

VETERANS FOR CHRIST, INC.  
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July 31, 2020

Fellow Veterans Grace and Peace to you and your family.

The Veterans for Christ, Inc. is looking for a few honorably discharged veterans to help other veterans less fortunate veterans than ourselves to support the mission of the Veterans for Christ, Inc. [www.veteransforchristinc.org](http://www.veteransforchristinc.org)

## Military Stolen Valor Cases on the Rise, Investigators Say



Special Agent David Berry (center) led a team of investigators that tracked down stolen artifacts from the National Archives. Berry is pictured here with Jason Metrick, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations (right) and Chris Naylor, Deputy Chief Operating Officer for the National Archives and Records Administration

Investigators at the National Archives have taken steps to make their research resources more available to federal and local law enforcement to deal with what they suspect is an uptick in "stolen valor" cases to obtain benefits or loans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We believe they're doing it," said Jason Metrick, assistant Inspector General for Investigations at the National Archives. "It's a matter of exposing or finding it.

In an interview Monday, Metrick and Waleska McLellan, special agent in charge at the Office of Inspector General in the National Archives and Records Administration, said their initiative is focused on putting out the word their resources are there to help in stolen valor cases.

"We have a responsibility to protect these records" from misuse, McLellan said.

"We want to let folks know we're here," Metrick added. Some law enforcement agencies "may not know we exist."

McLellan and Metrick said the initiative is not intended to go after that 30-something blowhard at the end of the bar who just has to tell anybody who will listen about how tough he had it on Iwo Jima.

"Money or some type of tangible benefit is the key element in bringing federal charges against an individual falsely claiming valor awards," the fact sheet states.

Congress passed a bill in 2005 to criminalize false claims about military service and awards. But in the landmark 2012 case of *U.S. v Alvarez*, the Supreme Court ruled that the bill was an unconstitutional violation of free speech rights. In essence, the court ruled that lying in itself is not a crime.

Lawmakers went back to the drawing board and passed the Stolen Valor Act of 2013, making it a crime punishable by up to one year in jail to make false claims about military service and awards with the intent of seeking monetary gain, employment or other benefits available to veterans.

Metrick pointed to the recent case of Christopher Crawford, 31, who was sentenced in May on fraud and related charges [to six to 12 years in jail](#) for stealing at least \$17,000 from American Legion Post 568 in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Crawford allegedly used false claims to get the job as the post's executive director and misused the post's debit cards for unauthorized purchases, including trips to casinos.

He had claimed to be an [Army](#) combat veteran wounded in Iraq, but the charges showed that he had been discharged at [Fort Benning](#), Georgia, under "less than honorable conditions" for going absent without leave during basic training.

In a statement when charges were filed in January, Lackawanna County District Attorney Mark Powell said, "The conduct alleged in this case -- masquerading as a combat veteran in order to infiltrate and steal funds from an American Legion post -- is breathtakingly brazen and

unprecedented in my almost 30 years of practicing criminal law in Lackawanna County. It's an affront to every veteran."

The IG's office at NARA has put out a Facebook page with a stolen valor fact sheet - [@NARAOIGOfficeofInvestigations](#) -- on the office's mission to expose false claims. NARA has also established a hotline -- 301-837-3500 -- for the public to report suspected cases of stolen valor.

-- Richard Sisk can be reached at [Richard.Sisk@Military.com](mailto:Richard.Sisk@Military.com).

*Related: [Fake SEAL Pleads Guilty to Stolen Valor, Stealing from VA](#)*

## **Air Force Special Operations Approves First Beard, Turban Waiver for Sikh Airman**



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Dominic Varriale, a geospatial intelligence analyst with the 11th Special Operations Intelligence Squadron, poses for a portrait at Hurlburt Field, Florida, July 17, 2020. (U.S. Air Force photo/Joseph P.

Leveille)

30 Jul 2020

Military.com | By [Oriana Pawlyk](#)

In a first for the command, Air Force Special Operations Command has granted a religious accommodation waiver to a Sikh airman.

Senior Airman Dominic Varriale was granted the waiver last month, according to an [Air Force](#) release. He serves as a geospatial intelligence analyst with the 11th Special Operations Intelligence Squadron.

With the help of his command leadership and the Sikh American Veterans Alliance (SAVA), an advocacy organization, Varriale was able to expedite the approval process, which normally takes up to three years, to only three months, the release states.

"[The SAVA] sent me Air Force Instruction-approved religious articles of faith such as my operational camouflage pattern-colored turban," said Varriale, of Long Branch, New Jersey. "They also made it possible for me to speak to a Gurdwara [a Sikh place of assembly or worship] back in my hometown to get a proper letter of sincerity from a Sikh Temple."

## **Senators Demand 'Immediate Action' After Explosive Report on Navy Sex Trafficking Scandal**

9 Jul 2020

Military.com | By [Gina Harkins](#)

Three lawmakers want the [Navy](#) secretary to explain how his service will combat prostitution and trafficking in the wake of a troubling report about sailors in Bahrain profiting from the sex trade there.

Democratic Sens. Richard Blumenthal, Kirsten Gillibrand and Tammy Baldwin sent a letter to Navy Secretary Kenneth Braithwaite on Tuesday, calling on him to respond to a host of questions about how the service is responding to charges that sailors in the Middle East were attempting to [recruit and harbor women for commercial sex acts](#).

The senators called the reports deeply concerning.

"We request immediate information on the steps you have taken to remedy the deplorable circumstances in Bahrain, combat the broader culture that allowed these crimes to flourish, and ensure that justice is delivered to trafficking survivors and their family members," they wrote.

Blumenthal, of Connecticut, and Gillibrand, of New York, both sit on the Senate Armed Services Committee. Baldwin represents Wisconsin.

Cmdr. Sarah Higgins, a spokeswoman for Braithwaite, declined to respond to questions about the letter.

"We won't comment on congressional correspondence," she said.

The senators called on Braithwaite to not only say how the Navy has improved anti-trafficking training in the wake of the investigations, but also how the service is combating the "girl in every port" culture they say contributes to a climate that allows those crimes.

"Beyond the despicable crime that sailors were charged with, the underlying culture ... that has allowed prostitution in U.S. Navy ports is shameful," the letter states. "It is evident the Navy's zero tolerance policy against trafficking has not been effectively communicated to every echelon of commanders."

Vice Adm. Jim Malloy, the head of Naval Forces Central Command, said in June that the Navy launched an "awareness campaign" in the summer of 2018 that includes training on combating human trafficking and ethics and character development.

"The goal of this campaign is to raise awareness of this issue, enforce Navy core values, and promote bystander intervention," Malloy said. "Working with our host nation, NAVCENT remains vigilant to both monitor for any recurrence and prevent such activity."

The Navy also made several locations off-limits to U.S. troops, the command said. Navy Times reported that sailors involved in the cases in 2017 and 2018 went to bars and nightclubs that were popular spots for prostitutes.

The senators said they're concerned the problems uncovered by the NCIS investigation in Bahrain mean the problem isn't limited to that location.

"Even the perception that Navy personnel could be involved in trafficking is damaging to the local and global perception of Navy forces," they wrote. "... We strongly encourage the Navy to tailor training for locations where human trafficking is more prevalent, as it did in ... 5th Fleet."

The letter did not state a deadline by which Braithwaite should respond.

-- *Gina Harkins can be reached at [gina.harkins@military.com](mailto:gina.harkins@military.com). Follow her on Twitter [@ginaaharkins](https://twitter.com/ginaaharkins).*

**Man Who Fatally Shot Air Force Vet at Protest Was Fort Hood Soldier**



Army Sgt. Daniel Perry, a soldier with 1st Cavalry Division, claims his shooting of Black Lives Matter protester Garrett Foster was self-defense. (Photo via Broden Mickelson)

31 Jul 2020

Military.com | By [Hope Hodge Seck](#)

A lawyer for the man accused of fatally shooting Black Lives Matter protester Garrett Foster in Texas has identified his client as an active-duty sergeant in the [Army](#), and released a statement saying the shooting was an act of self-defense.

Sgt. Daniel Perry shot 28-year-old Foster in downtown Austin July 25 at a late-evening protest, according to Perry's attorney, Clint Broden of the Dallas-based firm Broden Mickelson. In a statement, Broden said Perry had been working for a ride-share service when he turned right onto Congress Avenue and encountered the protesters. Foster, who was seen carrying an "AK-47-style" assault rifle, motioned to Perry to roll down his driver's-side window, then raised his rifle at him, according to Broden's statement.

The [Washington Post](#) first published the statement in full. The law firm did not immediately respond to Military.com's request for additional comment. Law enforcement officials have not publicly identified the shooter in the case.

"It was only then that Sgt. Perry, who carried a handgun in his car for his own protection while driving strangers in the ride share program, fired on the person to protect his own life," the statement continues.

Army Lt. Col. Chris Brautigam, a spokesman for 1st Cavalry Division, out of Fort Hood, Texas, confirmed to Military.com that Perry was an active-duty sergeant assigned to 1st Cav.

"Any questions or information requests related to the ongoing Austin Police investigation should be addressed to the Austin Police public information officer," he said. "The unit continues to cooperate with the Austin Police Department in their ongoing investigation."

Brautigam did not confirm any additional career specifics for Perry, but Broden's statement said he had served honorably for eight years, [deployed](#) once to Afghanistan and "has been the recipient of numerous [A]rmy awards and commendations."

Foster also had a history of service; he was a former Air Force flight mechanic who received an early discharge to provide full-time care to his fiancée, Whitney Mitchell, a quadruple amputee.

There is some disagreement among witnesses regarding what took place in the confrontation. Witnesses told the [Austin American-Statesman](#) that Perry's car had appeared to accelerate into the crowd, and also that Foster had his weapon pointed down.

"In a Facebook Live video of the hours-long march, a car honking is heard before two volleys of gunshots, a total of eight rounds, were unleashed. Several screaming protesters immediately took cover," according to the American-Statesman report.

The statement from Perry's attorney offers a different view.

"Immediately after Sgt. Perry fired on the individual who raised the assault rifle toward him, a member of the crowd began firing on Sgt. Perry's vehicle," it says. "Sgt. Perry drove to safety and immediately called the police. He waited for the police to arrive and fully cooperated with the police following the shooting and he continues to do so."

Austin Police Chief Brian Manley [confirmed to reporters on Monday](#) that the driver of the car had called 911 and turned himself in.

Perry was initially taken into police custody [but later released](#). Another individual identified as shooting at Perry's vehicle was also questioned and released, Manley said at the time, according to a Washington Post report. Both, he noted, had a license to carry.

"Sgt. Perry and his family deeply sympathize with the loss and grief being experienced by Mr. Foster's family. Sgt. Perry is devastated by what happened. Nevertheless, that does not change facts," according to the statement. "The simple fact is that Sgt. Perry reasonably perceived a threat to his life when ... We simply ask that anybody who might want to criticize Sgt. Perry's actions, picture themselves trapped in a car as a masked stranger raises an assault rifle in their direction and reflect upon what they might have done if faced with the split second decision faced by Sgt. Perry that evening."

Austin police [officials have said](#) the investigation into Foster's killing remains active.

-- Hope Hodge Seck can be reached at [hope.seck@military.com](mailto:hope.seck@military.com). Follow her on Twitter at @HopeSeck.

Related: [Air Force Veteran Shot and Killed in Austin Protest](#)



### Verse of the Day

*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

**Romans 15:13 KJV**

## **YOU TOO CAN BE A MEMBER OF THE VETERANS FOR CHRIST, INC.**

Sign up online to become an associate member. The annual associate membership of \$120.00 which can be used as a tax deduction for supporters. Registration fees can be paid online through our PayPal account. You will get a free VFC T-shirt with your associate membership. Your tax deductible membership fee will support the VFC mission.

All Honorably Discharged Veterans are welcome to come and observe the VFC; feel free to ask questions and learn more. If we don't know the answer we know someone who does. Please browse our web site [www.veteransforchristinc.org](http://www.veteransforchristinc.org). There you'll find information on many subjects of interest to veterans. You'll also find a Newsletter for your branch of service and links to Social Security and many other links with an abundance of information.

Our monthly meetings are on hold until the pandemic is cleared and a vaccine is developed. No meeting are being held at the Wesley Chapel Library at 2861 Wesley Chapel Rd., Decatur, Ga. Our meetings are the fourth Thursday of every month and start at 6:30 (PM) for approximately one hour and a half, unless otherwise advertised. We will be respectful of your time.

Thank you for your interest in the VFC. We look forward to communicating and fellowshiping with you soon. We are looking for a corporate sponsor for our VFC Gerald Prince College Scholarship which is donated each September at our Anniversary Luncheon

"Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, being men of courage, be strong." 1Cor 16:13

Sincerely,

*William A. Harris, Jr.*

William A. Harris, Jr., USAF Retired  
President, Veterans for Christ, Inc.

[www.veteransforchristinc.org](http://www.veteransforchristinc.org)