



## Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

### Articles of Interest

7 June 2019

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#### RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

1. [Troop divorce rate continues slow but steady decline](#)

*(20 May) Military.com, By Amy Bushatz*

The rate of divorce among female officer and enlisted troops has historically been more than double that of their male counterparts. That remained true in 2018, with 6.3% of female troops' marriages ending in divorce over the year, compared to 2.6% of male service members' marriages.

2. [Army beginning to see payoff from new recruiting strategy](#)

*(22 May) Military.com, By Matthew Cox*

Army Recruiting Command officials said recently that the service is starting to see results from the new recruiting strategy it launched last year.

3. [Bill Allowing Military Teens to Wear Uniforms at Graduation Signed into Law](#)

*(23 May) BayNews9, By Sandra Weathers*

Governor Ron DeSantis signed a new law that allows high school seniors serving in the military to wear their military uniforms at graduation. High School Senior Emily Olson, then a member of the military's Split program, wore her military uniform to graduation last year, only to be told she couldn't walk with her class if she didn't cover it up with a cap and gown.

4. [Army's Tweet prompts stories of harmful effects of military service](#)

*(26 May) New York Times, By Mihir Zaveri*

In its next tweet, the Army asked: "How has serving impacted you?" The post was shared widely and received thousands of responses. But many were probably not what the Army was looking for. Instead, the call-out provided what some felt was a rare platform to spotlight the darker consequences of military service for soldiers and their families, as tweet after tweet described lifelong health complications, grief over loved ones lost, sexual assaults gone unpunished and struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder and depression.

5. [The Air Force details its plan to overhaul the way officers are promoted](#)

*(31 May) Air Force Times, By Stephen Losey*

The Air Force on Friday detailed plans to break out most of its officer career fields into six newly created promotion categories, which could take effect early next year. The current Line of the Air Force category, which encompasses about 87 percent of the service's officers, would be replaced by six more finely tuned promotion categories: air operations and special warfare, space operations, nuclear and missile operations, information warfare, combat support and force modernization.

6. [This report says black and Hispanic service members are more likely to face trial](#)

*(31 May) Military Times, By Meghann Myers*

GAO report concluded is that the services will have to do a better job tracking these statistics before anyone can determine whether there are demographic disparities in the military's criminal justice system.

7. [Coast Guard commandant speaks to STEM middle school students](#)

*(3 Jun) The Day, By Kimberly Drellich*

He spoke to students about the mission of the Coast Guard, the importance of STEM education and lifelong learning, and the need to have more women and minorities in the Coast Guard.

8. [\*\*Navy launches a promotion incentive to fill recruiting and other jobs\*\*](#)  
*(4 Jun) Stars & Stripes, By Joshua Karsten*  
Sailors could qualify for alternative petty officer first class promotions if they fill recruiting and recruit training billets, under a new Navy incentive program likely expand to other jobs.

## **EMPLOYMENT & INTEGRATION**

9. [\*\*This is what the Army is considering as a fitness test for injured soldiers\*\*](#)  
*(20 May) Army Times, By Meghann Myers*  
It's been about nine months since the Army began a field test for its new PT exam, and next month, the Center for Initial Military Training will begin evaluating an alternate assessment for soldiers who are permanently unable to complete the standard six events of the Army Combat Fitness Test.
10. [\*\*These brigades are the next to accept women into direct combat units\*\*](#)  
*(28 May) Army Times, By Meghann Myers*  
More than three years into its efforts to recruit and assign women to every combat military occupational specialty, more than 1,000 women have joined the infantry, armor and field artillery branches, according to a May 21 release from the Army.
11. [\*\*Women Sue F.B.I., Claiming Discrimination at Training Academy\*\*](#)  
*(29 May) The New York Times, By Adam Goldman*  
Women who were once F.B.I. recruits sued the bureau, accusing it of running a "good-old-boy network" at its training academy that discriminates against women and sets them up to fail.
12. [\*\*Navy PRT changes: Sailors ditch sit-ups for planks, add rowing to fitness test\*\*](#)  
*(30 May) Military.com, By Gina Harkins*  
Sit-ups will be axed from the Navy's physical readiness test starting in 2020. Sailors can expect planks and rowing tests to replace the event on the annual assessment.
13. [\*\*In a Male-Dominated Administration, Pentagon Chief Seeks More Women\*\*](#)  
*(3 Jun) ForeignPolicy.com, By Lara Seligman*  
The Pentagon is still a largely male-dominated place, and Patrick Shanahan, U.S. President Donald Trump's nominee for secretary of defense, is pushing hard to change that by filling top posts with female candidates, his chief of staff said.
14. [\*\*Shaw suspends PT testing after two airmen's running-related deaths\*\*](#)  
*(3 Jun) Air Force Times, By Stephen Losey*  
The commander at Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina has suspended physical fitness assessments in the wake of two airmen's recent deaths after running, and launched an investigation to see if PT caused their deaths. Senior Airman Amalia Joseph, 32, had a medical emergency during her PT assessment May 24 and died early in the morning of May 26.

## **WELL-BEING & TREATMENT**

15. [\*\*It May Not Be a Bad Thing Fewer U.S. Babies Were Born in 2018 Than in Any Year Since 1986\*\*](#)  
*(15 May) Time, By Jamie Ducharme*  
With American women increasingly delaying having children, fewer U.S. babies were born in 2018 than in any year since 1986, according to provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The U.S. saw not only a 32-year low in total births, but also a record-setting dip in national fertility rates.
16. [\*\*End the Plague of Secret Parenting\*\*](#)  
*(21 May) The Atlantic, By Emily Oster*  
If mothers and fathers speak openly about child-care obligations, their colleagues will adapt.
17. [\*\*Kirsten Gillibrand Proposes Huge Investments in Maternal Health, Child Care and Education\*\*](#)  
*(22 May) The New York Times, By Stephanie Saul*  
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's introduced a proposal aimed at investing heavily in maternal and child health, adoption and in vitro fertilization, paid family leave and universal prekindergarten.

18. [\*\*Military Chain of Command Under New Scrutiny in Assault Cases\*\*](#)  
*(23 May) Wall Street Journal, By Kristina Peterson and Ben Kesling*  
The role played by the Pentagon's chain of command in investigating and prosecuting military sexual-assault cases has resurfaced as a divisive issue in a congressional debate over the annual defense policy bill.
19. [\*\*Citing 'survey fatigue' the Corps cuts command climate surveys to 1 a year\*\*](#)  
*(23 May) Marine Corps Times, By Shawn Snow*  
Marines take a number of surveys from health assessments, command climate to safety issues, and now Marines are telling their commands they've had enough.
20. [\*\*Senate defense bill would make military sexual harassment standalone crime\*\*](#)  
*(23 May) The Hill, By Ellen Mitchell*  
The Senate Armed Services Committee's fiscal 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) includes numerous reforms to policies surrounding military sexual assault and harassment, including making sexual harassment a stand-alone offense in the military's criminal justice system.
21. [\*\*Program aims to ease military transition for female veterans\*\*](#)  
*(23 May) The Reserve & National Guard, By Bianca Strzalkowski*  
A new partnership between the Departments of Defense and Veteran Affairs focuses on the gender-specific needs of women leaving the service.
22. [\*\*Acting SECDEF urges Naval Academy grads to fight sexual abuse in the ranks\*\*](#)  
*(24 May) The Associated Press*  
Acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan says the new graduates of the U.S. Naval Academy should change the status quo and "set the standard on preventing sexual harassment and assault" among ranks.
23. [\*\*Tainted by sexual misconduct scandal, ex-Missouri governor to rejoin the Navy\*\*](#)  
*(24 May) The Associated Press*  
The news that Former Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens is returning to the Navy was criticized by some who said it sent the wrong message while the military is grappling with an increase in sexual assaults.
24. [\*\*John Hickenlooper unveils plan to expand access to long-acting contraception\*\*](#)  
*(29 May) CBS News, By Stephanie Ramirez*  
Former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper announced a plan to expand access to long-acting reversible contraception, or LARC. The plan calls for subsidizing the cost of LARC for women who want to use the birth control method but cannot afford to do so.
25. [\*\*Assault, fraternization, harassment: Punishment book reveals noncommissioned officer misconduct aboard 13th MEU deployment\*\*](#)  
*(30 May) Marine Corps Times, By Shawn Snow*  
The 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit's 2018 deployment achieved historic feats. One staff sergeant with the 13th MEU was charged for creating an "abusive" work environment, sexual harassment, assault and forcing Marines within the platoon to play a sexually explicit game, according to details laid out in the charge sheet.
26. [\*\*Victory for Fathers in a Parental Leave Case That Could Be a Harbinger\*\*](#)  
*(30 May) The New York Times, By Noam Scheiber*  
For years, scholars, activists and mothers have criticized policies that place the burden of child-rearing overwhelmingly on women. Increasingly, fathers are joining the criticism of these policies — and asserting their legal rights to challenge them. JPMorgan Chase announced that it had reached a tentative settlement in a class-action case initiated by a father who was denied the 16-week paid parental leave that the company began offering in 2016. He was offered only two weeks, on the grounds that he was not the primary caregiver.
27. [\*\*Army Bringing More Sexual Assault Cases to Trial\*\*](#)  
*(31 May) Association of the United States Army*  
Aided by statutes that strengthen the voice of sexual assault victims in the military judicial system, the Army is making progress in bringing cases to trial, the Army's judge advocate general told Congress.

28. [House defense bill doesn't include Pentagon proposal to make sexual harassment stand-alone military crime](#)  
(3 Jun) *The Hill*, By Rebecca Kheel  
A Pentagon request to make sexual harassment a stand-alone crime in the military justice system came too late for the House Armed Services Committee to include it in its annual defense policy bill, committee staff said Monday.
29. [A West Point cadet just had his rape conviction overturned, leaving him free to return to the school](#)  
(4 Jun) *Army Times*, By Meghann Myers  
Two years ago, U.S. Military Academy Cadet Jacob Whisenhunt was sentenced to 21 years in prison for raping a sleeping classmate. On Monday, an appeals court threw out his conviction, citing lack of evidence to prove that the sex wasn't consensual. The judges surmised that because the woman did not audibly struggle and Whisenhunt took no steps to keep her quiet, hide his identity or remove evidence of the alleged assault, the circumstances did not amount to a rape.

## SERVICEWOMEN IN THE NEWS

30. [West Point to graduate record number of black female cadets](#)  
(23 May) *The Associated Press*, By Michael Hill  
The class of cadets preparing to jubilantly toss their caps in the air at the U.S. Military Academy's graduation ceremony Saturday includes 34 black women, a record number that's a sign of concerted efforts to diversify West Point's Long Gray Line.
31. [Navy IDs sailor who died aboard USS Arlington](#)  
(23 May) *Stars and Stripes*  
The Navy identified the sailor found dead on the USS Arlington as Lt. Kaylie Ludwig. Lt. Ludwig, a medical corps officer, was found unresponsive and pronounced dead aboard the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS Arlington, U.S. Sixth Fleet spokesman Kyle Raines said in a statement.
32. [SMA or bust: The first enlisted female Ranger grad talks ambition and leadership](#)  
(24 May) *Army Times*, By Meghann Myers  
Last year Staff Sgt. Amanda Kelley became the first enlisted woman to earn a Ranger tab, a crucial step on her way to achieving her ultimate goal: to be sergeant major of the Army. On May 17, she gave the first of what could be many interviews from the top senior enlisted adviser's office in the Pentagon.
33. [General Officer Announcement](#)  
(28 May) *Immediate Release (No. NR-130-19)*  
Acting Secretary of Defense Patrick M. Shanahan announced today that the president made the following nomination: Air Force Maj. Gen. Mary F. O'Brien for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general, and assignment as deputy chief of staff, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Cyber Effects Operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Pentagon, Washington, District of Columbia. O'Brien is currently serving as commander, Twenty-Fifth Air Force, Air Combat Command, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.
34. [A transgender soldier thought the fight was won](#)  
(29 May) *Los Angeles Times*, By David S. Cloud  
Cathrine Schmid longed to be a soldier. To wear the uniform her grandfather wore. She had a secret reason too: to belong somewhere that would suppress her innermost self.
35. [Coast Guard Commander killed in crash donates organs to comrade's mom](#)  
(29 May) *WUSA9*, By Jess Arnold  
Coast Guard Commander Molly Waters was riding her motorcycle to work on May 13 when she was hit by a car. She died in the hospital from her injuries a few days later.
36. [Marine runs 161 miles across Wyoming to honor fallen servicewomen](#)  
(4 Jun) *The Associated Press*  
A Marine is running 161 miles (259 kilometers) across Wyoming to honor the 161 U.S. military women killed in the line of duty since 9/11.

## WOMEN VETERANS

37. [Meet the women helping VA work for women veterans](#)  
*(1 May) Military Times, By Pamela J. Powers*  
Anyone who thinks the Department of Veterans Affairs is an old boys' club should meet some of the women running it. I'm one of them. The VA has a long history of both serving women and putting them in a position to lead, and we're better positioned than ever to help our women warriors when they return home.
38. [Anticipating Growth – VA focusing on women Veteran's health](#)  
*(21 May) VA Blog, By Steven Clipp*  
Three times as many women Veterans are using VA care, benefits, and services now than in 2000, and national efforts are underway to address women specific care.
39. [One of the first two female FBI agents got her start in the Marines](#)  
*(23 May) We Are The Mighty, By Blake Stilwell*  
After the death of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover in 1972, the FBI began opening up training to women who were qualified candidates. At Hoover's funeral was a young female Marine, sent to Washington as a representative of the U.S. Navy. As soon as Hoover's replacement offered the title of "special agent" to women, that Marine was one of the first ones to go to Quantico.
40. [Memorial Day: 5 courageous women who died in service](#)  
*(26 May) NBC News, By Julianne Pepitone*  
Retired Brig. Gen. Carol Eggert shared the stories of five military women killed in action throughout history to remember this Memorial Day.
41. [Remembering the progress and pain of women's military service](#)  
*(27 May) The Hill, By Pat Spearman*  
On Memorial Day it is essential for Americans to remember the profound sacrifices women have made in service to our country and why equality under the Constitution for women service members must be compulsory.
42. [WWII spy honored with Congressional Gold Medal at 98](#)  
*(29 May) The Hill, By Rebecca Klar*  
A 98-year-old Massachusetts woman was honored Tuesday with the nation's highest civilian award, nearly 80 years after serving the country as a spy in World War II.
43. [Battle for equality continues for these women veterans serving in Congress](#)  
*(30 May) ConnectingVets.Com, By Kaylah Jackson*  
From experiencing harassment at local VA centers to lacking access to gender-specific care, the way women veterans have been suffering for decades is gaining the attention of the public and those in public office. Various women-specific legislation has been on the table, and, recently, the first-ever women veterans caucus was created to tackle these issues with support coming straight from Capitol Hill.
44. [Former Army nurse, 99, returns to Normandy to commemorate D-Day](#)  
*(6 Jun) The Week Online*  
Ellan Levitsky remembers everything about the time she spent working in an Army field hospital in Normandy during World War II. The 99-year-old served alongside her older sister, Dorothy Levitsky, at the 164th General Hospital from August 1944 to May 1945.