

## **Juneteenth Independence Day**

**June 19, 2022**

Juneteenth is the oldest celebration of the emancipation of enslaved African Americans, and is so named after the events that took place on the June 19, 1865 in Galveston, Texas.

On June 19, 1865, Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved were free. Reactions to this news ranged from shock to jubilation. News of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States for more than 2 years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War. Even after word had spread some slave masters chose to withhold the information, holding them as slaves through one more harvest season.

Juneteenth is an example of America's commitment to liberty and June 19th is celebrated and recognizes the historical significance of the end of chattel slavery in the United States. Many African Americans continue the tradition of celebrating Juneteenth as inspiration and encouragement for future generations, and for more than 155 years, Juneteenth Day celebrations have been held to honor African American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures.

The fight for freedom does not exist in a vacuum, and the struggle against oppression and for sovereignty is one we collectively share and are inextricably linked to. Juneteenth celebrates the unity and mutuality of American liberty realized, which makes Juneteenth a celebration of freedom and justice for all Americans, not only those enslaved and their descendants.

The faith and strength of character demonstrated by former enslaved African Americans remains an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion or race.



The late Lula Briggs Galloway of Saginaw, Michigan - author, social activist, curator of African American history, was the originator of the interim Juneteenth Creative Culture Center and Museum in Saginaw, Michigan. Galloway successfully worked to bring national recognition to Juneteenth Independence Day and encouraged Congress to pass a resolution in 1997 in honor of the day. In continuation of those efforts, Ms. Opal Lee spent years lobbying Congress to make Juneteenth a federal holiday. Former educator and counselor, lifelong social impact leader, and considered the “Grandmother of Juneteenth,” Ms. Lee stood alongside President Joseph R. Biden as he signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act on June 17, 2021, which officially recognized Juneteenth Day of Observance making June 19 a federal holiday.

This year the City of Boulder joins the federal and state government in commemorating Juneteenth as an official holiday. This year, the city will observe Juneteenth on Monday, June 20. In celebration, the city's Human Relations Commission is co-sponsoring local events throughout the weekend in partnership with the NAACP Boulder County and Executive Committee, African American Cultural Events, BoCo for their second annual Boulder County Juneteenth Celebration. This five-day affair will include flag raising ceremonies across Boulder County, workshops, and celebration events. For more information please visit the Executive Committee for African American Cultural Events webpage at [ecaace.org](http://ecaace.org).

We, the City Council of the City of Boulder, Colorado declare June 19, 2022 as

### **Juneteenth**

And recognize the historical significance of Juneteenth; support the continued celebration of Juneteenth to provide an opportunity for the people of the City of Boulder to learn more about the past to better understand the experiences that have shaped the nation and encourage the people of the City of Boulder to observe Juneteenth Day with appropriate ceremonies, activities and programs; and



The history and the plight of African Americans and all that was endured during chattel slavery, reconstruction, Jim Crow, and the Civil Rights Movement is an example of pure resilience.

This declaration underscores the freedom with dignity of every human being. As a governmental body, we oppose and reject any form of oppression and pledge to support our community members and local entities working to achieve equality and protect human rights.



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Aaron Brockett, Mayor

