

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 8 APRIL 2022

HIGHLIGHTS

[Jackson confirmed as first Black female high court justice](#) [Mary Clare Jalonik and Mark Sherman, *The Associated Press*, 7 April 2022]

The Senate confirmed Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court on Thursday, shattering a historic barrier by securing her place as the first Black female justice and giving President Joe Biden a bipartisan endorsement for his effort to diversify the court. Jackson, a 51 year-old appeals court judge with nine years' experience on the federal bench, was confirmed 53-47, mostly along party lines but with three Republican votes. Presiding was Vice President Kamala Harris, also the first Black woman to reach that high office. During the four days of Senate hearings last month, Jackson spoke of her parents' struggles through racial segregation and said her "path was clearer" than theirs as a Black American after the enactment of civil rights laws. She attended Harvard University, served as a public defender, worked at a private law firm and was appointed as a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

[The next Coast Guard commandant could be the first woman in history to serve as a uniformed service chief](#) [Max Hauptman, *Task & Purpose*, 5 April 2022]

The White House has nominated Adm. Linda Fagan to serve as the next Coast Guard Commandant, which would make her the first woman to serve as the uniformed chief of a military branch. While women have served as service branch secretaries—Christine Wormuth is the current Secretary of the Army—Fagan would be the first servicewoman to serve as the leader of a military branch. It wouldn't be the first milestone for Fagan to achieve in the Coast Guard. When she was promoted to vice commandant in 2021, she became the first-ever four-star admiral in the branch. In an interview with "CBS This Morning" that year, she described nearly being pulled from her first sea deployment, as the ship's executive officer was hesitant to have her aboard as the only woman in the crew. She also noted her commitment to helping the Coast Guard continue to recruit and retain women, including her own daughter, in its ranks. "We've made a lot of progress in the junior ranks, we need to keep making progress," she said.

[Remote Bases Seeing More Suicide Attempts But Fewer Deaths, Watchdog Says](#) [Rebecca Kheel, *Military.com*, 6 April 2022]

Military bases in remote locations outside the contiguous United States have seen a slightly higher proportion of suicide attempts than bases on the mainland but lower rates of suicide deaths, a government watchdog said Wednesday. Pentagon officials are attributing the lower deaths to the fact that service members outside the contiguous United States, or OCONUS, have limited access to non-military issued firearms, Brenda Farrell of the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, told a Senate hearing as she previewed the findings of an upcoming report from her office. For its [report](#), the GAO looked at bases in Alaska and Hawaii, as well as those outside the United States that have been designated by the Pentagon as remote for the purpose of morale, welfare and recreation funding; are identified as a hardship duty pay location; or have a less than standard tour length due to quality-of-life factors.

CULTURE

[Alabama plan advances to alter name of Edmund Pettus Bridge](#) [*The Associated Press*, 6 April 2022]

Alabama lawmakers on Tuesday advanced legislation that would alter the name of Selma’s Edmund Pettus Bridge to honor those who were beaten on the bridge as they marched for civil rights in 1965. The Alabama Senate voted 23-3 for legislation that would change the official name to the “Edmund W. Pettus-Foot Soldiers Bridge.” However, the lettering on the famous bridge would remain unaltered. The name “Foot Soldiers” would be on a separate sign that would include a silhouette of the marchers. The bill, dubbed the “Healing History Act,” now moves to the Alabama House of Representatives with three meeting days remaining in the legislative session. The bridge in 1940 was named after Pettus, a Confederate general and reputed Ku Klux Klan leader. However, 25 years later it became an enduring symbol of the civil rights movement after marchers were beaten by law enforcement officers on the bridge in 1965. The melee became known as Bloody Sunday and helped lead to passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

[Candace Parker documentary “Title IX: 37 Words That Changed America” details how much work still needs to be done](#) [Annie Costabile, *Chicago Sun Times*, 2 April 2022]

In eighth grade, growing up in the western suburbs of Chicago, Candace Parker wrote a paper on Title IX. Five years later, after graduating from Naperville Central, Parker played for a Title IX pioneer in Hall of Fame coach Pat Summitt. Fourteen years after graduating from Tennessee and being selected with the No. 1 overall pick in the 2008 WNBA Draft, Turner Sports, in conjunction with Parker, Scout Productions and Baby Hair Productions, are releasing a documentary, “Title IX: 37 Words That Changed America,” on the societal and cultural impact of this legislation. The documentary, which airs at noon Saturday on TBS, has been in the making for three years “For so long, women’s sports just existed as something that had to be there,” Parker said. “Now, as we look at [women’s sports] as an investment, I think we can start moving things forward.”

[\[TRAILER\]](#)

[Five more women, including Bessie Coleman and Maria Tallchief, will appear on U.S. quarters next year](#) [Harmeet Kaur, *CNN*, 4 April 2022]

The U.S. Mint has announced the next five women to appear on American quarters. After honoring such figures as Maya Angelou and Sally Ride in the first run of its American Women Quarters Program, the agency has selected a new group of pioneering women who will be celebrated on U.S. currency: pilot Bessie Coleman, journalist and activist Jovita Idár, hula teacher Edith Kanaka ‘ole, former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt and ballerina Maria Tallchief. These five women will appear on the backs of select quarters beginning next year, while the front of the coins will feature a portrait of George Washington designed by 20th century sculptor Laura Gardin Fraser. This year’s trailblazers made contributions in fields from aviation to activism to the arts.

[How infrastructure package could affect U.S. Chinatowns, long facing hidden tolls](#) [Claire Wang, NBC News, 6 April 2022]

Mary Yee was in elementary school when the neighborhood she grew up in, Boston's Chinatown, was destroyed. Beginning in the late 1950s, the state built a pair of sprawling freeways, Interstates 93 and 90, through the historic neighborhood and demolished hundreds of row houses and storefronts where working-class immigrants lived and thrived. For the first time, Congress is directly addressing the harms caused by freeways. The federal infrastructure package that passed in November allocates \$1 billion for a five-year pilot program to reconnect communities devastated by highway construction. "For my generation, the freeways decimated the sense of community and the social connections we had," said Yee, who became a labor and housing organizer in Philadelphia. "Chinatown became a ghost town." Yee said families received relocation money but that it was less than what they had paid for their original homes.

[Library study finds "challenged" books soared in 2021](#) [Hillel Italie, The Associated Press, 4 April 2022]

Deborah Caldwell-Stone, director of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom, has never been so busy. "A year ago, we might have been receiving one, maybe two reports a day about a book being challenged at a library. And usually those calls would be for guidance on how to handle a challenge or for materials that support the value of the work being challenged," Caldwell-Stone told The Associated Press. "Now, we're getting three, four, five reports a day, many in need of support and some in need of a great deal of support." "We're on the phone constantly," she added. Accounts of book bannings and attempted book bannings, along with threats against librarians, have soared over the past year and the ALA has included some numbers in its annual State of America's Libraries Report, released Monday. The association found 729 challenges—affecting nearly 1,600 books—at public schools and libraries in 2021, more than double 2020's figures and the highest since the ALA began compiling challenges more than 20 years ago.

[Magic Johnson on Learning to Accept His Gay Son EJ: "He Changed Me"](#) [Selome Hailu, Variety, 6 April 2022]

In a new interview with Variety ahead of the April 22 release of "They Call Me Magic," an Apple TV Plus docuseries that covers his life and career, Johnson revealed that he initially struggled to come to terms with his son's sexual orientation. "When you grow up in team sports, you're thinking, 'Is he gonna play sports?'" Johnson says. "And then when I saw that he liked dolls and to play dress-up ... 'What are you doing?'" Tensions were high in the Johnsons' Beverly Hills home. For EJ, 17 at the time, those were his last few months with his family before he set off for newfound independence at NYU. But soon after, Johnson visited him in New York, and the two repaired their relationship. But not everybody has been so accepting. "You get the other side too," Johnson says. "A lot of people don't love that I love my son." Still, that doesn't matter to Johnson. "He changed me," Johnson says of EJ. "He was so proud. This dude here is just so proud of who he is.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Military children attend Japanese schools to immerse in culture](#) [Sean Kimmons, *U.S. Army Garrison Japan Public Affairs*, 7 April 2022]

It was like stepping into the unknown when Sgt. 1st Class Georgette Ray's children first entered a Japanese school last fall. With no grasp of the language or culture, her three school-aged children were full of nerves in anticipation of attending classes in a foreign land. So were their parents. U.S. Army Japan parents who choose to send their children to off-post schools face similar challenges, but have been known to support each other to ensure the children receive a unique learning experience. Last year, when it was time to decide on the family's next destination, Georgette said her children unanimously picked Japan. "They all chose Japan," she said. "So I didn't want to come here and not have them experience the culture and not experience what's outside the gates." "I thought it would be good for them to learn a different language," Roderick added, "and just figure out how to be a part of a group they're not familiar with."

[Native American tribe gets its land back after being displaced nearly 400 years ago](#) [Zoe Sottile, *CNN*, 2 April 2022]

The Rappahannock Tribe, a Native Tribe in Virginia, has reacquired 465 acres of sacred land at Fones Cliff. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Martha Williams celebrated the tribe's reacquisition of the land Friday, according to a press release from the Department of the Interior. Fones Cliff is the ancestral home of the tribe, located on the eastern side of the Rappahannock River in Virginia. The area, located inside the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge, will be publicly accessible and placed in trust with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Tribe plans to educate the public about their history by constructing a replica 16th-century village and expand their "Return to the River" program, which trains Tribal youth in traditional river knowledge and practices. In 1608, the tribe first encountered and defended their homeland against English settler Captain John Smith, who played an important role in the first permanent English settlement in America at Jamestown, Virginia.

[U.S. airport security screening to become more gender-neutral](#) [*The Associated Press*, 5 April 2022]

U.S. airport security procedures will become more gender-neutral, with changes to scanners used for screening and the use of an "X" for travelers going through Precheck who do not identify as male or female, the Biden administration said Thursday. Transportation Security Administration officers will also receive new instructions on screening intended to make procedures less invasive, the Department of Homeland Security said in a statement. They are among a series of travel-security measures announced by the department in conjunction with Transgender Day of Visibility. President Joe Biden is marking the day by advocating against what his administration terms "dangerous anti-transgender legislative attacks" that have passed in statehouses across the country. Later this year, TSA will begin using scanners with new technology that will replace gender-based systems and are intended to "advance civil rights and improve the customer experience."

DISCRIMINATION

[Agencies take action to improve federal services for transgender Americans](#) [Drew Friedman, *Federal News Network*, 4 April 2022]

The White House presses agencies to make federal services more inclusive, particularly when it comes to people who are transgender. The Biden administration said in a fact sheet on March 31, Transgender Day of Visibility, that it's aiming to break down systemic barriers that transgender people often face. The initiatives add to a central goal of the President's Management Agenda: delivering excellent, equitable and secure federal services and customer experience. In this instance, that means focusing on the experiences of transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming Americans. The announcement additionally folds into the White House's executive order from 2021 on enhancing diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility for federal agencies. That mandate focused in part on improving the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals in government. Several agencies announced new actions that would "expand the collection and use of sexual orientation and gender identity data," the fact sheet stated.

[California corporate diversity law ruled unconstitutional](#) [Robert Jablon, *The Associated Press*, 2 April 2022]

A Los Angeles judge ruled Friday that California's landmark law mandating that corporations diversify their boards with members from certain racial, ethnic or LGBT groups is unconstitutional. The measure requires corporate boards of publicly traded companies with a main executive office in California to have a member from an "underrepresented community," including LGBT, Black, Latino, Asian, Native American or Pacific Islander. The lawsuit argued that violated the state's constitutional equal protection clause. The 2020 law required corporations to include at least one member of an underrepresented community on their boards of directors by the end of last year, either by adding a seat or filling a vacant one.

[How the Navy's beard policy discriminates against Black sailors](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz, *Navy Times*, 5 April 2022]

Men of any race can suffer from PFB, but the curly nature of a Black man's facial hair means it hits them particularly hard, afflicting up to three out of five African American men. And according to several Black sailors who spoke with Navy Times, growing a beard brought them pain relief but ushered in a raft of professional obstacles, petty indignities and institutional side-eye from a Navy that has carried both a formal and informal aversion to facial hair for decades. "You never see a sailor on a poster with a beard," another chief told Navy Times. Because PFB mainly afflicts Black men, they say, Navy PFB rules and the norms surrounding shaving and beards end up discriminating against Black sailors in ways big and small, all because of a skin condition they were born with. "The razor bump issue is actually as much of a rock in my shoe as Confederate flags on base," one Black officer said. "The current climate sends a bad message to Black males that the service isn't meant for 'you.'" The Navy is the only service that doesn't allow permanent or years-long medical shaving waivers, a policy couched around safety.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Iowa court upholds gender identity discrimination case](#) [David Pitt, *The Associated Press*, 1 April 2022]

The Iowa Supreme Court on Friday upheld much of a 2019 jury verdict that found the state discriminated against a transgender state prison employee by denying him the use of men's restrooms and locker rooms, but the court dismissed a portion of the case that centered on sex discrimination. The ruling means Jesse Vroegh, a former nurse at the state's Mitchellville prison for women, has won his discrimination lawsuit based on gender identity and the jury's \$120,000 damages verdict for emotional distress. The decision in which the full court recognized gender identity discrimination for transgender workers under state civil rights law is a significant LGBTQ victory. The court determined that the amended act added sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected characteristics, which allowed the jury to consider gender identity discrimination in Vroegh's case. The court, however found the sex discrimination allegation should not have been before the jury.

[Judge Overturns Military Ban on HIV-Positive Troops Getting Commissioned as Officers](#)

[Konstantin Toropin, *Military.com*, 7 April 2022]

A federal judge has struck down the military's policy of denying commissions to HIV-positive service members in a lawsuit filed in 2018. U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema ruled Wednesday that the Department of Defense must reconsider Nicholas Harrison's application to become a JAG officer for the D.C. National Guard without taking into account his HIV-positive status. The ruling also applies to "any other asymptomatic HIV-positive service member with an undetectable viral load." The lawsuit, originally filed several years ago, was brought by Harrison, who joined the Army in 2000 at 23. According to his complaint, Harrison left active duty for the reserves after three years as a sergeant to focus on college. He subsequently earned both a bachelor's and law degree while with the Oklahoma Guard.

[Judge tosses Girl Scouts' recruitment suit against Boy Scouts](#) [Larry Neumeister, *The Associated Press*, 8 April 2022]

A federal judge rejected Girl Scouts' claims Thursday that the Boy Scouts created marketplace confusion and damaged their recruitment efforts by using words like "scouts" and "scouting" in recruitment drives. Manhattan Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein ruled the Boy Scouts of America can describe their activities as "scouting" without referring to gender and that the matter does not need to be put to a jury. The lawsuit was filed in late 2018, a year after the Boy Scouts announced that boy scouting and cub scouting would be open to girls, leading the organizations to compete for members after social trends and a rise in sports league participation drove down membership for decades. The pattern worsened when the pandemic hit. The term "scout" is descriptive of both the Boy Scouts' and Girl Scouts' programming, the judge wrote.

[Transgender people of color face unique challenges as gender discrimination and racism intersect](#) [Gabriel Lockett, Jules Sostre and Roberto L. Abreu, *The Conversation*, 31 March 2022]

Throughout history, transgender people of color have had a place of honor in many indigenous cultures around the world. This changed in many places, however, as European colonizers began forcing indigenous people to follow White social norms. These include anti-Blackness, Christianity and a gender binary that reduced gender to just man and woman. The reverberations of these colonial beliefs are still felt today. In just the first three months of 2022, there were over 154 anti-trans state bills proposed across the U.S. seeking to limit the rights of trans kids and

their parents. And for trans people of color, the challenges they face because of gender discrimination are exacerbated by struggles they deal with because of racism. Trans people of color who have multiple marginalized identities [face higher levels of stress](#) from being a minority compared to those with fewer marginalized identities. While there has been a [lack of research](#) on the experiences of trans people of color, [many studies suggest](#) that many of the challenges they face arise from the intersection of racism, xenophobia and cisnormativity.

DIVERSITY

[Job seekers will sacrifice money for diversity at work](#) [Maggie Overfelt, *Futurity*, 21 March 2022]

In August 2020, the Securities and Exchange Commission announced a new rule requiring public companies to disclose any “human capital resources” material to their operations. The mandate left it up to individual companies to decide exactly what that meant. Jung Ho Choi, an assistant professor of accounting at Stanford Graduate School of Business, was curious to see how many companies would interpret the rule as a call to reveal more information about the diversity of their workforces. Choi recently tackled this question with a field experiment using online job listings. The [results suggest](#) that a majority of people looking for work care about potential employers’ demographics and diversity. Choi thinks this research might be a wake-up call for employers and the policymakers who set disclosure rules about diversity. “83% of the firms seem to believe that diversity information is immaterial, yet our experiment finds a non-trivial willingness to pay for this information,” he says. “They may want to change their behavior. Job seekers care about diversity and companies could put more effort into disclosing it.”

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Navajo life helped forge NGB diversity director’s passion](#) [Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka, *Nevada Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs*, 31 March 2022]

Gen. Daniel Hokanson, chief of the National Guard Bureau, named Col. Lawrence Yazzie the bureau’s director of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in October. Yazzie had the ideal resume—growing up on the Navajo reservation in Arizona, graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy, working in the civilian sector for Fortune 500 companies, commanding the Iowa Air Guard’s 168th Cyberspace Squadron. His diverse background prepared him to embrace and back the National Guard’s principles for equal opportunity and diversity and inclusion so the Guard can recruit, develop, and retain a competitive, efficient and highly lethal workforce. Yazzie recently talked by telephone with Nevada Army Guard public affairs Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka about how his experiences influence his vision for the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

EXTREMISM

[Member of Proud Boys leadership pleads guilty to U.S. Capitol attack charges](#) [Hannah Rabinowitz, *CNN*, 8 April 2022]

A leader of the Proud Boys pleaded guilty on Friday to two felony charges in one of the most prominent criminal cases against an organized far-right group that participated in the U.S.

Capitol attack on January 6, 2021. Charles Donohoe, 34, is the first person in the Proud Boys leadership to plead guilty. He pleaded guilty to conspiracy to obstruct an official proceeding and assaulting an officer. Prosecutors have gained momentum recently in their investigation into the Proud Boys. Prosecutors cracked the phone of Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrío in March and have said in court that there is new evidence that could lead to additional charges or arrests in that case. The head of the West Virginia chapter of the Proud Boys pleaded guilty on Wednesday and said that he looked to Donohoe, Tarrío, and others as leaders on January 6, and another Proud Boys member is slated to plead guilty this afternoon.

[Ohio National Guardsman arrested for threatening to crash plane into Anheuser-Busch plant](#)

[Monroe Trombly, *The Columbus Dispatch* (Columbus, Ohio), 5 April 2022]

James Ricky Meade II, 26, of Chesterhill, Morgan County, has been charged in Franklin County Municipal Court with making a terroristic threat, a felony of the third degree. Meade in December posted statements on social media in which he said he wanted to steal a plane and crash it into the Anheuser-Busch plant on Schrock Road, a Columbus police officer said in a complaint filed March 30 with the court. Meade is the second Guard member to have been arrested and charged with making a terroristic threat in the past week. Thomas Develin, 24, of Columbus' Northwest Side, was arrested March 30 and is charged with making threats toward the Columbus Torah Academy, a private school based in the Jewish faith located at 181 Noe Bixby Road. According to court records, Develin worked as a security guard at the East Side school.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

HUMAN RELATIONS

[Even after lockdowns eased, pandemic depression persisted across social classes-new study](#)

[Catherine Ettman and Sandro Galea, *The Conversation*, 25 March 2022]

One year into the COVID-19 pandemic, we found that more than 1 in 5 U.S. adults reported probable depression [in both spring 2020 and spring 2021](#). We also found that financial assets helped reduce the persistence of symptoms—but only to a point. Our recently published research highlights COVID-19's continuing mental health effects on the U.S. population. We launched a national study in March 2020 measuring mental health and assets. COVID-19 was a national emergency, as deaths were on the rise. Schools, workplaces and government offices closed as Americans were urged to stay home. At that time, we found that 27.8% of U.S. adults in our study reported symptoms of depression, such as losing interest in activities or feeling down or hopeless. This number was over [three times as high](#) as the national pre-pandemic depression estimate of 8.5%.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[With students in turmoil, U.S. teachers train in mental health](#) [Jocelyn Gecker, *The Associated Press*, 4 April 2022]

As Benito Luna-Herrera teaches his 7th grade social studies classes, he is on alert for signs of inner turmoil. And there is so much of it these days. One of his 12-year-old students felt her world was falling apart. Distance learning had upended her friendships. Her home life was stressful.

“I’m just done with it,” the girl told Luna-Herrera during the pandemic, and shared a detailed plan to kill herself. Luna-Herrera is just one teacher, in one Southern California middle school, but stories of students in distress are increasingly common around the country. The silver lining is that special training helped him know what to look for and how to respond when he saw the signs of a mental emergency. Since the pandemic started, experts have warned of a mental health crisis facing American children. That is now playing out at schools in the form of increased childhood depression, anxiety, panic attacks, eating disorders, fights and thoughts of suicide at alarming levels, according to interviews with teachers, administrators, education officials and mental health experts.

INTERNATIONAL

[The Chinese label subverting masculine stereotypes for a “gender-fluid generation”](#) [Oscar Holland, CNN, 6 April 2022]

The topic of masculinity—and perceived threats to it—appears to be increasingly sensitive in today’s China. The country’s state broadcaster has moved to ban shows portraying “effeminate styles,” education officials have proposed ways to combat “feminization” in schools and state media has decried the “sickly aesthetics” that propel young “gender-ambiguous” men to stardom. For the co-founders of menswear label Pronounce, whose androgynous collections defy categorization, the headlines belie an emerging reality among the country’s youth. In fact, Chinese-born Yushan Li and Jun Zhou see a “disconnect” between official attitudes and what’s happening at ground level. “When I was young, similar discussions were also happening,” Li said. “Masculinity and the idea that boys need to be men—these topics have always existed in our Asian culture.”

[Prime Minister Boris Johnson says transgender women should not compete in women’s sport](#) [BBC News, 6 April 2022]

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson says he does not believe transgender women should compete in female sporting events—a view he conceded may be “controversial”. The issue of transgender athletes—centred around the balance of inclusion, sporting fairness and safety in women’s sport—has recently focused on the case of transgender cyclist Emily Bridges. Bridges was recently ruled ineligible to compete in her first elite women’s race by cycling’s world governing body. Johnson was speaking on a range of issues, including the government’s approach to the ban on so-called conversion therapy, before adding: “I don’t think biological males should be competing in female sporting events. Maybe that’s a controversial thing to say, but it just seems to me to be sensible.” The most recent International Olympic Committee guidance - updated in November 2021 after the Tokyo Olympics—said there should be no assumption that a transgender athlete automatically has an unfair advantage in female events.

[“Safe To Be Me” LGBT conference cancelled after boycott](#) [Josh Parry and Lauren Moss, BBC News, 5 April 2022]

The UK has cancelled its first-ever international LGBT+ conference after a boycott by more than 100 organisations, the BBC understands. “Safe To Be Me” was scheduled to take place in London in June to promote LGBT rights within the UK and globally. The event will not go ahead

after LGBT+ charities and other groups pulled out over the government's stance on conversion therapy. A number of LGBT+ organisations and charities had signed [an open letter written by campaign group Stonewall](#) which said they would not lend their support for the event unless Boris Johnson included transgender people in the ban. Earlier on Tuesday the government's first LGBT+ business champion resigned over the exclusion of transgender people from any conversion therapy ban that would instead only apply to sexual orientation.

MISCELLANEOUS

[54th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. assassination](#) [Bria Bolden, *Action News 5* (Memphis, Tenn.), 3 April 2022]

54 years ago today Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. traveled to Memphis in support of sanitation workers, and he gave his last speech. He was assassinated at the Lorraine Motel just a day later. Action News 5 spoke with visitors, including civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, that shared how they're remembering him. "The 54th anniversary celebration of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is one of the most important dates in Tennessee and across the nation to observe," Bishop Henry Williamson Sr. said. "Dr. King called for non-violence to bring about change against unjust and immoral laws in situations of segregation and discrimination. We need that in today's world," Williamson said. They'll also be joined by civil rights icon Reverend Jesse Jackson who will hold a community rally at Mt. Olive CME Church.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Federal Employees Can Now Concurrently Hold Partisan Elected Office](#) [Eric Katz, *Government Executive*, 4 April 2022]

Federal employees can hold elected partisan office while also working at their agencies, a key panel found in a ruling setting a new precedent for civil servants. Rodney Cowan did not have to give up his role as a county commissioner in Tennessee or be removed from his job with the U.S. Postal Service, the recently reconstituted central body of the Merit Systems Protection Board said in a decision last week. It was one of the first decisions of MSPB's central board as it addresses its backlog of more than 3,500 cases that have piled up during its five years without a quorum. The board overturned a ruling from one of MSPB's administrative law judges, who said a settlement agreement that allowed Cowan to keep both positions violated the Hatch Act. The law, which dates back to 1939, restricts the political activities in which federal employees can engage. The board has historically interpreted it to block civil servants from concurrently holding political office, leading the judge to find Cowan's agreement with the Office of Special Counsel—the independent federal agency that enforces the Hatch Act—invalid.

[New AFMC Professional Library encourages lifelong learning](#) [Marisa Alia-Novobilski, *AFMC Public Affairs*, 4 April 2022]

A new Air Force Materiel Command Professional Library offers Airmen and civilians the opportunity to embrace lifelong professional development with books, podcasts, articles and more, inspired by leadership recommendations across diverse subject areas. "It is important to be a lifelong learner. Our goal for this Professional Library is to spark critical thinking and inspire ongoing conversations between Airmen, family members and friends as new concepts and

ideas are explored,” said Patricia M. Young, AFMC executive director. “We are committed to the professional development of our Airmen across the enterprise. As leaders, we are often asked what content we are consuming; here’s a chance to learn alongside us as we move into the future.” The Professional Library can be accessed [here](#).

[A Proclamation on National Former Prisoner Of War Recognition Day, 2022](#) [Joseph R. Biden, Jr., White House Press Office, 8 April 2022]

On April 9, 1942, tens of thousands of American and Filipino prisoners of war began what would become known to history as the Bataan Death March. Thousands died during the march, but the indomitable spirit of those prisoners was never broken. Eighty years later, our Nation continues to honor their courage and recognize the more than half a million service members who sacrificed their own freedom as prisoners of war to ensure that our Nation and the values of freedom and democracy always prevail. Former prisoners of war stand among the bravest of our Nation. They fought valiantly and served with honor—and under often agonizing conditions as prisoners, they demonstrated incredible personal courage, love of country, and devotion to duty. Through their extraordinary sacrifices and selflessness, they helped ensure freedom for millions of people. They are heroes. I join all Americans in expressing our deepest gratitude to every service member who has endured being a prisoner of war and to their families, caregivers, and survivors.

[With Hour-Long Drives and Weeks Until Appointments, Pregnant Military Women Feel Pain of Medical Reforms](#) [Patricia Kime and Konstantin Toropin, *Military.com*, 5 April 2022]

The U.S. military health system is in the middle of seismic changes that will send many of its civilian patients to private care. While planned reductions in uniformed medical personnel have yet to begin, the shift to private care is underway in some places—often leaving patients waiting months for appointments, including expectant mothers who require consistent care to avoid potentially life-threatening complications. The Department of Defense has sought to manage the rising cost of health care since at least 2013, when it established the Defense Health Agency to handle functions that existed in triplicate across the Army, Navy and Air Force medical commands, such as administration, training and logistics.

MISCONDUCT

[Army logistics general loses star, replaced after IG investigation](#) [Davis Winkie, *Army Times*, 5 April 2022]

The Army has replaced its deputy chief of staff for logistics, now-Maj. Gen. Duane Gamble, after an inspector general investigation substantiated allegations that he “displayed counterproductive leadership,” according to an Army spokesperson. Army spokesperson Cynthia Smith confirmed Gamble’s replacement and new rank, but she emphasized that investigators found “most of his actions had a positive impact on the organization.” The Department of the Army IG also did not substantiate allegations that Gamble discriminated against peers or subordinates based on race. Gamble, who was a three-star, reverted back to major general when he left his former duty position.

RACISM

[Asian American wrongfully accused of spying recounts damage of racial profiling](#) [Kimmy Yam, *NBC News*, 8 April 2022]

Hydrologist Sherry Chen, a Chinese immigrant, said she once saw herself as a “soldier without a uniform,” pointing to her hard work to keep American cities safe and informed with her water and flooding analysis. But after the Justice Department accused her of spying for China in a seven-year-old case that’s since collapsed but has prevented her from working, Chen says she feels it’s evident that her sacrifices meant little, obscured by her race. The “nightmare,” as Chen, 66, describes it, is not over. She said she’s still on administrative leave from her job at the National Weather Service, and the ordeal has left her with indelible scars on her emotional well-being. Now, she’s speaking out alongside more than 1,000 organizations and individuals, including the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund and National Asian Pacific American Bar Association. They’ve signed a letter—shared first with NBC Asian American and sent to the Department of Commerce, which houses the National Weather Service (NWS)—demanding a formal apology and Chen’s reinstatement.

RELIGION

[First pope, now U.S. churches face boarding-school reckoning](#) [Peter Smith, *The Associated Press*, 6 April 2022]

As Native Americans cautiously welcome Pope Francis’ historic apology for abuses at Catholic-run boarding schools for Indigenous children in Canada, U.S. churches are bracing for an unprecedented reckoning with their own legacies of operating such schools. Church schools are likely to feature prominently in a report from the U.S. Department of the Interior, led by the first-ever Native American cabinet secretary, Deb Haaland, due to be released later this month. From Episcopalians to Quakers to Catholic dioceses in Oklahoma, faith groups have either started or intensified efforts in the past year to research and atone for their prior roles in the boarding school system, which Native children were forced to attend—cutting them off from their families, tribes and traditions. Indigenous groups note that even the better schools were part of a project to assimilate children into a predominately White, Christian society and break down their tribal identities, customs and languages—what many Indigenous groups call a cultural genocide.

[Mormon leader reaffirms faith’s stance on same-sex marriage](#) [Sam Metz, *The Associated Press*, 3 April 2022]

A top leader in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reaffirmed the faith’s opposition to same-sex marriage and “changes that confuse or alter gender” as debates over gender and sexuality reemerge throughout the United States. Dallin H. Oaks, the second-highest-ranking leader of the faith known widely as the Mormon Church, told thousands of listeners gathered at a conference center at the church’s Salt Lake City headquarters that what he called “social and legal pressures” wouldn’t compel the church to alter its stances on same-sex marriage or matters of gender identity that he did not specify. Oaks also said church doctrine “opposed changes that confuse or alter gender or homogenize the differences between men and women” and warned that “confusing gender, distorting marriage, and discouraging childbearing” was the devil’s work.

He also implored members of the faith to live peacefully and respect those with beliefs different than their own.

[See how almost a quarter of humanity ushered in Ramadan, their holiest month](#) [Nicole Werbeck and Saeed Ahmed, *NPR*, 2 April 2022]

Ramadan, the holiest month in the Islamic calendar, began this weekend for the 1.8 billion Muslims around the world. From sun-up to sundown, the physically able among them will fast—abstaining not just from food but also so much as a sip of water. “[The pandemic] has touched home in many, many ways,” Makram Nu’man El-Amin, an imam in Minneapolis, told NPR on Saturday. “So just the idea of being able to come back together during this special month—the month of fasting, the month of reflection, the month of, you know, self-development and all of it, the month of being charitable, etc.—all the things that we love to do, desire to do, we’ll be able to do, at least in a greater measure than we have been over the past couple of years. So I’m just excited. And I’m so grateful for this moment.”

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Texas teacher settles lawsuit with student he forced to write out Pledge of Allegiance](#) [Elisha Fieldstadt, *NBC News*, 30 March 2022]

A Texas high school teacher who was sued after he forced a student to write out the Pledge of Allegiance after she refused to say it has settled with the student for \$90,000, according to a civil rights organization. American Atheists, which represented the student, Mari Oliver, said in a statement Tuesday that Benjie Arnold, a 12th grade sociology teacher at Klein Oak High School in Harris County, about 30 miles north of Houston, agreed to the settlement. Oliver, who is Black, had “exercised her constitutional right to decline to participate in the Pledge out of her objection to the words, ‘Under God,’ and her belief that the United States does not adequately guarantee ‘liberty and justice for all,’ especially for people of color.” The U.S. Supreme Court in 1943 decided that students may not be required to salute the American flag or recite the Pledge of Allegiance if it is against their religious belief.

[Thousands gather at Jerusalem’s Al-Aqsa for first Friday prayers of Ramadan](#) [Reuters, 8 April 2022]

Tens of thousands of Muslims flocked to Jerusalem’s Al-Aqsa Mosque on the first Friday of Ramadan for noon prayers, which passed peacefully despite concerns about a repeat of Israeli-Palestinian violence that erupted during the Muslim holy month last year. Days before the start of Ramadan, far-right Israeli lawmaker Itamar Ben-Gvir toured the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, known to Jews as Temple Mount, in a move seen by Palestinians as a provocation. Al-Aqsa Mosque, which sits atop a plateau in the heart of Jerusalem’s Old City, is one of the most sensitive sites in the Middle East conflict.

SEXISM

[Young Women Earn the Same or More Than Male Peers in These U.S. Cities](#) [Andre Claudio, *Route Fifty*, 5 April 2022]

On average, women in the U.S. earn less than men but in 22 of 250 metropolitan areas, women under age 30 earn the same as or more than their male peers, [according to a Pew Research Center analysis of Census Bureau data](#). Women under 30 who work full time, year-round earn about 93 cents on the dollar compared with men in the same age range in these cities. Nevertheless, only about 16% of all working women age 30 or younger live in the areas where they are at or above wage parity with men, the report shows. The report examines how the gender wage gap among young workers varies across metro areas. It is based on the American Community Survey, the largest household survey in the U.S., with a sample of more than 3 million addresses.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Missouri regulates boarding schools after abuse allegations](#) [Jim Salter, *The Associated Press*, 2 April 2022]

Maggie Drew’s dad sent her to Circle of Hope Girls’ Ranch in Missouri in 2007, hoping strict Christian teachings would stop his 14-year-old daughter’s teenage rebellion. Instead, Drew said, she found herself in a nightmare, sexually abused by one of the boarding school’s founders and left with permanent spinal injuries after a fall from a hay barn for which she received no medical attention. Just 25 miles away at another Christian boarding school, Brett Harper says he endured abuse that included staff members stomping on his back. He said his injuries required two spinal surgeries and left him disabled. They are among dozens of people who say they were abused at either Circle of Hope or Agape Boarding School—allegations that helped prompt a new Missouri law aimed at reining in religious boarding schools that for decades went without any oversight by the state.

[Ruling that rejected split verdict conviction in court-martial heads to Army appeals court](#) [John Vandiver, *Stars and Stripes*, 4 April 2022]

An Army appellate court will soon take up the January decision by a Germany-based military judge that a unanimous guilty verdict will be required to convict an officer of sexual assault in his court-martial trial. The court agreed to hear the case in response to an appeal by prosecutors, who argue that Col. Charles Pritchard’s decision in the case of Lt. Col. Andrew Dial was based on faulty legal reasoning. Pritchard ruled that allowing a split guilty verdict would violate Dial’s Fifth Amendment rights by denying him equal protection. Dial, a member of the Belgium-based Allied Forces North Battalion, was slated to stand trial in January in Kaiserslautern, Germany, on three counts of sexual assault. However, the proceedings against Dial were delayed after prosecutors filed a challenge. Pritchard found that there is “no rational basis” for allowing military defendants to be convicted under a lower threshold than the one that applies in civilian courts.

SUICIDE

[Army suicides hit new post-9/11 peak in 2021](#) [Davis Winkie, *Army Times*, 1 April 2022]

The active duty Army marked a grim milestone Friday as a Defense Suicide Prevention Office report revealed that the service suffered more suicides in 2021 than any other year since the Sept.

11 attacks. The rate of suicide deaths among active duty troops also climbed to its highest level since the Great Depression—36.18 per 100,000 soldiers. The service first declared its intent to write a dedicated suicide prevention regulation in 2020, but that has so far not arrived. A September 2021 release said it would publish that fall. A Nov. 2021 release said it would come “in the first quarter of 2022.” When calculated against the active duty Army’s end strength, 2021’s 36.18 suicide deaths per 100,000 soldiers is the highest rate of suicides since 1938, [according to a 2019 Journal of the American Medical Association analysis](#) of Army suicide rates over time.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Spike in veteran calls expected with launch of new three-digit suicide prevention line this summer](#)

[Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 6 April 2022]

Veterans Affairs officials expect calls to the Veterans Crisis Line to increase by as much as 150% after a new three-digit dialing code for suicide prevention services starts operating this July. That would mean hundreds of thousands more veterans getting emergency help during mental health crises, provided department officials can keep up with the demand. On Wednesday, VA Secretary Denis McDonough said department leaders have been increasing staff and prepping for increased caseloads in anticipation of the new 988 dialing code. Individuals in some areas can already use the service, but it is set to go into effect nationwide by July 16. Similar to the 911 dialing code, which puts callers in direct contact with local emergency response officials, the 988 code will allow individuals to instantly connect with the [National Suicide Prevention Line](#).

VETERANS

[Mental Health Visits Up, Suicidal Behavior Down for Vets Given iPads During Pandemic, Study Finds](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 6 April 2022]

A program that put iPads in the hands of veterans with mental health conditions at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in increased therapy sessions and reduced suicidal behaviors, according to a new study. At the start of the pandemic in 2020, the Department of Veterans Affairs distributed nearly 99,000 of the tablet computers to veterans for telehealth appointments, with more than one-third issued to rural veterans without computers or who faced long drives for medical care. Among rural veterans receiving treatment for mental health conditions, those with tablets engaged in mental health appointments and psychotherapy visits at higher rates than those who didn't have the devices, and they also had fewer emergency visits and less suicidal behavior, a [study](#) published Wednesday in *JAMA Network Open* found.