

Happy Juneteenth!



June 19th, otherwise known as “Juneteenth”, is Emancipation Day, an annual celebration of the day in 1865 when news came to slaves in Galveston, Texas (the last state to end slavery), that they were FREE!!! Free from slavery, bondage, abuse, and separation. Free to be equal in the sight of the law, recognized as human, and finally given a chance to earn wages for their labor.

Note: this word of freedom came **two and a half years after** President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, which became official on January 1, 1863. Texas did not have enough Union troops to enforce the new Executive Order. However, with the surrender of General Lee in April of 1865, forces were finally strong enough to overcome the resistance, enforce the law, and free all slaves.

African Americans celebrate this important day to remember our ancestors who were looted from their origin country and forced into free labor for an oppressor who’s race continues an unmatched level of political power and privilege. We celebrate, we advocate, we remember.

Knowing and being reminded of this history helps highlight a very important day in the African American community, and helps shed light on social unrest that exists today. Yes, slavery ended over 150 years ago, but inequality and an imbalance in political power continues. Privilege of having an upper hand due to skin color continues. Fear and disgust toward the confederate flag, which symbolizes a belief that slavery was good continues. Frustration at monuments of confederate generals who continued to enforce slavery even after it was abolished, continues. All reminders of hard history. However, Black history is American history, and the more you know, the better you can do.

So, today is a day of celebration. Celebration of the black family, freedom, deliverance, perseverance, culture, humanity, and change. Gather, laugh, ‘que, dance and sing, for we are FREE! Happy Juneteenth!!!

We Rose

From Africa’s heart, we rose
Already a people, our faces ebon, our bodies lean,
We rose
Skills of art, life, beauty and family
Crushed by forces we knew nothing of, we rose
Survive we must, we did,
We rose
We rose to be you, we rose to be me,
Above everything expected, we rose
To become the knowledge we never knew,
We rose
Dream, we did
Act we must

We Rose -Kristina Kay