

VSC NAACP VETERANS NEWSLETTER ISSUE 15 August 2022

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Clifford Alexander Jr., first Black secretary of Army, dies at 88



Clifford L. Alexander Jr., a Harlem-raised, Ivy League-educated lawyer who was a crusading chairman of the Equal **Employment Opportunity Commission in** the late 1960s and later served as the first Black secretary of the Army, died July 3 at his home in Manhattan. He was 88. Guided by powerful mentors in academia, law and government, Mr. Alexander was the first Black student-body president at Harvard University, the first Black partner at the elite Washington law firm Arnold & Porter and spent his career seeking to shatter racial boundaries with statesmanlike calm. He seemed destined for elective office but lost a close race for D.C. mayor in 1974, shortly after the city won home rule.

Mr. Alexander came to Washington in 1963 on the recommendation of McGeorge Bundy, a former Harvard dean who served in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations as national security adviser. Mr. Alexander helped shepherd the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965 and became Lyndon B. Johnson's personal consultant on civil rights before

he became EEOC chairman in 1967. Read More

Former Airborne Brigade Soldier Lawrence Boyd Sr. Visits Vietnam Veterans Memorial



Lawrence Boyd Sr., 76, a Black veteran who volunteered for service in the Vietnam War, said he has never forgotten the lessons he learned while fighting for his country more than 50 years ago.

But what sticks with him most profoundly may come as a surprise to the majority of other Americans.

Boyd, now a resident of Puyallup, Washington, a small town not far from Tacoma, contends that despite the bombs, the carnage and the other atrocities he witnessed as a member of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, what he realized while in the service was how manmade distinctions of people based on race and

skin color became blurred as he and his fellow soldiers struggled to survive.

On April 24, Boyd, with the support of both Puget Sound Honor Flight, a non-profit that provides transportation to America's vets so they can view the memorials erected and built in their honor in Washington, D.C., and Talking Rain, a leading beverage company, visited the Vietnam Wall. <u>Read More</u>

VFW Post Dedication Ceremony Honors Brigadier General McGee



Staff from the VFW Washington Office attended a dedication ceremony to rename Post 341 of Washington, D.C., after Brigadier General Charles E. McGee, who was a Tuskegee Airman. McGee was one of the first African American aviators who flew 409 combat missions in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. He passed away in January of this year at the age of 102. VFW Executive Director Bob Wallace spoke at the dedication, calling him a "true American hero" and thanked McGee's daughter for allowing the VFW to dedicate the only post in Washington, D.C. in her father's name. Learn more about Brigadier General Charles E. McGee.

Navy Commissioned Destroyer Ship Named in Honor of the First Black Marine Aviator



Image: Lt. Gen. Frank E. Petersen Jr., Marine commander at Quantico in the Marine Corps Museum on June 17, 1988. Frank E. Petersen Jr. was the first Black general in the U.S. Marines. Image: Frank Johnston/The Washington Post via Getty Images.

On May 14, 2022 a destroyer ship was named in honor of a Black Marine, Frank E. Petersen Jr., WIBW reports. The USS Frank E. Petersen Jr. is on its way to Pearl Harbor in Oahu, Hawaii, after its commissioning at the Columbus Street Terminal in Charleston, SC.

The ceremony was led by Commander Daniel Hancock along with 32 officers and 297 enlisted personnel who are assigned to the ship.

The ship's sponsors are D'Arcy Ann Neller, wife of retired Gen. Robert Neller, former Marine Corps Commandant, as well as Petersen's wife, Dr. Alicia J. Petersen, who passed away in September 2021, according to the Defense Department. The motto of the ship is said to be "Into the Tiger's Jaw," a phrase often used by Petersen to display courage despite all the social injustices and dangers that he encountered.

"When the time comes, hell, stick out your can," Petersen's quote read on the ship's wall. "Let's go. Let's see what the old tiger's got. Let's jump right into his big, old jaw."

Born in Topeka, Kansas, Petersen became the first Black aviator and first Black general in the history of the Marines. He served combat tours in Korea in 1953 and in Vietnam in 1968. During those conflicts, Petersen is estimated to have flown more than 350 combat missions and logged over 4,000 military aircraft hours.

In 1988, Petersen retired from the Marines as a three-star general. Read More

Biden nominates Marine general as next commander of US forces in Africa



Lt. Gen. Michael E. Langley, the head of Marine Forces Command and Marine Forces Northern Command, and commanding general of Fleet Marine Force Atlantic, takes notes while touring the dock landing ship Gunston Hall March 25 prior to its deployment. WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden on July 9 nominated Lt. Gen. Michael E. Langley to lead U.S. forces in Africa, teeing him up to become the first Black four-star Marine Corps general.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced the president's decision to nominate Langley as head of AFRICOM. Langley currently heads Marine Forces Command and Marine Forces Northern Command and is the commanding general of Fleet Marine Force Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia. Langley has served in Afghanistan, Somalia and Okinawa. He also has worked at the Pentagon and CENTCOM, which oversees US forces in the Middle East.

Should the Senate confirm Langley, he will replace Army Gen. Stephen Townsend, who has led AFRICOM since July 2019.

AFRICOM oversees U.S. troops dispersed throughout Africa, including in conflicts zones such as Somalia, where Biden recently reinstated troops to expedite airstrikes for counterterrorism operations. The command is headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany.

After 35 years of military service in the U.S. Marine Corps, Lt. Gen. Michael Langley is set to earn one of the highest ranks in the military. If confirmed by the Senate Armed Services Committee on July 21, he will become the first Black four-star general in the history of the Marine Corps, according to NPR. Currently, he is one of only six Black generals serving in the Marines. <u>Read More</u> <u>Read More Cont.</u>

JOB FAIR: DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV) AND RECRUIT MILITARY

National Virtual Career Fair for Veterans. Aug 16, 2022. 12 PM - 4 PM EST. Open to all U.S. military, veterans and their spouses. Register at

https://success.recruitmilitary.com/events/national-virtual-career-fair-for-veterans-august-16-2022

GENERAL LELAND TONY SHEPHERD FIRST BLACK MAN TO COMMAND ARKANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



Guyana-born Brigadier-General Leland Tony Shepherd <u>made</u> history in June when he became the first Black man to command the Arkansas Army National Guard.

Shepherd led four brigades of 6,500 guardsmen on Sunday, June 12. The milestone followed Shepherd's promotion to brigadier general, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* <u>reported</u>.

He is the second Black general officer in the Arkansas Army National Guard after Brig. Gen. William J. Johnson, who was promoted on Oct. 16, 2007, and retired in 2012.

Shepherd served in two combat tours in Iraq with the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, first as a signal officer in 2004 and then as an IBCT signal officer in 2008. <u>Read More</u>

Black veteran groups seek policy agenda on racial inequities

The first-ever national policy conference for Black veterans was in Washington on June 23. Representatives from nearly 20 advocacy groups for service members of color were collaborating on a legislative agenda addressing longstanding racial, economic and social inequities facing more than 2 million Black American veterans.

In addition to disparities in the military justice system, homelessness and unemployment, federal veterans benefits data show Black service members' post-Sept. 11 disability claims have been granted at lower rates than their white counterparts. Advocates say racial inequality in veterans' benefit access stifles or, worse, upends the lives of those who proudly served their country.

"The system isn't accommodating us, we're accommodating it," said Victor LaGroon, chairman of the Black Veterans Empowerment Council, which organized the conference. "We've got to have these systemic and legislative discussions because, until there's full transparency and accountability, people are going to continue to skirt the issues."

According to Veterans Benefits Administration records analyzed by the Veterans Legal Services Clinic at Yale Law School and reviewed by The Associated Press, there are statistically significant differences in disability claim outcomes for Black and white veterans. Although disability claim approval rates are low across the board, they are significantly lower for Black veterans.

Between 2002 and 2020, Black veterans had the lowest claim approval rate, at 30.3%, when compared to their non-Black counterparts. White veterans had 37.1% of their claims approved, while Hispanic veterans had an approval rate of 36% and Asian or Pacific Islander veterans had a rate of 30.7%. <u>Read More</u>

Fresh off fourth star, General Williams now commands top post at US Army Europe and Africa



STUTTGART, Germany — Gen. Darryl A. Williams, who received his fourth star June 23, has become the first Black commander of U.S. Army Europe and Africa, leading ground forces at a crucial time for security in Europe.

The current superintendent at the U.S. Military Academy, Williams replaced Gen. Christopher Cavoli, took command at U.S. European Command on July 1. A native of Alexandria, Va., Williams is himself a West Point graduate.

On June 23, the Senate confirmed Williams for a fourth star, a prerequisite for taking the job. A change of command at U.S. Army Europe and Africa headquarters in Wiesbaden was held June 28. Williams will bring his extensive military experience in Europe to the job. As a colonel, he commanded 1st Armored Division Artillery in Baumholder, Germany, until it was inactivated in 2007.

He previously served as the Commander, Allied Land Command from 24 June 2016 to 29 June 2018. <u>Read More</u>

Better outcomes and better treatment: Equity in oncology for Black Veterans

What does equity in oncology mean? The positive impact of VA's focus on health equity can be seen in the cancer care treatment outcomes of Black male Veterans. Prostate cancer is one of the most common diagnoses for the Veteran community.

When Black Veterans turn to VA for their prostate cancer care, they have better outcomes. Studies have shown that Black men who use VA for prostate cancer screening and care have significantly better outcomes than those using private health care services. This is because VA reduces barriers to access traditionally seen in non-VA settings, which minimizes racial disparities.

The Center for Minority Veterans (CMV) works to ensure Veterans receive equal services regardless of race, origin, religion, or gender. The Office of Health Equity (OHE) works alongside VA's programmatic efforts to provide individualized health care to each Veteran in a way that eliminates disparate health outcomes and assures health equity. The National Oncology Program stands shoulder to shoulder with the CMV and OHE to guarantee an equitable experience for Veterans. <u>Read More</u>

Local veteran gets Salem VA Women's Health Clinic named in her honor



Ret. Master Sgt. (MSG) Silverine Vinyard James sits outside the health clinic at Salem VA Medical Center named in her honor.

Even though Women's History Month was in March, the Salem VA Medical Center (VAMC) continued that sentiment on June 6 by naming one of its health clinics in honor of local Veteran Ret. Master Sgt. (MSG) Silverine Vinyard James.

During the ceremony, Dr. Miguel LaPuz, Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Integrated Veteran Care and a former Salem VAMC Director provided the keynote address. Ben Cline, US Representative for Virginia's 6th District, also made some remarks.

Rebecca Stackhouse, Salem VAMC Executive Director, said, "The record of MSG James and her contributions to the military, being one of the first female Veterans to rise to an E-8 rank, is impressive and worthy of our admiration and recognition. I am extremely grateful we were able to share this moment with MSG James and her family, and I hope that her story and indomitable spirit will inspire everyone who walks past these doors for generations to come."

Born in 1929 during the Jim Crow era, James grew up in Vinton, Virginia. She attended a four-room schoolhouse through seventh grade before attending Washington Carver High School. She went on to graduate third in her class in 1948. The following year, James joined the Army, attending boot camp as part of a segregated all-female company. Read More

Former academy basketball star, experienced pilot takes over largest Air Force wing in Europe



Friday, July 15, 2022, at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Jones took command from Brig. Gen. Josh M. Olson, who is moving on to an assignment at the Pentagon after leading the wing for nearly two years.

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — The new commander of the largest Air Force wing in Europe and Africa pledged his very best Friday to the 8,000 airmen now in his command.

Jones is a seasoned commander and mobility pilot who has flown the C-130E and J model cargo planes, as well as the C-17A and C-12J. He's also an accomplished former college basketball player, which was noted by speakers as he took charge of

the 86th Airlift Wing at a ceremony inside a hangar on Ramstein's flight line Friday. <u>Read More</u>

Kidney donation needed for Veteran Walter E. Bridgers



Would you consider giving a life saving kidney to Walter E. Bridgers? A kidney transplant would offer him the ability to live a longer, healthier, more normal life. It would also allow him to live his dreams of starting a not for profit to aid farmers in Senegal, West Africa.

Walter E. Bridgers served in the New Jersey Guard for several years and completed his basic training with the award and distinction of "Trainee Leader of the Cycle." He continued serving his country in the United States Army for an additional 11 years, until he was medically retired at the rank of Sergeant E-5. During his tour, he served bravely as a Combat Medic and a Logistic NCOIC.

While his last five years in the Army proved to be his most challenging, they also propelled him into a new life experience. During that time, Sergeant Bridgers had a life-altering physical injury – he broke his back. After undergoing rehabilitation at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, he was released but not repaired. Repair required surgery, which was not medically recommended until his condition further deteriorated. This resulted in Sergeant Bridgers' forced medical retirement in 1986. After his discharge, he decided to pursue a career in psychology so that he could better understand his physical trauma and transition to civilian life.

If you would like to find out whether you can be a kidney donor match for Doc, please go to https://columbiasurgery.org/kidney-transplant, press the tab on the left in the gray box that says, "I want to donate", and fill out the short questionnaire inserting Doc's birth name (**Walter Bridgers**) as the recipient. If you would like to speak with me first to get more information, please call (732)

716-7451. Here's a video that describes one person's journey as a kidney transplant donor:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fi4gZpp6IKA

For more information about kidney transplant and kidney disease, feel free to contact Bobbi Hicks, Professional & Family Life Purpose Expert Founder and CEO of Purposestry, LLC Founder of The Global Family Responsibility Movement[™] at <u>bobbihicks@gmail.com</u>. https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/2016/bill-perkins/walter-e-bridgers

Eugene Bishop, Maryland World War II vet, celebrates 100th birthday



Eugene Bishop sits for a portrait outside his home on his 100th birthday on July 22 in Temple Hills, Md.

Eugene Bishop pulled up to his 100th birthday party Friday like a celebrity arriving at the red carpet. He emerged from a gray Porsche, driven by a friend, and was dressed in a spotless white-collared shirt, navy pinstripe suit and U.S. Army baseball cap. Relatives offered to guide him out of the car, but he politely refused any help. As he had done for much of his 100 years of life, Bishop preferred to do things his own way.

"Good afternoon," he said, walking into his party at a ballroom in Hillcrest Heights, Md., to Stevie Wonder's rendition of "Happy Birthday." "Doctor Bishop coming through."

The World War II veteran - nicknamed "Doc," since his family says he can fix just about anything - celebrated his centennial Friday, surrounded by dozens of family members and friends. Bishop has so many descendants - 11 children, dozens of grandchildren, great-grandchildren and even great-great-grandchildren - that his family has stopped keeping count. <u>Read More</u>

Awards Presented at NAACP Veterans Reception

Several awards were presented at the NAACP Veterans Reception during the 113th NAACP National Convention in Atlantic City, NJ on July 19.

OUR FIRST AWARD IS THE JULIUS E. WILLIAMS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD. THIS AWARD IS GIVEN ANNUALLY TO A VETERAN ORGANIZATION THAT HAS INFLUENCED BROAD SERVICE INITIATIVES TO DEVELOP VETERANS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS. The 2022 NAACP JULIUS E. WILLIAMS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD is presented to Black Veterans for Social Justice.

Black Veterans for Social Justice serves over 15, 000 persons per year in a variety of programs and services and operates out of its own headquarters building in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. Its core mission is to serve minority veterans, non-veterans and their families with a tender listening ear and a keen sense of community. The agency's founder and its board were largely born, raised or live in Central Brooklyn, and reflect a deep understanding of residents' needs and aspirations. The daily core services veterans receive is a reminder from where the organization first started and grew, and who it represents. The NAACP is proud to present the 2022 NAACP Julius E. Williams award to Black Veterans for Social Justice. Receiving this award is Wendy McClinton, President & CEO of Black Veterans for Social Justice, Inc.

OUR NEXT AWARD IS THE JESSIE BROWN DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AWARD. THIS AWARD IS PRESENTED TO AN AMERICAN WHO WORKS DILIGENTLY TO ENSURE THAT ALL VETERANS ARE PROVIDED THE BENEFITS AND SERVICE THEY HAVE EARNED THROUGH THEIR HONORABLE SERVICE TO THEIR COUNTRY.

THE 2022 NAACP JESSIE BROWN DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AWARD IS PRESENTED TO EDNA CUMMINGS.

Retired Army Col. Edna W. Cummings is the first African American woman to earn her commission as an Army officer through the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Appalachian State University (ASU), Boone, NC. She is a former member of ASU's Foundation Board of Directors, wherein she established the Warrior Fund for veterans and their children.

She is a current member of the Military Advisory Board of the History Makers, the nation's largest African American video oral history archive, and an Army Reserve Ambassador for the state of Maryland, a volunteer special government employee equivalent to a Major General (two-star) in the Armed Forces. In this capacity she advances Army ROTC scholarships for reserve duty opportunities and promotes awareness of the Army Reserve, its goals and objectives. She has worked to bring recognition to the all-black WWII Women's Army Corps unit the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion also known as the Six Triple Eight. As a citizen advocate, she raised funds for the 6888th monument and coproduced an award-winning documentary about the unit. She championed the effort with Congress to enact passage of the Six Triple Eight Congressional Gold Medal Act. On March 14, 2022, President Biden signed the legislation into law awarding the 6888th the nation's highest civilian honor. The NAACP is proud to present the 2022 NAACP Jessie Brown Distinguished Leadership award to Col Edna Cummings, USA Retired.

THE NEXT AWARD IS THE ROY WILKINS RENOWNED SERVICE AWARDS. The Roy Wilkins Renowned Service Award was instituted in 1975 by the NAACP Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Department in recognition of the distinguished service of Roy Wilkins, the fifth NAACP Executive Director, who established the NAACP Armed Services & Veterans Affairs Department in 1969. Roy Wilkins recognized that the same strides that were being made for the procurement of civil and human rights for African Americans in the civilian populace must also encompass those who serve in the military. He understood that it was up to organizations like the NAACP to ensure that Executive Order 9981 was enforced and that its call for desegregation of our military population was strictly adhered to. This award salutes those who continue the struggle for equality in the Armed Services. The Awards is presented annually to one military service member and one Federal Civilian Employee from each Branch of Service and the Defense Agencies. THE 2022 NAACP ROY WILKINS RENOWNED SERVICE AWARD ARMY CIVILIAN IS PRESENTED TO CHARMAINE BETTY-SINGLETON

The First of four 2022 Roy Wilkins Renowned Service Award is presented to Charmaine Betty-Singleton. For her tireless efforts and contributions to the advancement of civil and human rights for all DoD personnel displayed by her genuine concern and exemplary leadership, advocacy, and mentorship from April 2019 to December 2021. During a period of divisiveness, Ms. Betty-Singleton's transparency and commitment to justice ensured that all personnel were included and treated with the utmost respect, fostering a cohesive environment where all personnel were welcomed and had the opportunity for promotion and advancement at all levels of the organization. Her efforts reflect greatly on herself, her community, the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, and the California Army National Guard. The NAACP is proud to present the Roy Wilkins Renowned Service Army Civilian Award to Charmaine Betty-Singleton.

OUR NEXT AWARD IS THE 2022 NAACP ROY WILKINS RENOWNED SERVICE AWARD COAST GUARD CIVILIAN AND IS PRESENTED TO DR. ARAM DEKOVEN UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

Dr. DEKOVEN is cited for superior performance while serving as the U.S. Coast Guard Academy's Chief Diversity Officer from April 2019 to December 2021. Demonstrating outstanding dedication, he has led the Office of Inclusion and Diversity through a dynamic operating environment to include a global pandemic. As a champion for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within the Coast Guard Academy Community and the boarder Coast Guard, Dr. Aram deKoven has been a fierce advocate for civil rights and the embodiment of our Service core values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty. The pandemic and race related social upheaval created a challenging environment to meet the mission across our Nation. At the Coast Guard Academy, the need for flexible, empathetic, creative and inspiring leadership was at an all-time high. Dr. DEKOVEN modeled the way as a DE&I leader. Over the course of his career in education Dr. deKoven has consistently led, taught and mentored through a critical lens regarding race and ethnicity. Dr. deKoven is the Director of the Office of Inclusion and Diversity which designs, implements, and evaluates culturally relevant programing, recruitment, and retention efforts. The mission is to shape culturally conscious leaders of character ready to serve in the United States Coast Guard and beyond. Dr. DEKOVEN's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard. The NAACP is proud to present the 2022 Roy Wilkins Renowned Service Award Civilian Coast Guard to DR. ARAM DEKOVEN

OUR NEXT AWARD IS THE 2022 NAACP ROY WILKINS RENOWNED MILITARY SERVICE AWARD USAF. THIS AWARD IS PRESENTED TO MASTER SERGEANT LAONARDO V. WHITE

Master Sergeant Laonardo V. White distinguished himself as African American Heritage Committee President and The Leaven program mentor, 60 Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, California and Parents Against Injustice and Negligence, 222 Intelligence Support Squadron, Beale Air Force Base, California from 01 April 2019 to 31 December 2021. During this period, Sergeant White epitomized selfless leadership as he led the Heritage Committee in fostering and creating three scholarships for the Black Student Union at Vaden High School. The scholarships and his direct mentoring positively motivated six students to attend college. Additionally, Sergeant White and his committee orchestrated the first law enforcement panel in 2020 to create a clear channel of communication between the local police department and minorities at the base. Furthermore, he volunteered and was trained as mentor/tutor for a local youth organization, The Leaven, and taught basic math to 12 children. These efforts created close ties to his community resulting in Sergeant White becoming a board member of the local Parents Against Injustice and Negligence. This allowed him to help children who had one or both parents incarcerated. His direct involvement helped to raise \$2,000 dollars for Christmas presents and meals for 20 families. His orchestrated efforts didn't stop there, he guided the organization to provide help throughout the year to include school supplies and general support to families. The distinctive accomplishments of Master Sergeant White reflect credit upon himself and the United States Air Force. The

NAACP is proud to present the 2022 NAACP Roy Wilkins Renown Military Service Award USAF To Master Sergeant Laonardo White.

OUR FINAL AWARD IS THE 2022 NAACP ROY WILKINS RENOWNED MILITARY SERVICE AWARD US ARMY. THIS AWARD IS PRESENTED TO CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER THREE THAIS TAYLOR

For exceptional meritorious service while assigned as the State Equal Employment Manager, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Thais Taylor was a great asset and valued member of the state while providing advocacy and exceptional character for all members of the National Guard to include women and minorities. CW3 Taylor strove to bring equality through the State Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity programs. She promoted equal rights and just and fair treatment amongst all employees within the Michigan National Guard. She demonstrated great leadership during the civil unrest situation of 2020 by providing mentorship and always approached a situation with impartial advocacy as well as just fairness. Chief Warrant Officer 3 Taylor's selfless service is keeping in fine traditions of military service, brings great credit upon herself, the Michigan National Guard, and the United States Army. The NAACP is proud to present the 2022 NAACP Roy Wilkins Renowned Military Service Award US Army To Chief Warrant Officer Three Thais Taylor. Accepting the Award on behalf of CW3 Taylor is, Lt Col KAREN E. SIMS, Deputy Commander Administration, Michigan Army National Guard.



Coming Mid-August!

Featuring Gary Sinise and Our 10-year Anniversary Exclusive

U.S. Veterans Magazine's (USVM)upcoming 10-Year Anniversary issue includes articles focusing on careers and employment, veteran-owned businesses, higher education, government, military spouses, health & wellness and much more! View the current digital magazine now, no credit card needed. View the <u>current</u> <u>digital magazine</u> now, no credit card needed. The mission of this newsletter is to provide our readers with a reliable and dependable source of news, information, products and services total to the education of all Americans on the need for ethnic, racial and sexual diversity within our military community. Diversity is the cornerstone for a strong national defense.

