JUNETEENTH Freedom Day

Juneteenth's origin story begins in Galveston, Texas, which was the western-most area of the Union in 1865. When enslaved people there were told of their emancipation on June 19, 1865, they had technically already been freed two-and-a-half years prior, when President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. Slaveholders in Texas had kept the information to themselves, extending the period of violent exploitation of enslaved African Americans. The following year, in 1866, a celebration was had in Texas, the first Juneteenth observance to recognize freedom from slavery in the U.S.

A Historical Timeline

Lincoln issues a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation

September 22, 1862

13th Amendment is passed in Congress

January 31, 1865

Maj.Gen. Gordon Granger arrives in Galveston and proclaims freedom to Texans- more than 250,000 people

June 19, 1865

First Jubilee Day Celebration takes place in Galveston, Texas

June 19, 1866

April 12, 1861

Beginning of the Civil War

January 1, 1863

Emancipation
Proclamation
becomes "official"

April 9, 1865

End of the Civil War, "officially" freeing the enslaved people December 6, 1865

13th Amendment is ratified, making it "legally binding"

June 17, 2021

President Biden signs a bill making Juneteenth a federal holiday

The Color Red

There are many different ways that the color red is integrated into Juneteenth celebrations. Red is significant because it symbolizes power, sacrifice and transformation. It's also symbolic of the blood our ancestors shed. So when you see red punch, watermelon, red velvet cake, and of course BBQ, know it all has significance.

Learning doesn't have to stop here. Scan our QR Code for a more in-depth exploration of the history of Juneteenth.



In addition to celebrations, Juneteenth is also a day of service. Below are ways to get involved

- Volunteer at and/or donate to places that serve the Black community
- Support Black businesses over larger corporations looking to monetize the holiday
- This history has cultivated a culture of racism an oppression that we must all actively dismantle through education and community involvement
- Keep this enthusiasm for blackness and Black culture all year round. Advocate ALL YEAR ROUND