

CPCS Honors Juneteenth

“My race needs no special defense, for the past history of them in this country proves them to be equal of any people anywhere. All they need is an equal chance in the battle of life.”

—Robert Smalls, U.S. congressman, 1895

As our nation nears Juneteenth 2022, we should reflect on why it is a holiday and how we can change the legacy of slavery which persists today, in a country that proclaims itself “land of the free and the home of the brave.”

The United States, since its inception, branded itself a free and democratic society governed justly by brave and noble men, despite its glaring and immoral practice of mistreating Black people across the country based on their skin color. A 1900 observation by Black political journalist and teacher Ida B. Wells-Barnett took issue with the propaganda promoted about the United States, unveiling the disconnect between the cruelty and injustice toward Black people the US fostered, while acting as a beacon of fairness and hope for those who came here:

“Brave men do not gather by thousands to torture and murder a single individual, so gagged and bound he cannot make even feeble resistance or defense. Neither do brave men and women stand by and see such things done without compunction of conscience, nor read of them without protest.”

This hypocrisy between what the United States says it is and what it did and allowed to happen is how Juneteenth came to be, and why it is so important to honor this day across America.

So, what ended slavery in the United States? Many assume it was the end of the Civil War or the Emancipation Proclamation issued in 1863. Both are essential factors, but not the correct answer. The official sanctioning against enslaving Black people was not fully enforced in the United States until June 19, 1865, while there was actual thought of making payment to former enslavers or having former slaves leave the country, along government inaction and concerns raised among freed Black people and abolitionists about the delay. In 1864, the National Convention of Colored Men was held in Syracuse, NY, chaired by Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave who became a prominent abolition activist, author and public speaker. In attendance were 144 delegates from 18 out of 35 states. The address to the United States that they crafted is relevant today.

“We declare that all men are born free and equal; that no man or government has a right to annul, repeal, abrogate, contravene, or render inoperative, this fundamental principle, except it be for crime; therefore we demand the immediate and unconditional abolition of slavery.”

The Convention leaders went on to note,

“(t)hat, as citizens of the Republic, we claim the rights of other citizens. We claim that we are, by right, entitled to respect; that due attention should be given to our needs; that proper rewards should be given for our services, and that the immunities and privileges of all other citizens and defenders of the nation’s honor should be conceded to us. We claim the right to be heard in the halls of Congress; and we claim our fair share of the public domain, whether acquired by purchase, treaty, confiscation or military conquest.”

Felix Haywood, a Texan born in North Carolina, was the son of slave parents bought in Mississippi and brought to San Antonio, Texas by Felix’ future master William Gudlow. Felix and his five brothers and sisters were all born and raised in slavery in San Antonio, and he recalled his thoughts on the summer day in 1865 when he heard of his emancipation while working on a cattle ranch near San Antonio:

“We knowed freedom was on us but we didn’t know what was to come with it. We thought we was going to get rich like the White folks. We thought we was going to be richer than the White folks, ’cause we was stronger and knowed how to work, and the Whites didn’t, and they didn’t have us to work for them any more. But it didn’t turn out that way. We soon found out that freedom could make folks proud, but it didn’t make ’em rich.”

The order shared that June day and Mr. Haywood’s reflection foreshadowed how the US government and White Supremacy would cast Black people through today. Although freed, the government advised them to stay with their former masters. While White people who enslaved others did not do the bulk of hard labor and would unlikely pay wages to former slaves, the order told the newly freed Black people they would not be supported in idleness. Black people were never allowed to be idle under slavery, then were denied opportunities in freedom, all as they were degraded or mocked as lazy, ignorant or even criminal. Mr. Haywood’s thoughts reflected hope of being able to earn money, because he knew how to work, but he only found the harsh rule of White Supremacy - your value and potential are tied to your skin color, and not your actual ability.

Juneteenth was born out of denial, benign neglect and White Supremacy, a special day created and embraced by Black people across generations, while until now unknown or ignored by Whites and others. The failure to fully enforce the Emancipation Proclamation reflects the persistent governmental policy of benign neglect that finds no need or desire to enforce laws for the benefit of Black people. This problem continues today, leading to the unrest after George Floyd’s murder and those who have died before or since, now including the targeting of Black communities for mass shootings. Black people in this country see false media propaganda, whether for profit or not, depicting a more-integrated society, while they have never realized full rights and suffer hatred, despite being people forced to build our White House, the railroads,

iconic elements in American economy and progress, and so much more. They see the rights they have been denied accorded to other citizens and non-citizens, who do not share the suffering of lost lives taken by hatred, the need for unrelenting protest, or the turmoil that sustains the status quo for too many.

The current movement for racial justice and equity can succeed if we all recognize the damage that slavery, hatred and the denial of opportunity have wreaked in the Black community. Juneteenth focuses us on the crimes of this country against Black individuals ultimately responsible for building this nation's wealth, without recognition or due compensation. Juneteenth makes plain the unforgivable and most grievous sin of enslavement, while affording each of us a time for reflection and commitment to change, and compelling us to see Black people as equal, contributing, and accomplished, for their sacrifice in support of our imperfect union.

CPCS, please give Thought, Praise, and Honor to the Black community this Juneteenth!

Juneteenth Links

With Juneteenth coming up, there are several events taking place in the Greater Boston area to celebrate this monumental occasion. Here is a list of a few of these events:

- **Boston**
 - [Embrace Ideas Juneteenth Block Party @ Nubian Square- Blair Lot](#)
 - This 5-day festival from June 13-17 will include dancing, music, community, and delicious food provided by the area's best BIPOC-owned food trucks.
 - [Juneteenth at Bow Market](#)
 - Join Bow Market in commemorating and celebrating Juneteenth through a showcase of Black Art and Culture.
 - [Radically Reclaiming Black Royalty Juneteenth Boston Weekend Celebration](#)
 - This series of events begins with the Juneteenth Rally/March to Freedom through Roxbury on Friday June 17th, followed by a beach day on Saturday and the Royalty Gala on Sunday.
 - [Juneteenth at Franklin Park](#)
 - Juneteenth at Franklin Park is a Roxbury Homecoming and a celebration of when the last slaves were freed. Enjoy picnics, barbecues, music, and dancing at the Shattuck Picnic Grove and all over the park on June 18th.
 - [Juneteenth Joy Pre-Event: Wellness as a Form of Resistance: Yoga for All](#)
 - Brittany Sampson leads an hour-long session of breath work, movement, and relaxation on June 18th at the Francis D. Martini Memorial Shell Park and Moynihan Recreation Area.
 - [Juneteenth Joy: Focus on Freedom. A Hyde Park Celebration](#)

- This is Hyde Park's second annual community wide Juneteenth Celebration planned for Saturday June 18, 2022, at the Martini Hatch Shell on Truman Parkway in Hyde Park. There will be performances, exhibits and vendors.
- [Juneteenth at the MFA](#)
 - In honor of Juneteenth, admission to the MFA is free with a valid Massachusetts zip code on Monday, June 20th.
 - Events and Activities
 - Drop-In Art Making: Portraits of Leadership
 - Spotlight Talks in “Touching Roots: Black Ancestral Legacies in the Americas”
 - The Most Estranged Fruits (Performances)
 - City Talks: SIDE Presents inSIDE
- [Reflecting Attucks Exhibit](#)
 - Revolutionary Spaces presents a new temporary exhibit exploring the legacy of Crispus Attucks, a man of African and Native descent who was the first to fall in the Boston Massacre, an act of protest widely viewed as a turning point on the road to American Revolution
- [Roxbury Film Festival](#)
 - The Roxbury International Film Festival is the largest New England film festival dedicated to celebrating films by, for, and about people of color. The 2022 Festival will be hybrid with a mix of in-person and online screenings and events.
- [Juneteenth Celebration of Culture Pop Up Shop](#)
 - Music, games, vendors, performances, prizes & more in Quincy!
- **Newton**
 - [Juneteenth Celebration in Newton](#)
 - Newton's second annual Juneteenth Celebration promises to be a fantastic family day out, with food by Gourmet Kreyol and others, vendors including Black-owned businesses, music by DJ Firestarta, kids' activities, art exhibits, and performers.
- **Springfield**
 - [Celebrate Juneteenth Jubilee 2022 in Springfield, Mass](#)
 - Experience an outburst & celebration of culture including a tribute to Harriet Tubman, a marching band, a hair show tribute to Madame CJ Walker, a fashion show, a step show, Father’s Day special, African dance, music, food, and more from June 17-19.
 - [Juneteenth Jubilee Underground Railroad Tour](#)

- An educational tour of Springfield's past, discussing some of Springfield's courageous residents, both famous and unsung, who sought or helped those who sought freedom through the Underground Railroad.
- **Oak Bluffs**
 - [Jubilee Fest Juneteenth 2022 Oak Bluffs](#)
 - The Juneteenth Jubilee on June 18th in Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard will feature iconic trailblazers including Pulitzer Winning #1 NYT Bestselling journalist Nikole Hannah Jones, acclaimed international actress Lynn Whitfield and Multi-Grammy Nominated jazz pianist and composer Christian Sands.
- **New Bedford**
 - [Juneteenth Black in Business Vendor Market, New Bedford](#)
 - Buy Black NB brings you an event with a hand-selected diverse group of local vendors offering you an opportunity to find your next favorite product on June 19th.
- **Framingham**
 - [Framingham 2022 Juneteenth Fest](#)
 - On June 18th, there will be food, music, games, a raffle, and face painting at Framingham Farm Pond to celebrate this historic holiday.
- **Lowell**
 - [Juneteenth & Father's Day Celebration](#)
 - This event is outdoors (rain or shine), FREE of charge, and open to all. First come first served for food, until gone. There will be games, music, shared canoeing & kayaking (weather dependent), crafts, gift bags (while supplies last), and more.
 - [Juneteenth Flag Raising](#)
 - There will be local speakers, information, and a flag raising commemorating Juneteenth. This event is FREE of charge and will be held rain or shine.
- **Fall River**
 - [Juneteenth Festival 2022](#)
 - Celebrate Juneteenth at the Kennedy Park Pavilion June 18th from 12-6pm. There will be food, vendors, prizes, live performances, and more!
- **Dedham**
 - [Juneteenth Celebration Kick Off - Networking Mixer](#)
 - Join the U.S. Haitian Chamber of Commerce, Inc. / Haitian American Business Expo, Inc. for a unique networking mixer to celebrate Juneteenth on Friday, June 17th.
- **Brockton**
 - [Brockton Juneteenth Festival](#)

- Join the African American Association as they host our First Annual Juneteenth Celebration! Come enjoy music, support local vendors, and more on June 18th.
- **Norwood**
 - [Norwood Juneteenth](#)
 - Celebrating Norwood's first annual Juneteenth event! Educate, celebrate, and enjoy the featured art, performances, and food on June 18th.
- **Beverly**
 - [Juneteenth JAMboree with Soul Food Buffet and Live Music](#)
 - A Juneteenth eve celebration (June 18th) at the legendary Beverly, MA restaurant and music room -- Chianti. Ticket price includes a soul food buffet and live music featuring Amadee Castenell, Henley Douglas, Jr & Friends.
- **Dracut**
 - [Juneteenth Black Tie Gala](#)
 - The evening will include cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, dancing, raffles, and keynote speaker Dr. Julius Wayne Dudley.
- **Taunton**
 - [Taunton's 3rd Annual Juneteenth Celebration](#)
 - Please join hosts Josephine Dwuye, Gloria Palmer and Alison Rosa with special participation by the Taunton High School African American Club and in a community celebration of heritage and culture.
- **Newburyport**
 - [Juneteenth Tiptoe Through the Tombstones: Black Newburyporters](#)
 - Wander through Newburyport's historic Highland Cemetery with a special guide - noted author and historian Ghlee Woodworth, a 12th generation Newburyport native. On this special Juneteenth event, Woodworth will focus on the memorials of Newburyport's once-thriving Black community, and tell the story of "Guinea village", the slang term for the Black neighborhood nearby. Learn more about efforts to commemorate and celebrate these lives and experiences.
- **Virtual**
 - [Black Gems Unearthed](#)
 - This is an educational video series about Black History of Massachusetts, taking viewers to sites where history took place throughout the state.
 - [Roxbury Film Festival](#)
 - The Roxbury International Film Festival is the largest New England film festival dedicated to celebrating films by, for, and about people of color.

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