

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 22 OCTOBER 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

[AbilityOne program looks to end subminimum wage for federal contract workers with disabilities](#)

[Jory Heckman, *Federal News Network*, 13 October 2021]

The Biden administration is proposing reforms to a New Deal-era federal program that gives people with disabilities federal contracting jobs, but allows those employees in some cases to receive less than the federal minimum wage. The AbilityOne Commission, an independent federal agency, [issued a proposed rule Tuesday](#) that would bar federal contractors and subcontractors from paying a “subminimum wage” to workers who are blind or have a physical or mental disability. The proposed rule would require each nonprofit agency participating in the AbilityOne program to certify it will pay its employees at least minimum wage for all contracts and subcontracts awarded through the program. “Employees with significant disabilities who have been receiving subminimum wages for their work will now receive the federal minimum wage, state minimum wage, or prevailing wage, depending on the applicable law,” the proposed rule states. The [Javits-Wagner-O’Day Act](#), passed by Congress in 1938, gives contracting preference to nonprofits that employ disabled workers to complete more than 75% of the direct labor required for a federal contract. A [provision in the Fair Labor Standards Act](#), however, gives the Labor Department authority to allow nonprofits in the program to pay workers with disabilities less than the federal minimum wage.

[For federal accessibility managers, adding “A” to new DEIA initiative is a welcome change](#)

[Nicole Ogrysko, *Federal News Network*, 13 October 2021]

As agencies continue an ongoing push to make their processes, tools and workplaces more accessible to employees and members of the public, a [recent executive order](#) is putting more wind in the sails of those who manage federal accessibility programs “A lot of times in what we do when dealing with accessibility, we are reacting. There’s a problem. We have an employee or an applicant or someone from the public who can’t access something. We are scrambling to fix it, and a lot of times we are seen as party crashers,” Annette Carr, disability program manager for the Transportation Security Administration, said Tuesday at the annual Interagency Accessibility Forum. But a recent executive order on diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA), which the president signed back in June, nudges agency accessibility programs and their managers closer to the spotlight. While the federal government in recent years has exceeded its goal of hiring at least 100,000 individuals with disabilities to agency jobs over a five-year period, recent data from the Government Accountability Office shows agencies often struggle to retain them. Agencies hired 143,000 employees with disabilities between 2011 and 2015, with an additional 79,000 new hires in 2016 and 2017, according to a [2020 study](#).

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[VA pushes for employment inclusivity during Compensated Work Therapy Vocational Rehabilitation Week](#) [Office of Public Affairs, *VA.gov*, 18 October 2021]

In recognition of [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#), the Department of Veterans Affairs is observing Compensated Work Therapy Vocational Rehabilitation Week, Oct. 17-21 at its facilities nationwide as part of its efforts to increase employment inclusivity and vocational rehabilitation services for Veterans with disabilities. The services provided through the [CWT program](#) are integrated with clinical care to assist Veterans with serious mental illness, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, polytrauma and traumatic brain injury, substance use disorder, homelessness, and other psychosocial issues that may interfere with securing meaningful employment. “The core philosophy of compensated work therapy is that given the right support, all persons with a disability can contribute productively to the workforce,” said National Director of Veterans Health Administration Vocational Rehabilitation Service Shana K. Bakken, Ph.D. CWT programs are located at all VA health care systems across the nation and VA staff have developed partnerships with local, regional and national businesses, industry and government agencies to provide Veteran candidates for employment.

CULTURE

[AFCLC launches updated culture guide app, introduces new educational course with certificate](#) [Lori M. Quiller, *Air Force News Service*, 19 October 2021]

*Airmen now have at their fingertips the opportunity to receive credit for learning about another country’s culture while simultaneously responding to the Air Force chief of staff’s action order to understand the nation’s strategic competitors. This can be achieved by [accessing the latest version](#) of the Air Force Culture and Language Center’s Air Force Culture Guide app. Ward described the updated app as a one-stop shop for accessible, relevant and impactful curriculum in addition to culture field guides. “It’s a delivery method that can deploy curriculum at enterprise scale, untethered from the constraints of government systems, which is especially great for total force Airmen, and it’s designed to accelerate learning for strategic competition by putting AFCLC’s ‘Global Classroom’ right in your pocket,” he said. Shortly after its initial release in 2017, *The Wall Street Journal* recognized the original version as one of the six indispensable apps for business travelers.*

[Census Prompts Push for More Indigenous School Lessons](#) [Tim Henderson, *Stateline*, 20 October 2021]

The census count of American Indians and Alaska Natives grew by almost 4.5 million to 9.7 million between 2010 and 2020, an increase the U.S. Census Bureau credits to better questions in 2020 that helped tease out the heritage of multiracial people. Many American Indians and Alaska Natives say the dramatic increase in their numbers recorded in last year’s census supports their longstanding argument that Indigenous history should get more attention in public school classrooms. Even before the latest tally, there was a growing movement to infuse more Indigenous material into school curriculums—not only to connect students to their roots, but also to ensure that all students know about the contributions of Indigenous peoples and to encourage respect for the sovereign rights of tribes. Some states, including Oklahoma, Oregon, Washington and Wisconsin, already have taken steps to make Indigenous history and culture a larger part of classroom learning. Now politicians and advocates in other states are doing the same:

Connecticut and North Dakota enacted laws this year requiring Indigenous history lessons, while California has pending legislation on the issue.

[Chappelle special spurs Netflix walkout; “Trans lives matter”](#) [Alex Veiga and Lynn Elber, *The Associated Press*, 20 October 2021]

Netflix employees who walked out Wednesday in protest of Dave Chappelle’s special and its anti-transgender comments were joined by allies who chanted “Trans lives matter,” getting pushback from counterprotesters who also showed up. A pre-noon rally at a Netflix office-studio complex drew about 100 people, most on the side of an estimated 30 workers at the streaming giant that joined in afterward. Some were willing to identify themselves as Netflix employees, but all declined to provide their names. Joey Soloway, creator of the groundbreaking Emmy-winning comedy “Transparent,” was among the speakers at the rally. Chappelle’s decision to share “his outrage as comedic humiliation in front of thousands of people, and then broadcasting it to hundreds of millions of people is infinitely amplified gender violence,” they said.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Fallout from Jon Gruden emails leads to diversity questions](#) [Rob Maaddi, *The Associated Press*, 21 October 2021]

Every week for the past two seasons, NFL players take the field wearing social justice messages on their helmets, and “It Takes All of Us” and “End Racism” are stenciled in the end zones as part of the league’s [Inspire Change](#) platform. But actions often speak louder than words. The fallout from Jon Gruden’s emails has many questioning what it will take to really change the culture in the NFL. “I can’t say that I was surprised at all that that kind of dialogue is happening behind the scenes,” three-time Pro Bowl safety Malcolm Jenkins said on the AP Pro Football Podcast. “I think that we understand the culture of the NFL and we can put ‘Inspire Change’ logos all over the field and create logos all we want, but until you actually change what leadership looks like, you can’t expect to change the culture.” In a sport with about 70% of the players Black, more than 80% of head coaches (27 of 32) and general managers (also 27 of 32) are White. Among principal owners, only Jacksonville’s Shad Khan and Buffalo’s Kim Pegula are members of minorities.

[Hate Crimes and Pandemic Lead More Asian Americans to Seek Therapy](#) [Alyssa Lukpat, *The New York Times*, 15 October 2021]

Mental health is heavily stigmatized among Asian Americans, whose older generations, like the older generations of other cultures, tend to see therapy as undignified or a sign of weakness, experts said. But the pandemic and the specter of hate crimes by those who tied the coronavirus to China have prompted a growing number of Asian Americans to overcome the stigma and turn to therapy for help, according to more than a dozen therapists, psychiatrists and psychology professors. More than 40 percent of Asian Americans were anxious or depressed during the pandemic, up from less than 10 percent before the virus struck, according to the [Asian American Psychological Association](#). The [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) found similar rates for all adult Americans, but experts said the figures for Asian Americans were most likely higher than reported because some Asian Americans are uncomfortable talking about mental health. More than a year and a half into the pandemic, the fear of hate crimes hasn’t decreased for a quarter of

Asian adults in the United States. They reported that, in the last few months, they still feared being threatened or physically attacked, according to a [poll](#) released this week by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

[How to Persuade White Lawmakers to Protect Black Hairstyles](#) [Patrice Peck, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 13 October 2021] [COMMENTARY]

In most U.S. states, employers and schools are allowed to discriminate against box braids, locs, and other traditional styles. A coalition of activists and legislators has started to change that. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits explicit discrimination by employers and public schools on the basis of traits the law considers immutable—unchangeable from birth—such as race and color. But the language doesn't explicitly ban discrimination against mutable traits, leaving many common, implicit forms of discrimination to be adjudicated by the courts. For decades, workplaces have argued, mostly successfully, that hairstyles predominantly worn by Black people are merely cultural practices and should be subject to change by employers or school administrators. The federal judiciary has so far protected only the afro, which was deemed an immutable racial characteristic in 1976. This discrepancy is absurd at best: Not all Black people have afros, and people who aren't Black can have natural afros, or brown skin, for that matter. This limited understanding extends to the nuances of Black hair, from its rich history and culture to its morphological differences.

[Removed Robert E. Lee statue now on display at Texas resort](#) [*The Associated Press*, 17 October 2021]

*A statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee that the city of Dallas removed from a park and later sold in an online auction is now on display at a golf resort in West Texas. The bronze sculpture, which was removed from the Dallas park in September 2017, is now at the Lajitas Golf Resort in Terlingua, Texas, the *Houston Chronicle* reported. The 27,000-acre resort, which is privately owned by Dallas billionaire and pipeline mogul Kelcy Warren and managed by Scott Beasley, the president of Dallas-based WSB Resorts and Clubs, received the statue as a donation in 2019. The 1935 sculpture by Alexander Phimister Proctor was among several Lee monuments around the U.S. that were removed from public view amid the fallout over racial violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017.*

[Tempe may rename streets, parks named for Klan members](#) [*The Associated Press*, 16 October 2021]

Tempe will consider renaming parks and streets named after former community leaders who were recently discovered to have been dues-paying members of the Ku Klux Klan. The city's research showed that three schools also were named for members of the Klan. Officials say they've notified Tempe Elementary School District leaders about the namesakes of Laird and Hudson elementary schools and Gililand Middle School. "Together we can acknowledge the past and make purposeful decisions that reflect our community values of equality and anti-discrimination," City Manager Andrew Ching said in a news release. A Klan chapter called Butte Klan No. 3 included many prominent Tempe residents in the 1920s, including mayors, council members, bankers and other power brokers, according to a memo prepared for the City Council. The city's elementary schools were segregated, as was a swimming pool at Tempe Beach Park.

[There's a good reason why this Air Force general only wears 3 ribbons on his dress uniform](#)

[David Roza, *Task & Purpose*, 19 October 2021]

If you know anything about generals, you know that they typically sport a lot of ribbons on their dress uniforms. These strips of colored fabric, sometimes referred to as “chest candy” by service members, represent accomplishments achieved over one’s career. So when someone walks into a room with a chest that looks like it’s covered in paint swatches from a hardware store, it sends a message that they’ve “been there” and “done that.” But sometimes what awards you choose to showcase speaks far louder than how many you’ve earned. That’s what stood out to airmen when Air Force Gen. Mike Minihan, the brand-new commander of Air Mobility Command, took nearly all of his 32 ribbons off his uniform for his most recent official service photo. Of those 32 ribbons, Minihan left only three on his chest, all of which were unit-based, rather than individual awards. One of Minihan’s public affairs officials said the general’s intent was to signal his commitment to team accomplishments over individual glory.

DISCRIMINATION

[Apple employee says she was fired for speaking out about workplace conditions](#) [Cameron

Jenkins, *The Hill*, 16 October 2021]

*A former Apple employee said the company fired her after she advocated for better conditions in the workplace. Janneke Parrish, who was fired from her role as a product manager on Apple Maps on Thursday, told *The Washington Post* that she believes her firing was connected to her involvement in #AppleToo, a movement created to improve working conditions within the company. Parrish’s firing came just hours after she was quoted in a *Washington Post* article voicing support for her co-worker Cher Scarlett, who is a founder of #AppleToo. Under the movement, more than 500 Apple employees have shared anonymous testimonials detailing their experiences with “racism, sexism, discrimination, retaliation, bullying, sexual and other forms of harassment” at the company and have accused Apple of operating as “an opaque, intimidating fortress,” the *Post* reported. Tech workers have increasingly challenged their employers in recent years as reports of discrimination continue to make headlines.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Bakery agrees to settle race discrimination lawsuit](#) [*The Associated Press*, 15 October 2021]

A Massachusetts bakery has agreed to pay up to \$95,000 in penalties and restitution, require anti-bias training for employees, and revise its anti-discrimination policies to settle allegations that an employee was repeatedly exposed to racial slurs in the workplace, the attorney general’s office said. The settlement filed Thursday resolves a lawsuit brought by the attorney general alleging that Brockton-based White’s Bakery violated anti-discrimination laws by creating a racially hostile work environment, according to a statement. A supervisor at the business repeatedly used racial slurs in front of the mixed race employee over a four-month period in 2018, causing him to suffer severe emotional harm and eventually quit, authorities said. Bakery management knew of the use of the slurs, but did nothing to stop it, the suit alleged. The bakery denied the allegations.

[Maine's Colby College bans discrimination based on caste](#) [*The Associated Press*, 15 October 2021]

Colby College is banning discrimination based on caste, a system of inherited social class, becoming one of the nation's earliest colleges to do so. The private liberal arts college revised its nondiscrimination policy to add caste to its list of protections for the campus community. The efforts were led by a professor who took an interest in caste discrimination across the country and realized the college needed to recognize it as a form of discrimination, the Bangor Daily News [reported](#). "You have to first name what it is to say: This exists, we name it, we stand against it," said Sonja Thomas, associate professor and department chair of women's, gender and sexuality studies at Colby. While caste is often associated with South Asia, such class-based systems come into play across religions, cultures and countries, and even in technology industries and academia, Thomas said. Colby College's updated policy, announced this week, follows one at Brandeis University in Massachusetts, which declared in late 2019 that it would prohibit caste discrimination on its campus.

[NFL, players agree to end "race-norming" in \\$1B settlement](#) [Maryclaire Dale, *The Associated Press*, 21 October 2021]

*The NFL and lawyers for thousands of retired NFL players have reached an agreement to end race-based adjustments in dementia testing in the \$1 billion settlement of concussion claims, according to a proposed deal filed Wednesday in federal court. The revised testing plan follows public outrage over the use of "race-norming," a practice that came to light only after two former NFL players filed a civil rights lawsuit over it last year. The adjustments, critics say, may have prevented hundreds of Black players suffering from dementia to win awards that average \$500,000 or more. The Black retirees will now have the chance to have their tests rescored or, in some cases, seek a new round of cognitive testing, according to the settlement, details of which were first reported in *The New York Times* on Wednesday. "We look forward to the court's prompt approval of the agreement, which provides for a race-neutral evaluation process that will ensure diagnostic accuracy and fairness in the concussion settlement," NFL lawyer Brad Karp said in a statement.*

[USC to apologize for sabotaging its Japanese American students' educations in WWII](#) [Kimmy Yam, *NBC News*, 19 October 2021]

*The University of Southern California announced last week that it will make amends for its discrimination against Japanese Americans during World War II, when the U.S. government deemed the community a national security threat. USC President Carol Folt will award posthumous degrees and apologize to the students of Japanese descent whose schooling was interrupted when they and their families were forcibly displaced and put into concentration camps. At the time, the university refused to release transcripts for students who wanted to transfer, sabotaging their chances to complete their educations. USC is now trying to identify the families of about 120 students who were affected during the 1941-42 academic year. "I think we're starting to understand ... there's things that have happened in the past that are not things that we're proud of," Folt told *NBC Asian America*. "It only does good to acknowledge that—to find the source of problems, to apologize, but maybe even more importantly ... to make sure that these sorts of issues do not happen."*

DIVERSITY

[1st woman to lead state Air National Guard assumes duties](#) [*The Associated Press*, 18 October 2021]

The first woman to lead the Minnesota Air National Guard officially assumed her duties after a change of command ceremony over the weekend. Command Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Erikson is the most senior enlisted member of the Minnesota Air Guard. She's in charge of about 2,000 airmen located at two separate wings and the command headquarters. "My priorities are to build relationships to improve the resiliency of the force so we may provide this state and nation a ready force," Erikson said. "I will also provide opportunities for development and growth." Erikson has 32 years of service in the Air Force and has held six different duty positions. She began her career as a jet engine mechanic on the C-141 cargo aircraft. At one point she was in charge of the 148th Medical Group that deployed to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

[Air Force general is second woman to lead a top U.S. command](#) [Robert Burns, *The Associated Press*, 15 October 2021]

Air Force Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost on Friday became only the second woman to lead one of the Pentagon's 11 so-called combatant commands, the multi-service organizations that spearhead U.S. military operations around the world. At a change-of-command ceremony at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin applauded Van Ovost's historic rise to lead U.S. Transportation Command. He called her a "legend of a leader," a pilot by training and a pivotal player in the airlift of tens of thousands of evacuees from Kabul in August. She helped orchestrate the airlift as commander of the Air Force Air Mobility Command. "We need every Jackie Van Ovost we can get," Austin, a retired Army general, said. "As she likes to say, 'As young women looking up, it's hard to be what you can't see.' So General Van Ovost knows the importance of breaking barriers."

[All-female aircrew teaches girls about aviation at The Sky's the Limit event](#) [Jack Murphy, *Audacy.com*, 12 October 2021]

Earlier this month an all-female aircrew from the Air Force flew to Canada to participate in an event aimed at teaching little girls about military aviation. The event, called "The Sky's No Limit: Girls fly too" was hosted at Abbotsford International Airport in Canada. Departing from Texas, the crew of the C-130J Super Hercules consisted of two pilots, two crew chiefs, two loadmasters, and one public affair officer since they were attending a public event. Throughout the several-day event, parents and their daughters toured the C-130J and learned about the aircraft from the female crew. Visiting children got to strap into the pilot's seat and learn about the instruments and dials in the cockpit.

[Army secretary highlights female trailblazers in leadership symposium](#) [Staff Sgt. Michael Reinsch, *Army News Service*, 14 October 2021]

The Army Women's Foundation hosted a leadership symposium Monday to honor female pioneers in the Army including those who served in an all-African American battalion in World

War II. “I have a special interest in women in the Army, both past and present. We all need trailblazers,” said Army Secretary Christine E. Wormuth, the keynote speaker for the symposium. “I’ve looked to them over the years for inspiration and for guidance when times get tough. There have been some tough times in the past, and there will be tough times, I think, ahead in the future. After the secretary’s speech, the event, which was part of the Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting and Exposition, held a tribute to the [6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion](#). “During World War II, there were more than 150,000 women in the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps. Of those 150,000 women, 6,520 were African American,” said retired Col. Edna C. Cummings, a U.S. Army Reserve ambassador for Maryland.

[As Some Black Staff Members Leave Congress, Those Who Remain Call for Change](#) [Aishvarya Kavi, *The New York Times*, 18 October 2021]

When Chanda Jefferson, a science teacher from Columbia, S.C., got the opportunity to work on Capitol Hill, she was thrilled to use her classroom experience to help shape education policy. It wasn’t until she arrived that she realized how impervious the halls of Congress were to change. In her office of more than a dozen people, there are no permanent Black staff members. “It was shocking to see so few individuals that look like me,” Ms. Jefferson said. “In order for us to have legislation to represent everyone in the United States of America, we need to hear from diverse voices.” In a [letter](#) published on Friday, two congressional staff associations called for better pay and “a stronger college-to-Congress pipeline” to recruit Black graduates. Published on behalf of more than 300 Black staff members who work in the House and the Senate, it offers a glimpse at the experiences of those who work behind the scenes drafting policy, interacting with constituents and advancing the agendas of members of Congress. Diversity has always been a challenge on Capitol Hill. While the 117th Congress is the most diverse yet—the percentage of Black lawmakers in the House is nearly equal to that of Black Americans, [according to the Pew Research Center](#)—representation among congressional staff falls far short of reflecting the population of the United States.

[“Disability Drives Innovation”](#) [Shira Ovide, *The New York Times*, 15 October 2021]

Do you love audiobooks? “You have blind people to thank for that,” said Catherine Kudlick, director of the Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University. The godfather of the book being read aloud through your smartphone headphones was Talking Books, the records developed in the 1930s in the United States for people with impaired vision as an alternative to Braille. I’ve been discussing the history of audiobooks with Dr. Kudlick, who calls herself “imperfectly blind,” and other experts because, well, I love listening to books. But it’s more than that. Audiobooks are a prime example of a technology developed by or for people with disabilities that has helped all of us. They remind us that people with disabilities are not an afterthought in invention but key players. “Disability drives innovation. It’s undeniable,” said Joshua Miele, a blind adaptive technology designer who was recently named a recipient of the MacArthur Foundation’s “genius” grant. “Almost always when you find something that is really cool for people with disabilities,” Dr. Miele told me, “it will find its way into the mainstream in a way that is wonderful and makes life better.”

[DIY “Smart” White Cane Works Like a Self-Driving Car](#) [Andrew Myers, *Futurity*, 15 October 2021]

*Most know the white cane as a simple but crucial tool that assists people with visual impairments in making their way through the world. Using tools from autonomous vehicles, the research team built the augmented cane, which helps people detect and identify obstacles, move easily around those objects, and follow routes both indoors and out. The augmented cane is not the first smart cane. Research sensor canes can be heavy and expensive—weighing up to 50 pounds with a cost of around \$6,000. Currently available sensor canes are technologically limited, only detecting objects right in front of the user. The new cane sports cutting-edge sensors, weighs only three pounds, can be built at home from off-the-shelf parts, and free, open-source software, and costs \$400. “We wanted something more user-friendly than just a white cane with sensors,” says Patrick Slade, a graduate research assistant in the Stanford University Intelligent Systems Laboratory and first author of the [study](#) in the journal *Science Robotics*. “Something that cannot only tell you there’s an object in your way, but tell you what that object is and then help you navigate around it.”*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Dr. Rachel Levine is sworn in as the nation’s first transgender four-star officer](#) [Jonathan Franklin, *NPR*, 19 October 2021]

Dr. Rachel Levine is once again making history, becoming the first openly transgender four-star officer to serve in any of the country’s eight uniformed services. During a ceremony Tuesday, Levine was sworn in as an admiral—the highest-ranking official of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. Levine’s appointment to the USPHS Commissioned Corps also made her the organization’s first female four-star admiral. Previously she became the first openly transgender person to be confirmed by the Senate for a federal office. “[Becoming a four-star officer] is very meaningful to me. I am so impressed by the dedication, the commitment and the expertise of the officers and the United States Public Health Service Commission Corps. And it is truly an honor to lead them and to serve with them,” Levine said in an interview with NPR. She describes her appointment as part of the Biden administration’s commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity.

[Female Veterans Recognized on Unique Honor Flight](#) [Crista Mary Mack, *U.S. Army Center of Military History*, *DOD News*, 20 October 2021]

Girl power took on an entirely new meaning recently when 93 female veterans whose service spanned from World War II to the Korean War and the Vietnam War flew to Washington, D. C., for Operation HerStory, the first all-woman Honor Flight out of Illinois. Over 200 volunteers from Chicago to the nation’s capital participated in the Oct. 6 event, sponsored by Operation HerStory and Honor Flight Chicago, recognizing veterans from all branches of military service. After attending the ceremony at the memorial and museum, the ladies participated in an official wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, then visited nearby landmarks, including the World War II Memorial, the Korean War Memorial and the Vietnam War Memorial. “It makes me feel that our time was not wasted...,” said Connie Edwards, a Vietnam veteran.

[The National Park Service could soon have its first Native American director](#) [Nell Clark, NPR, 19 October 2021]

Charles “Chuck” F. Sams III could soon become the first Native American to head the National Park Service in the agency’s 105-year history. Sams is an enrolled member of the Cayuse and Walla Walla tribes, which are part of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and has decades of experience in land management. The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources meets Tuesday to consider his nomination. Sams’ confirmation would bring change to an agency that hasn’t had a permanent Senate-approved director in more than four years. The department has been helmed by a series of acting directors since the last director of the National Park Service retired in 2017. Sams is a U.S. Navy veteran and lives on the Umatilla Indian Reservation with his wife and their four children. The announcement of Sams’ nomination was met with celebration from Native groups as well as Sams’ local community.

EXTREMISM

[Army reservist with “Hitler mustache” demoted, discharged after Jan. 6 charges: report](#) [Lexi Lonas, *The Hill*, 20 October 2021]

*Army Reservist Timothy Hale-Cusanelli, who was known among colleagues for sporting a “Hitler mustache,” was demoted and discharged after he was charged in connection with the Jan. 6 Capitol riot, *The Washington Post* reported on Wednesday. “This was a knee-jerk reaction to the charges,” Jonathan Crisp, Hale-Cusanelli’s attorney, told the *Post*. Hale-Cusanelli is the first known discharge from the military due to charges in connection with the assault, according to the newspaper. Prosecutors said during Hale-Cusanelli’s case that he was a widely known White supremacist who regularly made antisemitic remarks at naval facility in New Jersey. “A Navy Petty Officer stated that Defendant talked constantly about Jewish people and remembered Defendant saying ‘Hitler should have finished the job,’” prosecutors said in the filing.*

[How to Win Back Loved Ones Lost to Extreme Views](#) [David Yaffe-Bellany and Sophia Cai, *Bloomberg*, 14 October 2021]

One spring day in 2009, [Melvin] Bledsoe set out from Memphis to Little Rock to look for [his son] Carlos, who hadn’t been answering his phone. As he sped west on the highway, Bledsoe got a call from an FBI agent: Carlos had shot and killed a soldier at a U.S. military recruiting office in Little Rock. “I felt my heart drop to my shoes,” Bledsoe says. “It was the most difficult thing in the world to pull that car over and to tell my wife what this agent just told me.” Carlos was sentenced to life in prison. As the family struggled with a mixture of anger and grief, Bledsoe kept returning to a tantalizing hypothetical: What if he’d found someone to help Carlos before it was too late? “We didn’t know where to turn,” he says. “We had no help.” In 2015, Bledsoe founded [Parents for Peace](#) a nonprofit that specializes in deradicalizing people who are drawn to extremist ideas, from jihad to QAnon. The group’s services have never been in greater demand. During the pandemic, Parents for Peace has seen a threefold increase in calls to its national hotline. Researchers at Harvard and Boston University are studying its methods, as academics, therapists, and social workers nationwide grapple with combating extremism in an increasingly

polarized political environment. Much of that work has focused on identifying and combating the roots of extremism in the Internet Age, such as the misinformation proliferating on social media.

[Lawsuit over Charlottesville “Unite the Right” rally has crippled White supremacist groups, leaders](#) [Will Carless, *USA TODAY*, 17 October 2021]

A federal lawsuit against the organizers of the deadly 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, which has rattled hate groups and White supremacist leaders, goes to trial this month. Lawsuits have long been used to dismantle or bankrupt the engines of hate in the U.S., including the Ku Klux Klan, the Aryan Nations and the neo-Nazi website The Daily Stormer. “We know that civil lawsuits work in holding accountable extremists by going after their finances and their operations,” said Amy Spitalnick, executive director of the nonprofit civil rights group Integrity First for America, which is backing the lawsuit. But even when those groups have been crippled, White supremacists have adapted, going underground and surfacing with new organizations and leaders. The Unite the Right rally, held on Aug. 11 and 12, 2017, was a watershed moment for the White supremacist movement in the United States. Clean-cut White men marched across the University of Virginia campus carrying tiki torches and chanting, “Jews will not replace us.” Neo-Nazis and White supremacists, brandishing shields emblazoned with Nazi symbols, chanted racist and antisemitic slogans as they fought the removal of a Confederate monument.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Online threats draw longest term yet in Capitol riot probe](#) [Lindsay Whitehurst, *The Associated Press*, 21 October 2021]

A man who pleaded guilty to posting threats on social media in connection with the riot at the U.S. Capitol was sentenced Thursday to 14 months in prison, the longest term to date resulting from the federal investigation of the insurrection. Smocks has been in jail since his arrest Jan. 15. One of the few Black people among the 600-plus defendants charged so far, Smocks argued that his treatment has been unfair compared with others who did enter the Capitol. On Jan. 6, Smocks posted threats to “hunt these cowards down,” targeting “RINOS, Dems, and Tech Execs”— words that were viewed tens of thousands of times on the social network Parler. “RINO” stands for “Republican In Name Only.” Smocks has a two-decade-long criminal history, and prosecutors said he had bought a plane ticket to leave the country shortly before his arrest. His social media accounts indicated he had been a colonel, but authorities found no record of military service. Prosecutors found evidence he had long passed himself off as veteran and had a history of fraud-related convictions from the 1980s to 2006, though he had stayed out of legal trouble over the past two decades.

HUMAN RELATIONS

[You can’t control time, but you can change your relationship with the clock](#) [Andee Tagle and Clare Marie Schneider, *NPR*, 16 October 2021] [BOOK REVIEW]

Good time management begins with accepting your mortality. It’s not the only step in the process, of course, but according to author Oliver Burkeman, it’s an essential element that many a productivity-minded or optimization-inclined individual often forgets. In this era in which we’re

accustomed to lightning-fast speeds and a constant bombardment of convenience, every new time-saving fad, life hack or planning app makes us feel as if we're "just on the verge of conquering time ... of being perfectly in control," says "productivity geek in recovery" Burkeman. "But of course, we never quite get that because I think humans can't get there. Because time ultimately just marches on, and things take the time they take." His new book, [Four Thousand Weeks: Time Management for Mortals](#), is all about how and why to reevaluate your relationship with time—starting with the startling brevity of the average human life span, which gave the book its title. Burkeman doesn't pull any punches from there.

INTERNATIONAL

[Across Africa, major churches strongly oppose LGBTQ rights](#) [Kwasi Gyamfi Asiedu, Chinedu Asadu, Rodney Muhumuza and Mogomotsi Magome, *The Associated Press*, 20 October 2021] *In Ghana, home to a diverse array of religions, leaders of major churches have united in denouncing homosexuality as a "perversion" and endorsing legislation that would, if enacted, impose some of the harshest anti-LGBTQ policies in Africa. In Nigeria, the umbrella body for Christian churches depicts same-sex relationships as an evil meriting the lengthy prison sentences prescribed under existing law. And in several African countries, bishops aligned with the worldwide United Methodist Church are preparing to join an in-the-works breakaway denomination so they can continue their practice of refusing to recognize same-sex marriage or ordain LGBTQ clergy. In the United States, Western Europe and various other regions, some prominent Protestant churches have advocated for LGBTQ inclusion. With only a few exceptions, this hasn't happened in Africa, where Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Lutheran leaders are among those opposing such inclusion. "The mainstream churches—all of them—they actually are totally against it," said Caroline Omolo, associate pastor at the Cosmopolitan Affirming Community in Nairobi, Kenya. It is a rare example of a church in Africa serving a predominantly LGBTQ congregation.*

[Gambian Toufah Jallow tells of surviving rape by dictator](#) [Carley Petesch, *The Associated Press*, 27 October 2021]

*Toufah Jallow's name resonates deeply in Gambia as one of the few women who has taken a public stand against sexual assault in the small West African state. She gained fame at the age of 18 when she won a university scholarship in a national talent competition for young women. But in 2015 she fled Gambia, fearing for her life, after dictator Yahya Jammeh allegedly drugged and raped her, angry that she had turned down his marriage proposal. She lived quietly in Canada, worried that Jammeh would persecute family members in Gambia. After Jammeh fell from power she later found the strength to go public with her story, despite Gambia's culture of silence over sexual assault, she told *The Associated Press*. The nation was riveted when she held a press conference to share her account via social media and in a human rights report in June 2019. She also testified months later to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Now, Jallow is telling her story in detail in a newly released [memoir](#): "Toufah: The Woman Who Inspired an African #MeToo Movement."*

[Japan's premier sends offering to controversial Tokyo shrine](#) [Mari Yamaguchi, *The Associated Press*, 17 October 2021]

Japan's new prime minister donated ritual offerings Sunday to a Tokyo shrine viewed by Chinese and Koreans as a symbol of Japanese wartime aggression, though he did not make a visit in person. Fumio Kishida donated "masakaki" religious ornaments to mark Yasukuni Shrine's autumn festival. It was the first such observance by Kishida since he took office on Oct. 4. Victims of Japanese aggression during the first half of the 20th century, especially Chinese and Koreans, see the shrine as a symbol of Japan's militarism because it honors convicted World War II criminals among about 2.5 million war dead. Such observances are seen by critics as a sign of a lack of remorse over the country's wartime atrocities. Many South Koreans deeply resent Japan for its 1910-45 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. Relations between Seoul and Tokyo have soured in recent years amid disputes over compensation for Korean wartime laborers and over the systematic abuses of "comfort women" used for sex by the Japanese military before its World War II defeat in 1945.

[Russian court outlaws racist, sexist extremist group](#) [*The Associated Press*, 18 October 2021]

A Russian court on Monday outlawed a radical online group that has become infamous for its racist and sexist views. The regional court in Nizhny Novgorod banned the Muzhskoye Gosudarstvo (Male State) group as extremist. Its members will face criminal charges if they continue their activities. The online group created by Vladislav Pozdnyakov several years ago has become notorious for its racist, misogynist and anti-LGBT rhetoric and its bullying of feminists and LGBT activists. Pozdnyakov left Russia after being handed a two-year suspended sentence in 2018 on charges of extremism. His current whereabouts are unknown. The Russian social network VKontakte blocked the group last year. The Russian Interior Ministry has described the group as promoting a "radical patriarchy" and striving to challenge the country's constitutional order.

MISCELLANEOUS

[Army's "Dragon's Lair" Opens to All Military Services](#) [Sgt. Maj. Alejandro Licea, *DOD News*, 20 October 2021]

Last November, the Army's XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, initiated the Dragon's Lair program, a "Shark Tank"-style competition in which soldiers from across the Army pitched their innovations to a panel of civilian tech experts and military leaders. The program has become a popular point of entry for soldier-driven innovations and was even mentioned by Army Secretary Christine E. Wormuth during an Oct. 14 news conference at the Association of the United States Army annual meeting in Washington, D.C. "The Dragon's Lair program on Fort Bragg is so important, as it allows soldiers to bring new ideas to the command," Wormuth said. Dragon's Lair has introduced a new mobile application for organizing and coordinating land and ranges; easier methods for moving generators around a motorpool; and change to the Army's policy on sexual harassment assault and response prevention. Military leaders hope opening the program to all units and military services will introduce even more innovations.

[Colin Powell, 84, dies of COVID-19 complications](#) [James R. Webb, *Military Times*, 18 October 2021]

Colin Powell died early Monday morning, according to a statement from his family on Powell's official Facebook page. Powell's family stated that the cause of death was due to complications from the COVID-19 virus, although Powell was fully vaccinated. While on an overseas trip in the Republic of Georgia, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin delivered an emotional statement to traveling press on the death of Powell, noting his role as the first African-American Secretary of State and a man who was "respected around the globe" in that role. "The world lost one of the greatest leaders that we have ever witnessed," Austin said. "Alma [his wife] lost a great husband, and the family lost a tremendous father. And I lost a tremendous personal friend and mentor." Additionally, former Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey stated his "friend and mentor" Powell, whom Dempsey said was also "a superb soldier, statesman, and lifelong public servant."

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Domestic violence prevention, PCS support discussed during senior leader town hall](#) [Joseph Lacdan, *Army News Service*, 19 October 2021]

In an effort to prioritize people and better address the concerns of Army families, senior leaders answered questions about health care, moves and domestic violence during a town hall Oct. 12. Secretary of the Army Christine E. Wormuth, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James C. McConville and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston said that placing all Army personnel as the top priority will strengthen the force, as part of the Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting and Exposition event. "It's not Soldiers first, it's people first because it recognizes the importance of families," McConville said. "We talk about being in a war for talent. If we want to retain Soldiers, we have to retain families." With October being Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the leaders said they continue to be focused on curbing domestic violence and abuse. Since December, the Army's Special Victims' Counsel Program has provided legal services to qualifying victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault. Army legal assistance offices have also given victims legal representation.

[Full List of Vaccines Mandated by the U.S. Military](#) [Khaleda Rahman, *Newsweek*, 21 October 2021]

Over the summer, the Department of Defense announced that it would make COVID-19 vaccination mandatory for service members amid a surge in infections driven by the Delta variant. It came shortly after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration gave full approval to Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine and following a spike in virus-related deaths in the military. Vaccination deadlines vary depending on the military branch. Active duty Air Force personnel must be fully vaccinated by November 2, while the Navy's deadline for active duty personnel is November 28. The Army's deadline is December 15. But the vaccine mandate has led to some service members declaring on camera that they are refusing to get the shot, despite the risk that they may face discipline or even be discharged for failing to comply without an approved exemption. The DOD already administers 17 different vaccines to service members—outlined in the ["Joint Regulation on Immunization and Chemoprophylaxis for the Prevention of Infectious Diseases."](#) [see article for full list]

[GSA Wants a Real Person Associated With Every SAM Registration Before Fiscal Year's End](#)

[Aaron Boyd, Nextgov, 20 October 2021]

The General Services Administration is cracking down on fake and anonymous account managers in SAM.gov. GSA's Integrated Award Environment has been consolidating various procurement websites and tools under a single site under SAM.gov. The new site includes the entity registration process previously housed on the old SAM.gov, including obtaining the unique identifier required for any organization doing business with the government—contractors, grantees, academic institutions, etc. IAE officials have also been working on a number of security upgrades, including plans to authenticate the real-world identity of all entity administrators—the people tasked with managing the SAM registration accounts at each private sector organization. Officials expect to kick those plans into full gear this year. According to an informational slide deck obtained by Nextgov, the identity proofing process—administered through GSA's single sign-on program, Login.gov—looks to prevent unauthorized access to entity registration accounts and, specifically, access to sensitive data that could harm or damage an entity.

[Pentagon outlines punishments for civilian employees if they fail to get vaccinated](#)

[Oren Liebermann and Ellie Kaufman, CNN, 19 October 2021]

The [Pentagon has laid out its enforcement and punishment procedures](#) for its civilian Covid-19 vaccine mandate with just over a month to go until the deadline for civilian employees to be fully vaccinated. The guidance, which was circulated on Monday, says civilian employees who refuse to be vaccinated will face an escalating series of punishments, including five days of education and counseling, 14 days of unpaid suspension, and finally termination “for failing to follow a direct order.” These enforcement actions can begin on November 22, the date of the deadline for vaccination. The guidance notes that there are other options for punishment as well, though it does not say what they are. Civilian employees with an exemption from vaccination or awaiting a decision on an exemption will not face enforcement actions. Employees can get vaccinated during working hours and they may take two days of administrative leave after receiving each dose if they experience an adverse reactions.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Texas residents rip teachers on Holocaust remark: “There are not two sides to a genocide”](#)

[Scott Gleeson, USA TODAY, 19 October 2021]

A Jewish community member in Southlake, Texas, shared an emotional account of the antisemitic bullying he endured while in high school and cautioned the Carroll Independent School District about its choice of words about the Holocaust during a heated school board meeting Monday. Jake Berman was among more than 50 community residents and former students who criticized the school district after its top administrator, Gina Peddy, last week advised teachers in a meeting to provide students with books that covered “opposing” perspectives of the Holocaust. Peddy was citing a Texas law that requires teachers to provide students with multiple perspectives when discussing controversial topics. At the school board meeting, teachers were seen getting emotional as the community members shared their discontent with the school and community's marred national reputation, according to NBC News.

MISCONDUCT

[U.S.: Couple accused in submarine espionage case indicted](#) [*The Associated Press*, 20 October 2021]

A Maryland couple arrested earlier this month on charges of trying to sell information about nuclear-powered warships to a foreign country have been indicted, the Justice Department said Tuesday. Federal prosecutors say Jonathan and Diana Toebe are each charged with one count of conspiracy to communicate restricted data and two counts of communication of restricted data. They were arrested in West Virginia on Oct. 9 and charged in a criminal complaint with violations of the Atomic Energy Act. The couple is due in federal court Wednesday for a detention hearing. Jonathan Toebe, a Navy nuclear engineer, is accused of trying to pass information about the design of submarines to someone he thought was a representative of a foreign government but who was actually an undercover FBI agent. Court documents do not reveal the identity of the foreign country he is accused of trying to sell the information to. Prosecutors say Diana Toebe accompanied her husband on several instances to pre-arranged “dead-drop” locations at which he left behind memory cards containing the sensitive information.

RACISM

[Alabama seeks to purge racist sections of constitution](#) [Kim Chandler, *The Associated Press*, 16 October 2021]

The Alabama Constitution still has language stating that schools should be segregated by race and people are to pay poll taxes to vote. While those provisions have long been invalidated by court rulings, they remain in the state’s chief governing document. One hundred and twenty years after the state’s 1901 constitution was approved, activists and lawmakers hope they can soon excise the racist language written to entrench White supremacy. The Committee on the Recompilation of the Constitution this week heard recommendations to strip language on segregated schools, poll taxes and language that allowed a brutal convict lease system that sold African-American men into forced labor. The panel is expected to take a final vote in the coming weeks, putting the proposal before lawmakers in early 2022 and potentially state voters in November of 2022.

[A Breakdown of the Black-White Homeownership Inequality Gap](#) [Andre Claudio, *Route Fifty*, 21 October 2021]

Homeownership is often less achievable for Black Americans and when they do own property, it’s valued at less than a home owned by a White family, [according to a report from the Brookings Institution](#). About 46% of Black people own a home, compared with 76% of Whites, Brookings says. Homes in Black neighborhoods are also valued at \$48,000 less than those in predominantly White neighborhoods. This creates a cumulative loss in equity of approximately \$156 billion, becoming a significant contributing factor to the racial wealth gap. Black homeownership and the racial wealth gap are byproducts of systemic racism, including the legacies of slavery, Jim Crow segregation and other racially motivated policies that targeted Black people and their neighborhoods, according to the report. Jim Crow laws were a collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation. The laws, which existed for about 100 years from after

the Civil War until 1968, were meant to marginalize African Americans by denying them the right to vote, hold jobs, get an education or have other opportunities.

[Georgia town calls for unity ahead of trial of accused killers of Black jogger Arbery](#) [Rich McKay, Reuters, 18 October 2021]

Community leaders in Brunswick, Georgia, are preaching unity ahead of the trial of three White men accused of racially motivated murder in the shotgun death of a Black jogger, anxious it does not stir racial tensions or violent protests in their small coastal city. Jury selection is scheduled to begin on Monday for a trial expected to draw hundreds of protesters outside the court building. The killing of 25-year-old Ahmaud Arbery on Feb. 23, 2020, sparked outrage across the country. Former police officer, Gregory McMichael, 65, his son Travis McMichael, 35, and William “Roddie” Bryan, 52, are charged with murder and other crimes. All have pleaded not guilty. They face life in prison if convicted. Community leaders are proud that Brunswick, population 16,000, was once dubbed a “Model City” for the collaboration by local Black and White leaders to desegregate schools, grocery stores, bowling alleys and other facilities even as racial conflict gripped other southern cities in the 1960s and 1970s. But the issue of race is likely to be at the forefront of the trial. Prosecutors have alleged that Arbery’s death was racially motivated.

[Justice department chastises Utah school district for ignoring racial harassment of Black students](#) [Courtney Tanner, *The Salt Lake Tribune* (Salt Lake City, Utah), 22 October 2021]

Davis School District has intentionally ignored “serious and widespread” racial harassment in its schools for years—failing to respond to hundreds of reports from Black students after they have been called slaves, the N-word, and heard threats that they would be lynched, according to a [jarring report from the U.S. Department of Justice](#). That refusal to intervene ultimately created an atmosphere that was so oppressive that some kids of color feared coming to class, the report said. Many stopped reporting acts of discrimination, which were often witnessed by teachers who didn’t step in, they said. A few told Justice investigators they felt the district was condoning the way they were treated by taking no action. “As a consequence of this dismissive attitude to serious racial harassment, a district-wide racially hostile environment went unabated,” the department concluded in the report released Thursday. And “the district left students of color vulnerable to continued abuse.” The findings from the Justice Department come after two years of investigation of the predominantly White northern Utah school district, starting in July 2019.

[When Black History Is Unearthed, Who Gets to Speak for the Dead?](#) [Jill Lepore, *The New Yorker*, 27 September 2021]

Underneath America lies an apartheid of the departed. Violence done to the living is usually done to their dead, who are dug up, mowed down, and built on. In the Jim Crow South, Black people paid taxes that went to building and erecting Confederate monuments. They buried their own dead with the help of mutual-aid societies, fraternal organizations, and insurance policies. Cemeteries work on something like a pyramid scheme: payments for new plots cover the cost of maintaining old ones. “Perpetual care” is, everywhere, notional, but that notion relies on an accumulation of capital that decades of disenfranchisement and discrimination have made impossible in many Black communities, even as racial terror also drove millions of people from the South during the Great Migration, leaving their ancestors behind. It’s amazing that Geer

survived. Durham's other Black cemeteries were run right over. "Hickstown's part of the freeway," Debra Gonzalez-Garcia told me, counting them off. "Violet Park is a church parking lot." The movement to save Black cemeteries has been growing for decades, led by Black women like Deidre Barnes and Gonzalez-Garcia, who have families to care for and work full-time jobs but volunteer countless hours and formidable organizing skills looking after the dead and upending American history.

SEXISM

[Boys, nonbinary student suspended over long hair sue school district for gender bias](#) [Erik Ortiz, NBC News, 21 October 2021]

Students in the Magnolia Independent School District in suburban Houston must adhere to several requirements when it comes to their hairstyles. Those include keeping their locks "clean, well-groomed, and worn out of the eyes," maintaining "appropriate hygiene at all times" and having a "natural hair color." For males, the districtwide policy is even stricter: no beards, mustaches or long sideburns; hair can't be pinned up in a bun or held in a ponytail; and its length shouldn't be longer than the bottom of the ear. For at least six boys, and one student assigned male at birth who identifies as nonbinary, having hair longer than permitted has come at a steep cost this school year: They've been suspended. A federal lawsuit filed Thursday on behalf of those students by the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas argues the punishment is biased and violates both their constitutional rights and Title IX, the federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in schools. A [survey](#) last year by the ACLU of Texas found that nearly 500 public school districts in the state have some form of a boys-only hair-length rule. Hairstyles in schools have become a point of contention across the country, particularly in districts where students of color say they were sent home or told to cut their hair, which civil rights advocates argue is discriminatory.

[How Scrubs Reinforce Sexist Double Standards](#) [Trisha Pasricha, *The Atlantic*, 16 October 2021]

In the spring of 2020, as Boston's first COVID-19 wave raged, I was the gastroenterologist on call responding to a patient hospitalized with a stomach ulcer. Wearing a layer of yellow personal protective equipment over a pair of baggy scrubs, I spent 30 minutes explaining to him that he needed an endoscopic procedure "Well, before we do anything, I'm going to need to discuss it with the doctor." I blinked. When I entered the room, I had introduced myself as the doctor. I had also just explained, in great detail, a highly specialized procedure. Of course. He still assumed I was a nurse, or a medical technician, or a physician assistant—anything but a doctor, especially his doctor. I wish I could tell you his assumption was rare, but it's not. A [recent study](#) in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* revealed that patients were about 20 percent less likely to assume that a woman wearing scrubs was a surgeon, compared with men. The study also found that patients consider a woman in scrubs to be "less professional" than a man in the same outfit. Because many hospitals, including mine, required workers to wear scrubs and PPE during the pandemic, this became an even bigger problem than usual for female physicians.

[Trailblazing Women Who Broke into Engineering in the 1970s Reflect on What’s Changed—and What Hasn’t](#) [Laura Ettinger, *The Conversation*, 20 October 2021]

Engineering in the U.S. has long been—and continues to be—a male-dominated profession. Fifty years ago, it looked like that might change. In 1970, the percentage of women majoring in engineering was less than 1%. In [1979, that number was 9%](#). Many hoped women would continue to enter the field at the same rate. But that’s not what happened. Today, only [21% of engineering majors are women](#), a number largely unchanged since 2000. I am a historian who, along with my colleagues, Nicole Conroy and William Barr II, surveyed 251 women engineers who graduated from college in the 1970s. These trailblazing women [reflected on the adversity they faced](#)—and had advice for women entering the field today. We asked about the greatest challenges our survey takers faced as women in a male-dominated field. The three obstacles they cited most frequently were not getting respect, not fitting in and struggling to achieve work/family balance.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Lyft releases sexual assault data: 4,158 incidents, including 360 rape reports over three year period](#) [Sara Ashley O’Brien, *CNN Business*, 21 October 2021]

Ridehail company Lyft on Thursday [released its first ever safety report](#), disclosing that it received 4,158 reports of sexual assault on its platform in 2017, 2018, and 2019. The disclosure comes more than three years after Lyft and its rival Uber first pledged to release safety reports disclosing incidents of sexual assault and abuse on their platforms after a CNN investigation. The company’s release shows that among the sexual assault reports it received, 360 were reports of rape. It also reported 10 deaths from physical assaults that occurred on its platform over the three years. In an [18-page appendix](#), linked in the last page of its 16-page safety report, Lyft indicated that riders reported 52% of the sexual assault incidents, whereas reports initiated by drivers made up 38%. Another 10% were initiated by third parties, which the appendix states may include “law enforcement officials, regulators, family, friends or media reports.”

[Melbourne rehab center fires employee, discharges client after abuse claims, lawyer says](#) [Tyler Vazquez, *Florida Today (Viera, Fla.)*, 22 October 2021]

A Melbourne drug rehabilitation center is facing allegations that it failed to adequately respond to sexual harassment claims by a client, and that it fired the employee who reported the incidents. When a client seeking treatment for addiction reported the harassment by an employee, she was removed from both the treatment program and her associated sober living arrangement. Complaints were filed internally and with DCF against the South Florida-based St. John’s Recovery Place, which operates a location on Silver Palm Avenue in Melbourne, have been filed both internally with the company and with the Florida Department of Children and Families. According to the report filed with DCF, the accused employee came to her room multiple times daily and made multiple sexual remarks at a time when the client was quarantining at a hotel due to COVID-19. The employee, who is still listed as an employee on SJRP’s website, reportedly offered the client rides in his personal vehicle and attempted to extract naked photos in exchange

for the favor, according to the reports. He also offered to help the client with chores as part of a lewd sexual exchange, the reports said.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Neurologist pleads not guilty to sexually abusing patients](#) [Tom Hays, *The Associated Press*, 21 October 2021]

A neurologist pleaded not guilty Thursday to federal charges alleging he was a serial sexual abuser of women who had gone to him for help with debilitating, chronic pain. Dr. Ricardo Cruciani entered the plea in federal court in Manhattan, prosecutors said. He was expected to be released into home detention with electronic monitoring once he posts a \$3 million bond secured by three properties and signed by three other people. Cruciani, 63, who lives in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, was arrested Wednesday morning in Pocono Pines, Pennsylvania, on charges he abused patients over 15 years at his offices in New York City, Philadelphia and Hopewell, New Jersey. An indictment described the doctor, who specialized in rare pain syndromes, grooming patients who were dependent on him for care and prescriptions to addictive opioids, turning back rubs and hugs into gradually more invasive physical attacks and sexual demands. The [federal charges follow years of public complaints](#) by Cruciani's accusers that authorities in some places weren't taking his crimes seriously, particularly in Philadelphia, where he pleaded guilty to relatively minor misdemeanor groping counts involving seven patients.

[Passengers failed to intervene as woman was raped on train: authorities](#) [Caroline Vakil, *The Hill*, 17 October 2021]

*Officials said that passengers failed to intervene when a woman was raped on a train close to Philadelphia, *The New York Times* reported. Late Wednesday, a woman was approached by a man on a train who attempted to touch her several times. Despite the woman's attempts to stop the man from inappropriately touching her, he ultimately took off her clothes and raped her, officials said. The incident, which took place around 10 p.m., happened on a Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) train on the Market-Frankford Line, a spokesperson for SEPTA told the *Times*. SEPTA called the incident "a horrendous criminal act" in a statement, noting that one of its employees contacted police about the rape immediately. "The assault was observed by a SEPTA employee, who called 911, enabling SEPTA officers to respond immediately and apprehend the suspect in the act," the transit authority said in a statement. "There were other people on the train who witnessed this horrific act, and it may have been stopped sooner if a rider called 911," SEPTA added.*

SUICIDE

[Navy denies malpractice claim filed by family of sailor who killed himself in military jail](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Military Times*, 18 October 2021]

The Navy has denied the medical malpractice claim filed by the family of a junior sailor who killed himself in a military jail. The parents of Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Macoy Hicks, 20, filed the claim in January, alleging that their son received subpar mental healthcare from the Navy, and that Army jailers failed to properly care for him when they issued him a belt he used to take his life while confined for 25 days at Joint Base Lewis-McChord,

Washington, in February 2019. Such a claim was made possible via a law change in recent years allowing troops and surviving family members to file tort claims for medical negligence against the services. For decades, service members have had limited options for redressing such wrongs due to the Feres doctrine, a legal stricture that banned military members from suing the government.

VETERANS

[Settlement Spurs Navy to Take Another Look at “Bad Paper” Discharges of Traumatized Vets](#)

[Allison Bath, *Military.com*, 15 October 2021]

The U.S. Navy has agreed to review more than nine years’ worth of “bad paper” discharges given to thousands of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder or certain other trauma-related health conditions. That announcement follows preliminary court approval Tuesday of a settlement of a 2018 lawsuit alleging that a Navy board had improperly denied a Marine Corps veteran’s request for a better discharge status. The suit was filed by Tyson Manker and the National Veterans Council for Legal Redress. Manker, who served from 1999 to 2003 and earned multiple awards and commendations, received an other-than-honorable discharge for smoking marijuana. In addition, the Navy agreed to provide discharge review board members and staffers with annual training in PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, military sexual trauma and other behavioral or mental health conditions, according to the settlement.