

PRIDE MONTH

EQUALITY WITHOUT EXCEPTION:
PRIDE IN ALL WHO SERVE

June

PRIDE MONTH

The Department of Defense (DoD) recognizes June as Pride Month, celebrating LGBTQI+ Service members who have courageously served and sacrificed in the U.S. military.

The DoD is committed to creating an environment that maximizes individual talents, increases morale, and enhances military effectiveness.



LEGACY OF SERVICE



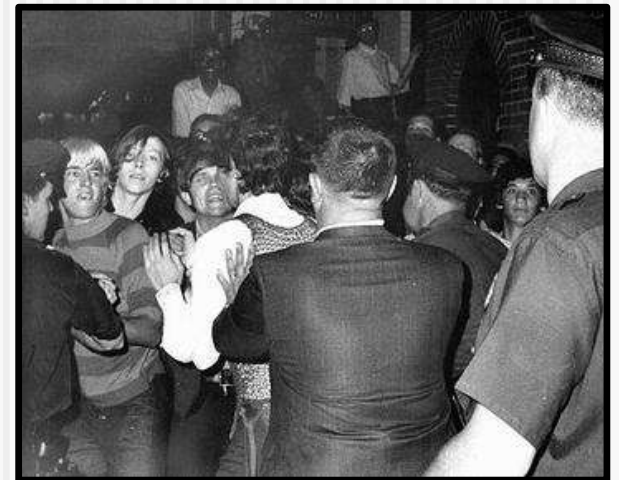
Throughout American history, LGBTQI+ Service members have fought to defend our rights and freedoms — from the founding of our nation, to the Civil War, through two World Wars, to Korea and Vietnam, and from Afghanistan to Iraq.

STONEWALL UPRISING

The Stonewall Riots, also called the Stonewall Uprising, began on June 28, 1969, when New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club located in Greenwich Village in New York City.

The raid ignited a riot among bar patrons and neighborhood residents as police hauled employees and patrons out of the bar. Six days of protests and violent clashes with law enforcement followed.

The Stonewall Riots served as a catalyst for the gay rights movement in the United States and around the world.



THEME/PRESENTATION

This year's theme is: *"Equality Without Exception: Pride in all Who Serve."*

This presentation recognizes Harvey Milk, whose perseverance was instrumental in the struggle for gay rights.



MILK'S EARLY LIFE

Harvey Milk was born on May 22, 1930, in Woodmere, New York.

He came from a prominent family. His grandfather owned the largest department store on Long Island and helped organize the area's first synagogue.

In 1951, Harvey Milk graduated from the New York State College for Teachers at Albany with a mathematics degree.

After graduation, Milk enlisted the U.S. Navy.



MILK AND THE U.S. NAVY

Milk attended Officer Candidate School at Newport, Rhode Island.

He later served as a diving officer aboard the submarine rescue ship, U.S.S. Kittiwake during the Korean War.

Records from March 1, 1954 note that *“Lieutenant (junior grade) Milk performs his assigned duties in an excellent manner. He conducts himself well as an officer at all times.”*

He was stationed at the Naval Air Missile Test Center in Ventura County, California.



U.S.S. Kittiwake. Photo credit: U.S. Navy.

DISCHARGE FROM THE U.S. NAVY

Milk was given an “other than honorable” discharge from the U.S. Navy after serving 3 years and 11 months.

He was forced to resign on February 7, 1955.

CHARACTER OF SEPARATION		REPORT OF SEPARATION FROM THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES		U.S. NAVY	
OTHER THAN HONORABLE		1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE NAME MILK, Harvey Bernard	2. SERVICE NUMBER 553945	3. GRADE - RATE - RATE AND DATE OF APPOINTMENT LTJG 10-1-53	4. COMPONENT AND BRANCH OR CLASS USNR R
5. SPECIALTY NUMBER OR SYMBOL 109		6. DATE OF SEPARATION Feb 7 55		7. TYPE OF SEPARATION RESIGNATION	
8. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION SECNAV Orders Pers-1136-GVB-2 dtd 29 Jan 1955		9. PLACE OF SEPARATION USNAVRECSTA NORVA			
10. DATE OF BIRTH 22 May 30	11. PLACE OF BIRTH (City and State) Weedmere, N.Y.	12. DESCRIPTION CAU Brown	13. GRADE THIS DATE LTJG	14. PAY GRADE 170	15. HEIGHT 5'10"
16. SELECTIVE SERVICE NUMBER YES	17. SELECTIVE SERVICE LOCAL BOARD NUMBER (City, County, State)	18. INDUCTED IN OR TRANSFERRED TO A RESERVE COMPONENT YES	19. COMPONENT AND BRANCH OR CLASS	20. COCK/ZONE/DISTRICT OR AREA COMMAND	21. GRADE - RATE OR MARK AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE RNS
22. MEANS OF ENTRY OTHER THAN BY INDUCTION <input type="checkbox"/> ENLISTED <input type="checkbox"/> REENLISTED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMISSIONED <input type="checkbox"/> CALLED FROM INACTIVE DUTY		23. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE (St., R.F.D., City, County and State) 225 Phidson Ave., Beland, Fla.			
24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 24 July 52		25. STATEMENT OF SERVICE FOR PAY PURPOSES			
26. NET (1) NAVAL SERVICE COMPLETED FOR PAY PURPOSES EXCLUDING THIS PERIOD		A. YEARS	B. MONTHS	C. DAYS	D. UNPAID PERIOD PAID ON EXTENSION OF PAY
		01	00	08	
27. NET SERVICE COMPLETED FOR PAY PURPOSES THIS PERIOD		02	06	14	
28. OTHER SERVICE (last of 16 June 1943 as amended) COMPLETED FOR PAY PURPOSES		00	00	00	
29. TOTAL NET SERVICE COMPLETED FOR PAY PURPOSES		03	06	22	02 00 00
30. OCCASIONS, MEDALS, BADGES, COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND CAMPAIGN HONORS AWARDED OR AUTHORITY United Nations, Korean, National Defense.					
31. MOST SIGNIFICANT DUTY ASSIGNMENT Executive Officer USS CHANTICLEER (AGR 7)		32. HONORS RECEIVED AS A RESULT OF ACTION WITH ENEMY FORCES (Place and date, if known) None			
33. SERVICE COURSES BY COURSE NUMBER, DATE, TRAINING COURSE AGENCY AND GRADE COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY		DATE	NAVAL COURSE	34. SERVICE TRAINING COURSE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED	
Deep Sea Divers School		8-52 to 2-53	Diving	None	

Paperwork showing that Harvey Milk's discharge was "Other than honorable" released by the Bay Area Reporter.

CONTRADICTORY NAVY DISCHARGE RECORDS

Naval records contradict an archival document at the San Francisco Public Library (SFPL).

Materials included a photocopy of Milk's "honorable discharge" from the Navy, dated July 23, 1955, and signed by R.C. Johnson, listed as a naval commanding officer. Authors of recent biographies have used the document to report that Milk was honorably discharged from the Navy.

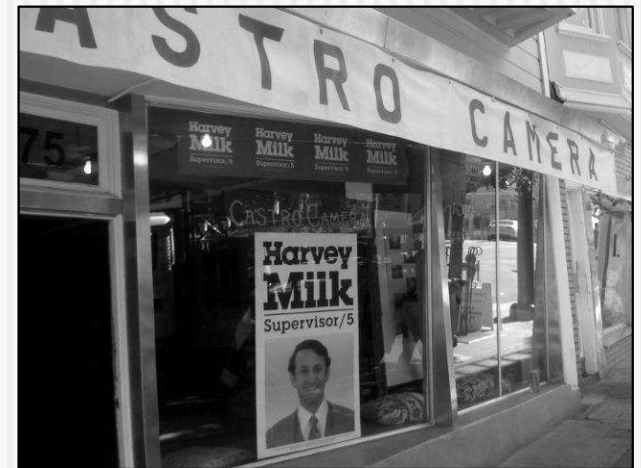
The SFPL now believes the honorable discharge papers were falsified and they are adding notes to correct the record.

THE MAYOR OF CASTRO STREET

In 1972, Milk returned to San Francisco after living for a short time in New York City.

He opened a camera shop on Castro Street, which was quickly becoming the heart of the gay community.

Inspired by an unfair tax on small businesses, he ran for a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1973 and lost.



*The location at 575 Castro Street, a Human Rights Campaign Store as of 2011, was recreated as a set for **Milk**, the biopic of Milk's life.
Photo credit: iStock.*

MILK'S BUSINESS AND POLITICAL PRESENCE

Milk co-founded the Castro Village Association to unite gay business owners.

In 1974, he launched the inaugural Castro Street Fair. He also forged an alliance with the Teamsters Union by supporting a boycott of Coors beer. The union returned the favor by promising to hire more gay drivers.

He lost his Board of Supervisors bids in 1973 and 1975, but won in 1977, becoming one of the first openly gay elected officials.

He sponsored a bill to ban discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on sexual orientation, one of the nation's strongest gay rights measures to date.

MILK'S ASSASSINATION



Harvey Milk (left) meeting with San Francisco Mayor George Moscone for the signing of the city's gay rights bill, April 1977.



On November 27, 1978, Milk's political nemesis, Supervisor Dan White, confronted and killed Mayor George Moscone, then walked into Milk's office, and murdered Milk, his former colleague.

WHITE NIGHT RIOTS

White was quickly apprehended. Tens of thousands of Milk supporters marched to City Hall for a peaceful candlelight vigil.

On May 21, 1979, White was sentenced to less than eight years in prison for voluntary manslaughter.

Outraged protesters stormed City Hall and set police cars on fire. The San Francisco Police Department responded by destroying gay bars and beating patrons.

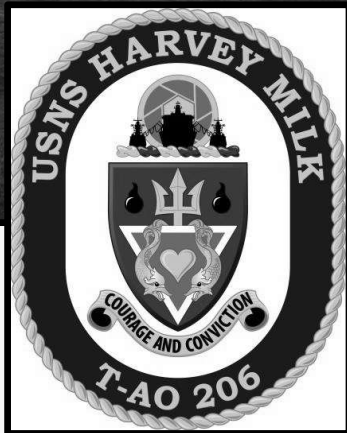
At least 120 people, including 60 policemen, were injured in what was dubbed the “White Night Riots.”

MILK'S LEGACY

In August 2009, President Obama honored Milk posthumously with America's highest civilian medal, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, with the following citation:

“Harvey Bernard Milk dedicated his life to shattering boundaries and challenging assumptions. As one of the first openly gay elected officials in this country, he changed the landscape of opportunity for the nation's gay community. Throughout his life, he fought discrimination with visionary courage and conviction. Before his tragic death in 1978, he wisely noted, “Hope will never be silent,” and called upon Americans to stay true to the guiding principles of equality and justice for all...”

THE USNS HARVEY MILK (T-AO-206)



In November 2021, the USNS Harvey Milk was launched in San Diego, in a service attended by Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro.

“For far too long, sailors like Lt. Milk were forced into the shadows or, worse yet, forced out of our beloved Navy,” Del Toro said. “That injustice is part of our Navy history, but so is the perseverance of all who continue to serve in the face of injustice.”

CONCLUSION

Diversity is more than race, gender, and ethnicity—it means diversity of thought, ability, background, language, culture, and skill.

As we celebrate Pride Month, let us take pride in all who serve.



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