



**Protect Our  
Defenders**

# A YEAR OF RECKONING

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

BLACK SERVICEMEMBERS LEVERAGE  
RACIAL DISPARITIES REPORT TO

## SPEAK OUT

P8

*“I am George Floyd, I am Philando Castile,  
I am Alton Sterling. I am a Black man who happens  
to be the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force  
and I am committed to making this better.”*

CMSAF KALETH O. WRIGHT

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## #IAMVANESSA GUILLÉN

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**Protect Our Defenders (POD) is the pre-eminent national human rights organization dedicated to ending sexual violence, victim retaliation, misogyny, sexual prejudice and racism in the military and combating a culture that has allowed it to persist.**

**We honor, support and give voice to survivors of military sexual violence. We seek reform to ensure all servicemembers are provided a safe and respectful work environment free from misogyny and racism, and have access to a fair, impartially administered system of justice.**

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“POD is tenacious and innovative. We weave together survivor stories, advocacy campaigns, legal representation, research, media coverage, and congressional partnerships to drive reform.”



## LETTER TO OUR FRIENDS

**THIS PAST YEAR, AMERICA RECOGNIZED DRAMATIC RACIAL AND GENDER INEQUITIES, IN BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY CONTEXTS. TODAY WE ARE PART OF AN HISTORIC MOVEMENT TOWARD ACCOUNTABILITY.**

The release of our “Racial Disparities in Military Justice” report shook things up. As reported by the media, “The Air Force faced an internal reckoning on racism following a scathing report from POD.” The report, in the wake of George Floyd’s murder, provoked an unprecedented response from Black servicemembers and military leaders. Outraged, Air Force Chief Master Sergeant Kaleth Wright took to Facebook to express his anguish.

Congress held hearings and passed laws. The Air Force Inspector General backed up our findings, resulting in a study to examine barriers to minority participation and promotion in the Armed Forces. It took five years of hard work to get here, but today there is finally momentum for systemic culture change.

The #IAmVanessaGuillén movement sparked public consciousness. The brutal murder of Ft. Hood soldier Vanessa Guillén and courageous activism by her family

and the survivor community motivated action. Congress is now poised to reform the broken military justice system.

POD’s presidential pledge campaign was a huge success, resulting in Joe Biden making an historic commitment to support our reform to create a fair and impartial system of justice.

Determined the COVID pandemic would not stop us, we launched *Unstoppable!* a virtual event to celebrate the victories and raise much needed funds. We announced our first *Coughlin Courage Award* named after our intrepid advocate, Paula Coughlin. We successfully fought for greater legal protections for victims, had a big win before the US Supreme Court, and we worked hard to keep these issues in the spotlight — featured in almost 40,000 stories.

None of this would have been accomplished without your steadfast support. On behalf of our board, staff and the community of survivors we serve — thank you.

With gratitude,

**Nancy Parrish**, Founder and Executive Chair  
**Col. Don Christensen**, USAF (ret), President



“The Supreme Court just delivered a major victory for military sexual assault survivors. Justice has been restored for three survivors and hope has been restored for countless others.”

TASK AND PURPOSE



# A MONUMENTAL SUPREME COURT WIN!

## UNYIELDING ACTIVISM DRIVES JUSTICE FOR SURVIVORS – HOLDING MILITARY COURTS ACCOUNTABLE

In 2018, the military’s highest court reversed 32 years of precedent by creating a five-year statute of limitations for rapes occurring before 2006. The ruling resulted in convicted rapists being set free and stopped other offenders from being prosecuted, denying justice for dozens of survivors.

Air Force veteran Harmony Allen was one of those survivors. Harmony reached out to POD seeking help to overturn the military court’s decision. POD worked with Harmony to get her case before the Supreme Court, and

in early 2020 POD’s Law Center [filed an amicus brief](#) on her behalf. Harmony became the first military survivor in history to file a brief before the Supreme Court arguing to affirm her rapist’s conviction.

In December 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court voted unanimously to overturn the severely flawed military court decision. This [groundbreaking ruling](#) represents a resounding victory for survivors.

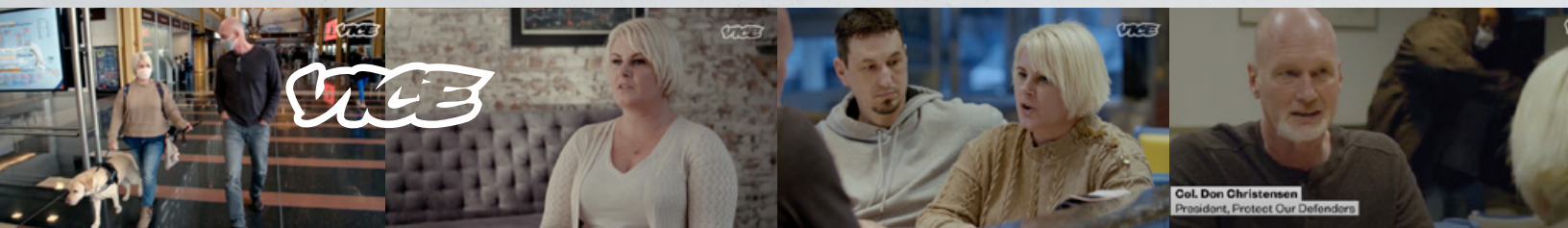


“We won our case before the Supreme Court!

*That means my rapist will go back to jail to finish serving his 16 year sentence...the five year statute of limitations imposed on rape victims will now go away. None of this could have been done without your help. POD has been there beside me to help navigate the legal system, write briefs and be on the phone just to listen to me cry... Your help and kindness has forever burned a spot in my heart.”*

WATCH HARMONY ALLEN’S VIDEOS AT [WWW.PROTECTOURDEFENDERS.COM/HARMONY](http://WWW.PROTECTOURDEFENDERS.COM/HARMONY)

Harmony Allen, Col. Christensen and Gunny, the dog celebrate the victory.



## LAW CENTER ACHIEVES JUSTICE FOR SURVIVORS

POD's Law Center continues to provide vital pro-bono legal services to servicemembers, military families, veterans, and civilians involving sexual violence or supporting those facing retaliation for reporting.

In addition to filing an amicus curiae brief on behalf of survivor Harmony Allen, POD filed two additional briefs in 2020 before the Supreme Court. In August, we joined with the Black Veterans Project urging the court to provide Title VII anti-discrimination protections to military members. In December, alongside 19 allied organizations, we supported a Navy survivor seeking to overturn the Feres Doctrine that was preventing her from suing leadership for failing to protect her from sexual assault at the Naval Academy.

The Law Center uniquely positions POD to shed light on military sexual assault cases and in turn enhances our ability to prompt justice and call for fundamental legal reform.

“POD's involvement in my case has been a game changer for me and my sanity...thank you so much for everything you do.”

CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE, USAF

## 2020 LEGAL SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS

**220 CASES** were submitted and reviewed through POD's intake process.

OF THOSE

**12 CASES**

were taken in house.

**27 CASES**

were referred to our Pro Bono Network or partners\* who collectively put in:

**72 INDIVIDUALS**

were provided assistance that did not include direct referral to an attorney, such as help with accessing healthcare for Military Sexual Trauma, filing Freedom of Information Act requests to access military records, and drafting congressional inquiries.

**2,598 HOURS OF SERVICE**  
**VALUED AT \$1,795,000**

\*National Veterans Legal Services Program, the Veterans Legal Institute, the Veterans Consortium, National Women's Law Center

“The #IAmVanessaGuillén hashtag, I think, is really the first time that military men and women have felt empowered to speak out. The military hasn’t had their #MeToo movement yet, until now...I think this could be a potential sea change that breaks down the resistance of those who previously supported the status quo.”

POD PRESIDENT, COL. DON CHRISTENSEN, USA TODAY



## #IAmVanessaGuillén ACTIVISM SPARKS #MeTooMilitary MOMENT

The [tragic murder of Ft. Hood soldier Vanessa Guillén](#) in April 2020 brought increased national attention to the epidemic of military sexual violence and harassment. Vanessa’s story sparked an outcry among active duty servicemembers and veterans who used the hashtag #IAmVanessaGuillén to share their own stories and eventually trigger an independent investigation.

The hashtag was started by 23-year-old Army veteran Karina Lopez, who also served at Ft. Hood. Karina came to Protect Our Defenders as a whistle-blower and military sexual assault survivor looking to give voice to all servicemembers who had experienced sexual assault or harassment. POD worked with Univision to help tell her story.

POD’s activism and work with the media proved critical in the weeks that followed. The dysfunction at Ft. Hood is emblematic of a broader pattern of neglect and betrayal. POD provided timely subject matter expertise to [CBS](#), [ABC](#), [PBS](#), [USA Today](#), [Univision](#), [Telemundo](#), [The Economist](#) and more.



“If someone had taken my case seriously that could have saved her,”

KARINA LOPEZ TO UNIVISION IN A SERIES OF LENGTHY INTERVIEWS. [WATCH VIDEO](#)

### OPINION

Vanessa Guillen Proves the Military's #MeToo Movement Is Long Overdue | Opinion

COLONEL DON CHRISTENSEN

ON 11/20/20 AT 9:04 AM EDT

Photo by Victoria Pickering licensed under CC by 2.0.

**ADVOCATES SUCCESSFULLY CALL FOR INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO FT. HOOD CLIMATE OF ABUSE**

In December 2020, an independent investigation found that US Army leadership fostered a “permissive environment” allowing sexual violence and harassment to go unchecked. The report detailed Army leadership’s consistent failure to address known instances of sexual violence. Fourteen leaders at Ft. Hood were removed or suspended as a result of the report; Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy declared this report will cause the Army to change its culture.

**“The shake-ups come in response to an independent review of the base’s command climate and culture... amid increasing pressure from Guillén’s family, Congress and advocacy groups.”**

THE TEXAS TRIBUNE



Vanessa Guillén’s sister Mayra honors her memory at the “I Am Vanessa Guillén Act” introduction, Sept. 2020.



A culture tolerant of abuse in the military, and particularly among military leadership, is not isolated to Ft. Hood.

**“The military’s own data confirms the extent of the crisis.**

**In 2018 alone, an estimated 20,500 servicemembers were sexually assaulted or raped – an increase of almost 40 percent from 2016...**

**Over 60 percent of women who report sexual assault are subjected to retaliation with significant career consequences...**

**One-third of survivors are forced out of the military within a year of reporting.”**

— COL. DON CHRISTENSEN

**THERE IS A SEXUAL ABUSE EPIDEMIC WITHIN THE MILITARY. IF WE WANT MORE THAN EMPTY PLATITUDES FROM MILITARY LEADERS, THE ONLY WAY TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE IS THROUGH FUNDAMENTAL MILITARY JUSTICE REFORM.**

*“The Air Force has faced an internal reckoning on racism following a scathing report from Protect Our Defenders that detailed how the service had tried to suppress evidence of systemic racism for years.”*

TASK AND PURPOSE



## POD'S RACIAL DISPARITY REPORT GARNERS NATIONAL ATTENTION

In May, just two days after the tragic death of George Floyd, POD released *Racial Disparities In Military Justice, Part II* revealing the United States Air Force had attempted to cover up its data on racial disparities following an internal investigation mandated by Congress. Since 2016, the Air Force has repeatedly concealed its records, embellished its efforts, and attempted to discredit its own statistics, while failing to address persistent racial disparities in the military justice system. In the Air Force, Black airmen are 71% more likely to face court martial or Non-Judicial Punishment (NJP) than White airmen.



“ *The recent deaths of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd and the advocacy group Protect Our Defenders’ release of their Racial Disparities in Military Justice report hold up a mirror that makes us look at the places where we’re falling short. It’s painful to look in that mirror...*” **GENERAL JAMES M. HOLMES, USAF COMMANDER, AIR COMBAT COMMAND, JOINT BASE LANGLEY EUSTIS** Excerpt from May 2020 Facebook Post

For the past five years, POD worked to force the military to reckon with its disparities in racial justice. In 2016, POD submitted a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests that ultimately spurred Congressional action, mandating the DoD transform how the military tracks, investigates, and addresses racial disparities. After POD’s initial FOIA request, the Air Force attempted to keep information from becoming public, forcing POD to file suit in federal court alongside the Veterans Legal Services Clinic at Yale Law School.



“ *Simply put, the Air Force did all it could to hide its failures because of how poorly it reflected on the institution from the Chief of Staff on down, but this is exactly why the FOIA process exists – to hold the government accountable.*” **COL. DON CHRISTENSEN**





“At the hearing, POD’s President, Col. Christensen told lawmakers that after the report was published, none of the services reached out to the organization to discuss the findings – a claim largely confirmed by the service judge advocate generals who testified before Congress later in the day.”

ABC NEWS

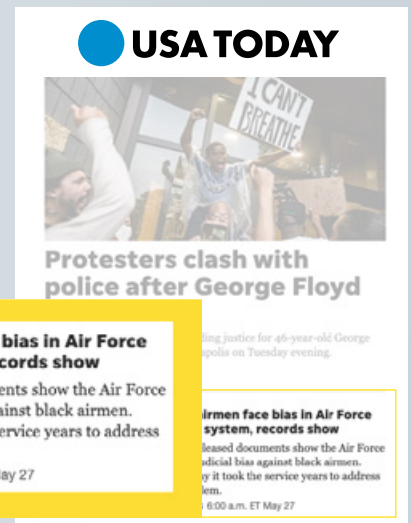


## REPORT PROVOKES CONGRESSIONAL HEARING AND INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION

POD’s powerful report — published on the front page of USA Today alongside an article about protests in the wake of George Floyd’s murder — captured public consciousness and sparked a [Congressional hearing](#) and independent review by the Air Force Inspector General (IG).

After the release of POD’s report Congress passed legislation requiring the IG to study diversity and extremism in the military.

POD continues to work to keep this issue in the spotlight and has been featured in hundreds of articles on the topic, including [USA Today](#), [Reuters](#), [AP](#), [The Washington Post](#), [CNN](#) and more.



### PENTAGON WITHHELD RACIAL DISCRIMINATION SURVEY DATA

In December, Protect Our Defenders worked with Reuters on an [exclusive investigation](#) which revealed the Pentagon stalled releasing its racial discrimination survey data for years and repeatedly denied requests for a public release. When finally released, the results revealed widespread racial discrimination and harassment. **39% of those who experienced discrimination or harassment did not report because “they thought nothing would be done.”** In an interview with Reuters, Col. Christensen called out the Pentagon’s suspect motives for delaying releasing the report, saying:

**“WHAT IT REALLY MEANS IS THAT IF WHATEVER YOU’RE ASKING MAKES THEM LOOK BAD, THEN THEY WON’T RELEASE IT. AND IF IT MADE THEM LOOK GOOD, THEY’D RELEASE IT.”**



# BLACK SERVICEMEMBERS MATTER

## WHO AM I?

**I AM A BLACK MAN WHO HAPPENS TO BE THE CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT OF THE AIR FORCE.**

I am George Floyd...I am Philando Castile, I am Michael Brown, I am Alton Sterling, I am Tamir Rice.

Just like most of the Black Airmen and so many others in our ranks...I am outraged at watching another Black man die on television before our very eyes. What happens all too often in this country to Black men who are subjected to police brutality that ends in death...could happen to me. As shocking as that may sound to some of you...I hope you realize that racism/discrimination/exclusion does not care much about position, titles or stature...This, my friends, is my greatest fear, not that I will be killed by a white police officer (believe me my heart starts racing like most other Black men in America when I see those blue lights behind me)...but that I will wake up to a report that one of our Black Airmen has died at the hands of a white police officer.

As I struggle with the Air Force's own demons that include the racial disparities in military justice and discipline among our youngest Black male Airmen and the clear lack of diversity in our senior officer ranks...I can only look in the mirror for the solution. I, the CMSAF must do better... in ensuring every Airmen in our ranks has a fair chance at becoming the best version of themselves...

### Who am I...

**I am Kaleth. I am a Black Man who happens to be the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and I am committed to making this better."**

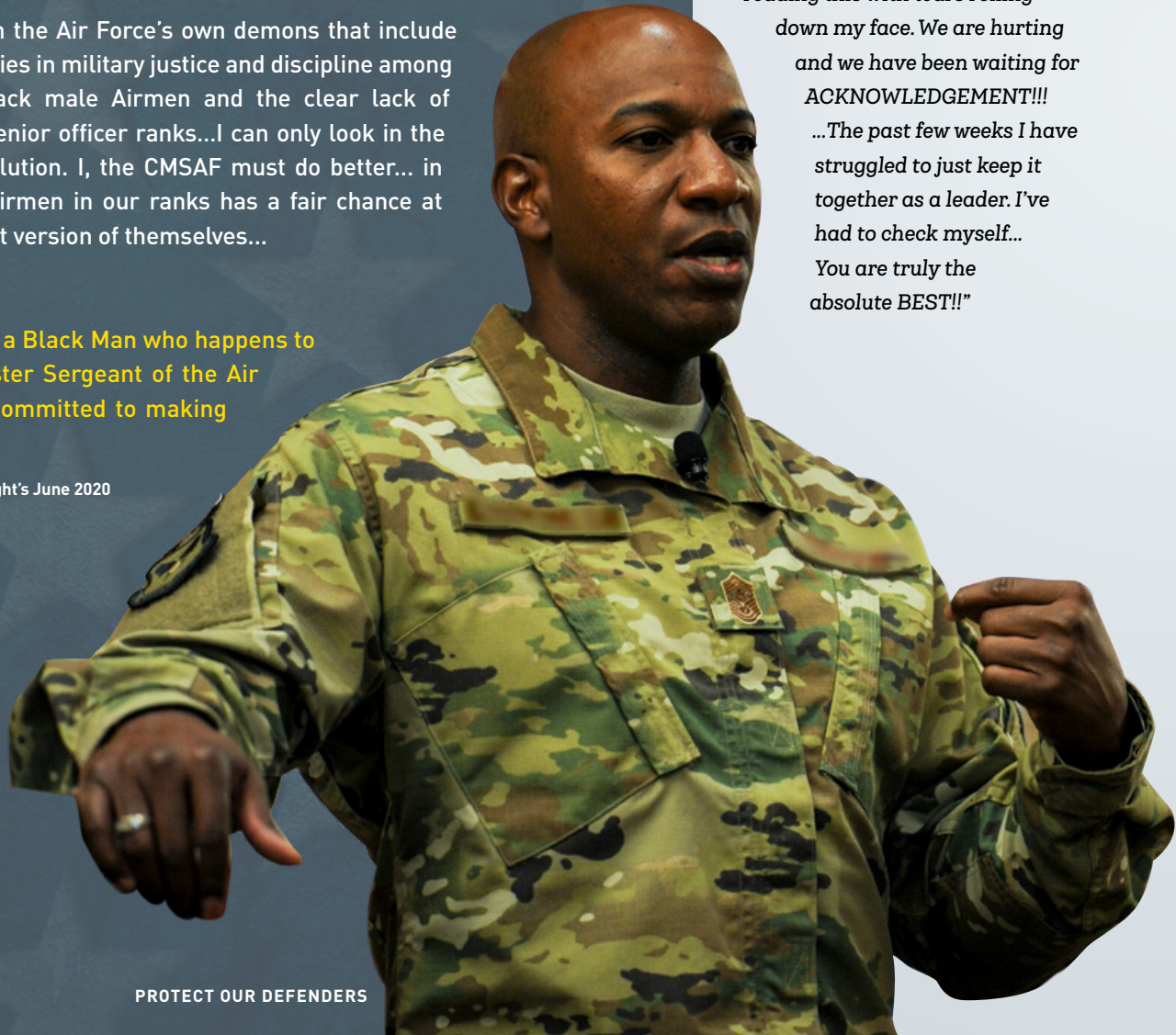
Excerpts from Chief Wright's June 2020 Facebook Post

## Responses to Chief Wright's June 2020 Facebook Post

*"Chief, I believe some of the issues within the Military Justice System stems from the people in leadership positions. Them having the authority to choose who gets a "slap on the wrist" and who deserves punishment is typically bias."*

*"As a Black Airman this was something I wanted to hear from up top...You just made the difficult but necessary road easier for us to travel! THANK YOU."*

*"Chief, I am sitting in my garage reading this with tears rolling down my face. We are hurting and we have been waiting for ACKNOWLEDGEMENT!!! ...The past few weeks I have struggled to just keep it together as a leader. I've had to check myself... You are truly the absolute BEST!!"*



“Just last week, the advocacy group Protect Our Defenders called out the Air Force for reportedly not only disproportionately punishing Black airmen but covering up the data. Wright said Monday that he is working with Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein to improve the military justice system.”

BUSINESS INSIDER



## BLACK SERVICEMEMBERS AND MILITARY LEADERS SPEAK OUT, LEVERAGE RACIAL DISPARITY REPORT

THE RESPONSE FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF GEORGE FLOYD AND THE RELEASE OF POD'S RACIAL DISPARITY REPORT WAS UNPRECEDENTED.



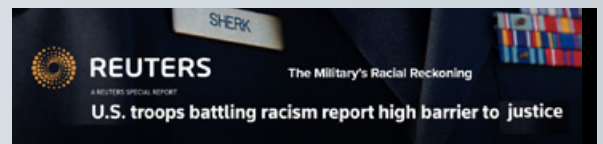
“We’re all better because of who you are, Chief Wright... The recent death of George Floyd [and others]...and Protect Our Defenders’ release of their Racial Disparities in Military Justice Report hold up a mirror that makes us look at the places where we’re falling short. It’s painful to look in that mirror...I’m hurting today.” GEN. MIKE HOLMES, USAF

“There’s no denying it from our part. We accept that there’s bias in our system and likely racism in our ranks, and we’ve got to work through to eradicate it.” LT. GEN. BRIAN KELLY, USAF

“In my opinion, I’ve been doing this for 38 years, the topic of race in the military has been considered taboo, something we just don’t talk about... We need to talk about it because it’s there. Diversity and inclusivity in the ranks are not merely aspirations, they are fundamental necessities to our readiness and our mission success.” GEN. ROBERT ABRAMS, USARMY

The Air Force is getting blasted by its own service members for trying to cover up institutional racism

TASK & PURPOSE





# ADVOCATES SECURE FIRST PRESIDENTIAL COMMITMENT TO FUNDAMENTAL JUSTICE REFORM

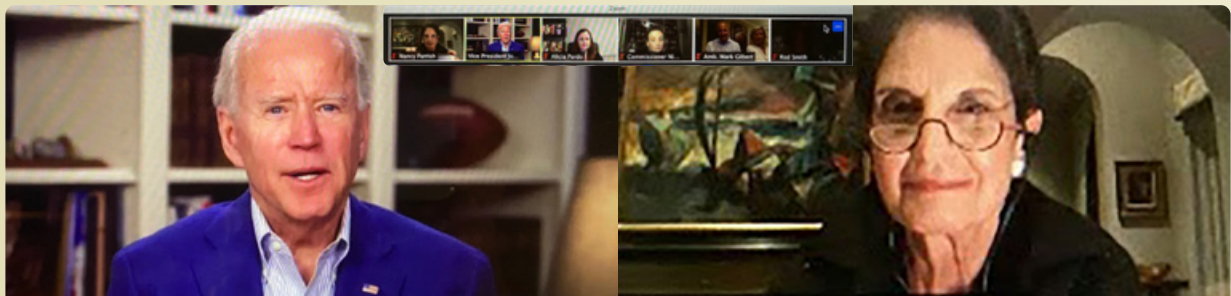
## BIDEN, AS CANDIDATE, AGREES TO SUPPORT POD FOUNDER'S CALL FOR REFORM

Presidential election cycles are opportunities. In 2020, we seized the moment to put military justice reform front and center during the primaries and general election. To push the candidates to take the POD Pledge for real reform, we activated our national network of survivors and supporters.

In April 2020 as part of our national campaign, POD CEO and Founder Nancy Parrish asked Biden if elected, "will you support moving the military justice system into the 21st century by empowering experienced military prosecutors to make prosecution decisions for non-military crimes — serious felonies like rape, murder, and child abuse?"

“The answer is yes, yes, yes...we have to change the culture of abuse in this country, especially in armed services...ignoring sexual assaults in the ranks goes against everything the military itself stands for...it is not only important from a standpoint of justice. It's important from a standpoint of a functioning, coherent, and strong military. It has to be done, I promise you it will be.” JOE BIDEN

April 2020 Zoom



Vice President Joseph Biden

Nancy Parrish

### The Washington Post

**Opinion:** The military has promised many times to combat sexual assault. Biden must ensure that it finally does.

This moment marked the first time a Commander-in-Chief has pledged support for fundamental reform, which will prove vital in addressing a long-standing culture of sexual assault. Biden's remarks were picked up in [Forbes](#), Univision, NPR and more. In December, the Washington Post editorial board, inspired by POD's efforts, published a piece encouraging Biden to follow through on that commitment as one of his primary initiatives upon taking office.

In the fall, POD then launched another national campaign, this time targeting commitment from a filibuster-proof 60 Senators. Senators McConnell (R.KY), Gillibrand (D.NY), Thune (R.SD), Warren (D.MA), Grassley (R.IA), Klobuchar (D.MN), Cruz (R.TX), Sinema (D.AZ) and Paul (R.KY) are among those who already support fundamental reform, alongside a majority of Congress.



# 2020 LEGISLATIVE AND RESEARCH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**POD'S EFFORTS HELPED SECURE GREATER LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT**

## LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

**APPELLATE REFORM LIMITS COURTS' ABILITY TO OVERTURN CONVICTIONS:** It will now be more difficult for military appellate courts to overturn court martial convictions on the basis of "factual sufficiency." Before, appellate courts could re-evaluate evidence and override a trial court decision solely on the basis of their determination of the credibility of witnesses the court never heard testify.

**SAFE TO REPORT POLICY PROTECTS SURVIVORS FROM RETALIATION:** The Pentagon is now required to create a "Safe to Report" policy that will protect service-members who report sexual assault from being punished for minor collateral offenses, such as underage drinking or violating curfew.

**CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT:** In response to the sexual harassment and subsequent murder of SPC Vanessa Guillén at Ft. Hood, calls arose for a separate, confidential mechanism for reporting sexual harassment outside of the chain of command. This new provision of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) requires the Secretary of Defense to lay out a process by which military personnel can make confidential reports as well as provide survivors an outline of their options should they wish to file a complaint.

**VICTIM'S RIGHT TO NOTICE OF APPEALS THAT AFFECT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH PRIVILEGE OR PRIVACY:** This provision in NDAA represents a further expansion of the post-conviction notification rights for sexual assault victims. If an offender files a post-conviction appeal that would potentially unseal the survivor's mental health records or other private information, the victim has the right to be informed.

## RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

**RELEASE OF POD'S RACIAL DISPARITIES IN MILITARY JUSTICE, PART II:** In June 2020, POD released a [follow up](#) to the ground-breaking [2017 Racial Disparity report](#) that exposed glaring racial disparities in the military justice system.

The 2020 report spurred the Air Force IG to conduct an independent investigation into racial disparities in the Air Force's justice system, the findings of which not only corroborated POD's report but exposed a far more widespread plague of racism and white supremacy. After the release of our report, Congress passed legislation requiring the IG to study diversity and extremism in the military.

**EVALUATION OF BARRIERS TO MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN ARMED FORCES:** As a result of POD's report and IG findings, a federally funded study will be carried out to examine barriers to minority participation and promotion in the Armed Forces. The study will also issue recommendations to remedy these impediments.



**FOR A COMPLETE LIST VISIT:  
[PROTECTOURDEFENDERS.COM/POLICY](https://PROTECTOURDEFENDERS.COM/POLICY)**

IN 2020, POD WAS FEATURED IN **8,378 PUBLICATIONS AND NEWS OUTLETS** AND REPRINTED BY NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND TRADE JOURNALS FOR AN ADDITIONAL **30,788 STORIES**.

## NONSTOP MEDIA COVERAGE

MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT HASN'T ALWAYS BEEN FRONT PAGE NEWS. BUT OVER THE LAST 9 YEARS WE'VE WORKED TIRELESSLY TO BRING THIS ISSUE TO FRONT PAGES ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

Google News search results for stories about military sexual assault:

IN 2012: **6,400**

IN 2020: **95,800**

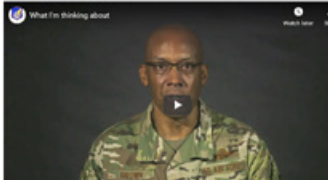
### POD COLLABORATES WITH CBS INVESTIGATIVE TEAM IN EXCLUSIVE SERIES DOCUMENTING PENTAGON'S REFUSAL TO ADDRESS SYSTEMIC ISSUES OF ABUSE

Often POD works behind the scenes to guide more in-depth features. Such was the case with Norah O'Donnell's investigative team for a [four-part series](#) that details a year-and-a-half long investigation. POD collaborated with the CBS unit, and connected them to courageous survivors featured throughout the series.

The series delves into the failure of military leadership to address a "pervasive culture of sexual assault" and "culture of retaliation" through interviews with military whistleblowers and dozens of sexual assault survivors, including the family members of those who took their own lives.



Air Force's top black general offers emotional take on racial unrest over Floyd killing



# POD FEATURED

Whether we're collaborating on major investigative stories or elevating survivors' voices, reporters nationwide know us as the leading organization putting public pressure on the military to face and fix its culture of sexual violence, misogyny and racial discrimination.

## STARS AND STRIPES

GAO: Pentagon hasn't delivered on promises to combat sexual harassment and assault

## CBS THIS MORNING

CBS NEWS | November 18, 2020, 8:13 AM

### "They took her soul": Army did "nothing" for soldier who reported sexual assault, mom says



**REUTERS**  
A REUTERS SPECIAL REPORT  
The Military's Racial Reckoning  
U.S. troops battling racism report high barrier to justice

## The Washington Post

National Security  
In Supreme Court hearing, Justice Department says military appeals court was wrong to dismiss three rape cases



## Top Air Force enlistee posts passionate plea for justice

By Veronica Stracqualursi, CNN  
Updated 9:18 AM ET, Tue June 2, 2020



United States  
One year after release  
**The Economist**  
A scathing report on sexual abuse may alter army culture  
The US Army vows to change its ways in response to damning criticism on its failures at Fort Hood



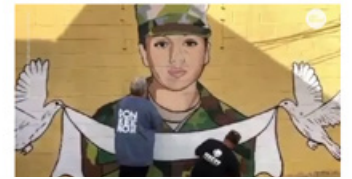
UNIVISION NEWS

## 'Military Sexual Trauma': the victims behind allegations of abuse in the U.S. Armed Forces

The murder of Vanessa Guillen has reignited debate about the military justice system and its failure to protect female soldiers and the victims of sexual abuse. More and more female veterans are speaking out. (Leelo en español)

**Fort Hood soldier's death sparks online outcry: 'The military hasn't had their #MeToo movement yet'**

Wyntia Greenham-Phillips USA TODAY  
Published 12:14 a.m. ET Dec. 9, 2020 | Updated 6:04 a.m. ET Dec. 9, 2020



## USA TODAY

**Panel blasts Fort Hood leaders, Army after disappearance, death of Spc. Vanessa Guillen; 14 fired or suspended**

Tom Vanden Brook USA TODAY  
Published 12:14 a.m. ET Dec. 9, 2020 | Updated 6:04 a.m. ET Dec. 9, 2020



## Supreme Court hears case of military rape and statute of limitation

The Supreme Court is addressing the issue of military sexual assault for the first time in the #MeToo era, and in the midst of congressional discussions over the #AmVanessaGuillen bill.

FOR: DAVID O'NEAL  
13 OCT 2020 - 11:33 PM EST



Vanessa Guillen.

LOCAL  
TELEMUNDO HOUSTON



**PBS NEWS HOUR**



**WATCH: House Armed Services holds hearing on racial disparities in military justice system**



Murder of Vanessa Guillen puts spotlight on abuse in the U.S. military



# UNSTOPPABLE! NATIONAL VIRTUAL CELEBRATION

HONORING THE BRAVERY OF SURVIVOR ADVOCATES & POD'S MOST TENACIOUS ALLIES

POD relies on a community of supporters and survivors all around the country. Normally, we would gather in person, but in 2020 we had to get creative. So, in September, POD launched *UNSTOPPABLE!* a virtual event, to celebrate big wins from the past year and raise funds to meet our budget in pursuit of justice and aiding survivors.



Ted Danson & Mary Steenburgen

“POD is changing the culture and changing lives”

“POD is the conscience of this movement and the watchdog over the Pentagon.”



Representative Jackie Speier



Ron Gault, Board Member

“Through POD’s Racial Disparity Report today’s aggrieved soldiers are given a voice.”

“There was no organization there for me in 1992. *POD saves lives.*”

PAULA TEARS UP WHEN SHE LEARNS POD’S ADVOCACY AWARD WILL BE NAMED IN HER HONOR.



Paula Coughlin



Heath Philips



BriGette McCoy



Darchelle Mitchell



Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

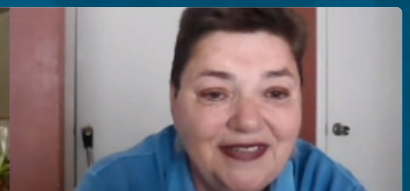
“There is no better advocacy organization on any issue better than POD.”

“I get to continue my service. It’s all I ever wanted.”

NANCY PARRISH PRESENTS THE **COUGHLIN COURAGE AWARD** TO TERRI ODOM: “TERRI, YOU’VE BEEN A VITAL NATIONAL VOICE FOR CHANGE!”



Nancy Parrish



Terri Odom





# FINANCIALS 2020

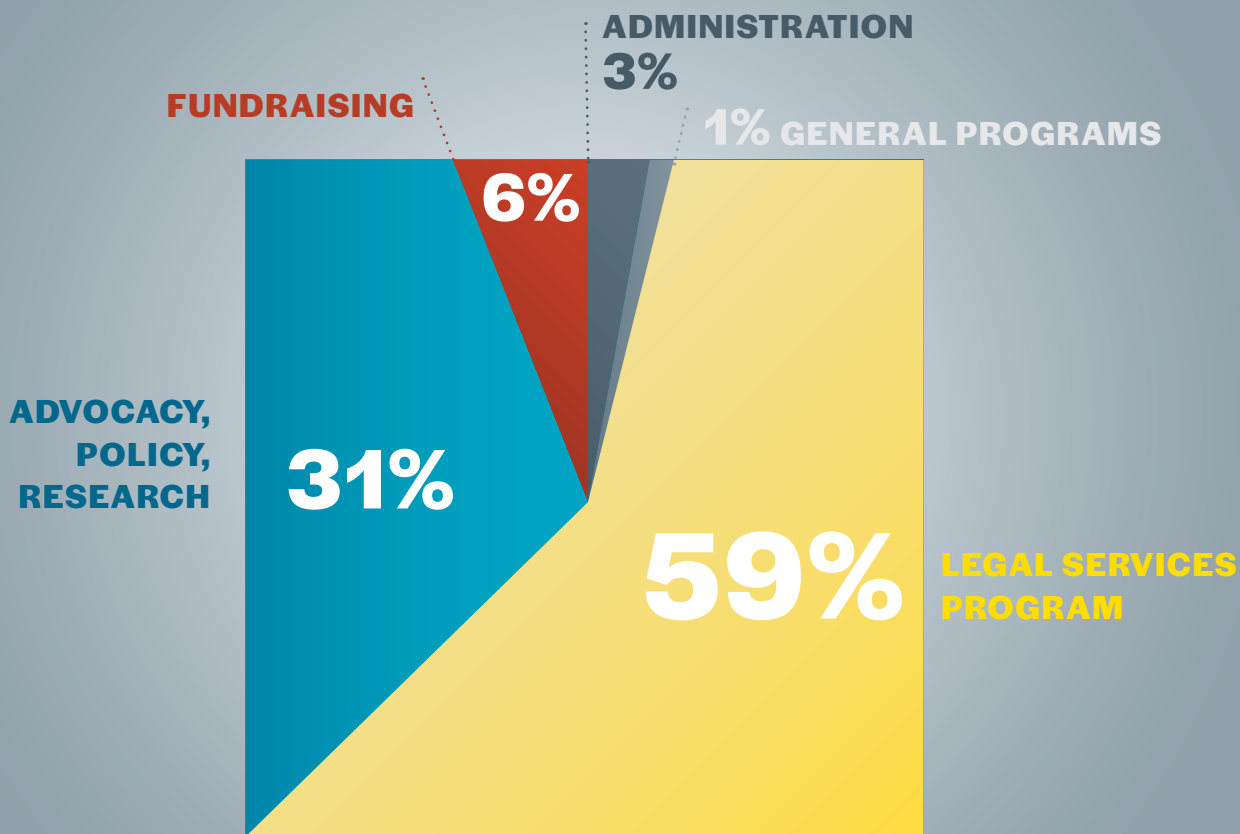
## REVENUE

Grants	121,301.00
Contributions	359,124.00
In-Kind*	1,795,000.00
Miscellaneous	3,858.00

**TOTAL** **\$2,281,079.00**

*\*Contributions and pro bono Legal Services*

**EXPENDITURES: \$528,347.00**



*Note: chart reflects cash expenditures only (in-kind not included)*

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**DAVIS WEINSTOCK** *Co-Chair*

**COL. SCOTT JENSEN** *USMC (ret.), Vice Chair*

**COL. DON CHRISTENSEN** *USAF (ret.), President*

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*US Army Veteran*

**NICCO MELE**

**DARCHELLE D. MITCHELL,** *US Navy Veteran*

**TERRI J. ODOM,**  
*US Army Veteran*

**HEATH PHILLIPS,**  
*US Navy Veteran*

**LILLI J. REY**

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## STAFF

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**President**

**COLONEL DON CHRISTENSEN**  
*Former Chief Prosecutor, USAF (ret.)*

**Director of Programs and Policy**  
**ADELAIDE KAHN**

**Programs and Services Manager**

**GILLIAN CHANDLER**

**Communications Director**  
**BRIAN PURCHIA**

**Communications Associates**

**KATHERINE HELETE**

**AMANDA DAILY**

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## ADVISORY BOARD

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To view IRS filings please visit [www.protectourdefenders.com](http://www.protectourdefenders.com).



Recognized by GuideStar with Platinum Seal, and the Catalogue for Philanthropy, Washington DC.



## OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY EXPANDS

Our network of survivors and supporters continues to be a strong force for justice, acting as advocates through social media on key initiatives.

We have over 23,000 followers on Facebook and over 5,000 on Twitter.

### 2020 COMMUNITY STATISTICS

#### WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

111,863

2019



211,634

2020

#### TOTAL FACEBOOK AND TWITTER IMPRESSIONS

702,000

2019



744,253

2020

#### YOUTUBE VIEWS

158,961

2019



402,834

2020

#### ALL TIME YOUTUBE VIEWS

1,653,759





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Headquarters: 950 N. Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314  
[info@protectourdefenders.com](mailto:info@protectourdefenders.com) | 703-639-0396

**[WWW.PROTECTOURDEFENDERS.COM](http://WWW.PROTECTOURDEFENDERS.COM)**

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Protect Our Defenders is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The IRS has determined that donations to POD are tax-deductible for the donor as charitable contributions. There are no limits or restrictions on these donations. EIN# 45-4044997