO briefing to members of Congress in February that was released Wednesday.

[“Trailblazer”: First Marine general to lead Defense Intelligence Agency dies at 64](#) [Wyatt Olson, Stars and Stripes, 2 May 2023]

The first Black director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the first Marine Corps officer to lead it, died Friday in Aldie, Va., the Marine Corps said in a news release Monday. Retired Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart, 64, died “peacefully in his sleep,” according to a brief obituary posted by the Colonial Funeral Home of Leesburg. Stewart retired in 2019 after 38 years in the Marine Corps. His last post was as deputy commander of U.S. Cyber Command. Stewart was born May 11, 1958, in Kingston, Jamaica, and immigrated to America in 1971 at age 13.

[A very good girl deploys on carrier Ford: Sage the therapy dog](#) [Megan Eckstein, Navy Times, 3 May 2023]

The first-in-class carrier Gerald R. Ford deployed this week with a first-of-kind asset for its sailors: a therapy dog. Sage, a 3-year-old female yellow Labrador retriever, is the first dog to deploy with a ship’s crew through a pilot program meant to address mental health and resiliency. The Virginia-based nonprofit Mutts with a Mission trained Sage and loaned her to the crew for the deployment. The dog will comfort sailors and is trained to help them cope with operational stress. It’s part of what is dubbed, in typical military-speak, the Expanded Operational Stress Control Canine program.

RACISM

[What a Black man discovered when he met the White mother he never knew](#) [John Blake, CNN, 30 April 2023] [COMMENTARY]

I was 17, just months away from leaving home for college, when my father called me into his bedroom one afternoon. “Do you want to meet your mom?” he asked me. His tone was matter of fact. But we both knew that his question was anything but casual. I had grown up in Baltimore without ever knowing my mother. She vanished from my life not long after I was born. No one told me why she disappeared. I didn’t know what she looked like, or even if she was alive. All I was told was this: Your mother’s name is Shirley. She’s White. And her family hates Black people.

RELIGION

[A Brief But Spectacular take on finding hope in a difficult world](#) [Amna Nawaz, *PBS News*, 2 May 2023] [AUDIO WITH TRANSCRIPT]

Simran Jeet Singh is executive director for the Aspen Institute’s Religion and Society Program and author of “The Light We Give: How Sikh Wisdom Can Transform Your Life.” Singh shares his Brief But Spectacular take on how by focusing on the positive aspects of our multi-religious, racial and ethnic world, society can disrupt bias and build empathy.

[Readout of White House Listening Session on Islamophobia](#) [*The White House Press Office*, 3 May 2023]

Yesterday, Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff, White House Domestic Policy Advisor Ambassador Susan Rice, Deputy Homeland Security Advisor Joshua Geltzer, U.S. Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Rashad Hussain, and Office of Public Engagement Director Stephen Benjamin hosted a listening session with Muslim community leaders to discuss efforts to counter Islamophobia, which is hate, discrimination, or bias directed at people who are or are perceived to be Muslim. During the convening, Muslim leaders outlined the challenges facing their communities and shared recommendations for confronting Islamophobia and all forms of hate and bigotry.

SEXISM

[Pregnant Employees at Customs and Border Protection Regularly Discriminated Against, Class Action Lawsuit Alleges](#) [Eric Katz, *Government Executive*, 1 May 2023]

The Homeland Security Department has allegedly discriminated against certain pregnant women for years by forcing them to forfeit some of their duties, according to a lawsuit filed by a group of employees who were recently certified to bring their case as a class action. The employees all worked at Customs and Border Protection’s Office of Field Operations at the time of the alleged discrimination. They brought their case before a field office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which found in a recent ruling that any pregnant employee required to enter “temporary light duty,” or TLD, since July 2016 would be eligible to join the class.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Her job is to care for survivors of sexual assault. Why aren’t there more like her?](#) [Katheryn Houghton, *NPR*, 5 May 2023]

Jacqueline Towarnicki got a text as she finished her day shift at a local clinic in Missoula, Montana. She had a new case, a patient covered in bruises who couldn’t remember how the injuries got there. Towarnicki’s breath caught, a familiar feeling after four years of working night shifts as a sexual assault nurse examiner in this northwestern Montana city. These nights on duty are Towarnicki’s second job. She’s on call once a week and a weekend a month. A survivor may need protection against sexually transmitted infections, medicine to avoid getting pregnant, or evidence collected to prosecute their attacker. Or all the above.

[Lawmakers want to protect teen trainees from “predatory” instructors](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 3 May 2023]

Democratic lawmakers are demanding an outside investigation into multiple allegations of sexual abuse in the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps, to protect high schoolers from “exploitative practices and predatory instructors.” The lawmakers asked the Government Accountability Office to launch a probe to help Congress determine whether to scale back or shutter the JROTC program altogether. The lawmakers’ request comes a few months after Defense Department leaders acknowledged that sexual abuse and harassment of high school students has been a significant problem in the program. Between 2017 and 2022, at least 58 such cases occurred.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

SUICIDE

[The Army Needs to Talk About its Problem with Leaders Taking Their Own Lives](#) [Dan Dillenback, *Military.com*, 28 April 2023] [OPINION]

Our leaders are supposed to be beacons—caring for us and showing us how to navigate our challenges. Army leaders know the resources available to them and often manage them, training others and ensuring their effectiveness. But according to the Department of Defense’s annual report on Suicide Prevention, these leaders take their own lives at the same rate as those they are supposed to lead. Why? If our systems work, those with the most knowledge and access should have lower suicide rates. The Army has a robust mental health support system, but current policy deters leaders from seeking help because it lacks privacy and strips them of agency over their care.

VETERANS

[Sen. Kaine introduces national version of state anti-housing discrimination law for veterans, low-income families](#) [Ian Munro, *The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, Va.)*, 1 May 2023]

Sen. Tim Kaine [reintroduced a 2018 bill](#) meant to stop housing discrimination against veterans and low income families by amending the Fair Housing Act of 1968. The bill would make it illegal to not allow an individual to rent a property based on source of income or veteran status.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)