

Governors State University

OPUS Open Portal to University Scholarship

Newsroom

Marketing and Communications

6-17-2022

Happy Juneteenth!

Office of Marketing and Communications
Governors State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://opus.govst.edu/newsroom>

Recommended Citation

Office of Marketing and Communications, "Happy Juneteenth!" (2022). *Newsroom*. 43.
<https://opus.govst.edu/newsroom/43>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at OPUS Open Portal to University Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Newsroom by an authorized administrator of OPUS Open Portal to University Scholarship. For more information, please contact opus@govst.edu.

University Park, IL,
June
17,
2022

Happy Juneteenth!



Dear GSU Community,

Governors State University Office of Institutional Advancement is proud to join the nation in celebrating Juneteenth this Sunday, honoring the day freedom reached the last enslaved African Americans.

June 19, 1865 – Juneteenth – marks the day Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, and informed the last enslaved African Americans that the Civil War had ended, and that President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation—issued more than two years earlier— had declared them free after decades of bondage.

While most Americans celebrate their independence each year on July 4, Juneteenth – a hybrid of the words June and 19th—was the first time **all** Americans could truly celebrate the taste of freedom.

In the decades following Juneteenth, also called Emancipation Day or Jubilee, many freed African Americans chose to celebrate with the traditional markings of family gatherings such as food, games, and music. Many descendants of slaves also incorporated oral histories to pass down a record of their ancestors’ struggles for freedom.

Today, we continue to celebrate with many of the same traditional staples, as well as an added emphasis on the progress of African American achievements and education. In 2021, the state and nation reached new milestones, declaring Juneteenth a national and state holiday, providing an opportunity for all Americans – not just African

Americans – to learn about the significance of this day in the context of a dark period in our nation’s history.

In signing the state’s bill to create National Freedom Day on June 16, 2021, Governor Pritzker noted the irony of the 1863 law that was intended to free all people in the context of today’s racially charged environment, when many Americans are questioning the democratic principles on which our nation was founded.

“Today, even a full 156 years after the 13th Amendment formally and constitutionally declared slavery illegal throughout the entire United States, we all know what it means to see justice as yet undelivered,” Pritzker said.

He’s right. This Juneteenth, as the nation reflects on the true meaning of democracy, the Office of Institutional Advancement encourages you to do so, as well. In this unique moment in history, take action that advances the ideals of our nation as well as our university. Lead from where you are and commit to continue exploring ways to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in workplaces, schools, and coffee shops.

As we move forward as a nation, we must remember our past and move closer to one another to strengthen the bonds of distinction in this land of the free, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Enjoy the Juneteenth holiday!

William A. Davis

Governors State University

Vice President, Institutional Advancement,

Marketing and Communications

Chief Executive Officer, GSU Foundation