



## The Importance of JUNETEENTH

Roosevelt Children's Academy Board of Trustees celebrates Juneteenth annually with our families.

**NOTE: August 2019 marks 400 YEARS SINCE THE FIRST AFRICAN SLAVES ARRIVED IN VIRGINIA**

**IT** seems like so long ago. The American Civil War ended in 1865. President Abraham Lincoln's **Emancipation Proclamation freed enslaved people in the Southern states back in 1863**, but it took the end of the war to turn the words into law. This was **the day that slavery ended in Galveston, Texas, in 1865** (two years later). General Order Number 3 from General Gordon Granger said, in part:

*"The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free."*

**AND** from the **freed slaves** of Galveston **came the Juneteenth celebration**. It is a joyous occasion, punctuated by great feasts and great gatherings of people. Celebrations take place all over the United States. **THE** end of slavery in America is still celebrated today, in the form of the Juneteenth celebration. The name comes from the melding of June and Nineteenth, or June 19th.

**BUT why is this celebration so important?** Slavery was outlawed by the Thirteenth Amendment, which was passed in 1865. African-Americans, under the law at least, are granted equal protection by the Fourteenth Amendment and an equal right to vote by the Fifteenth Amendment.

**WHY is Juneteenth so important?** It gives African-Americans (and indeed everyone living in America) a sense of togetherness. You don't have to be African-American to join in celebrating the anniversary of the end of slavery. Slavery is a terrible thing. Many people of all skin colors fought tirelessly to end it, and their efforts should not go unnoticed. "Freedom is **not** free and we must fight for it every day because we are fighting for our children and the next generation".

Many have shared stories of how their families were impacted, how they have made great sacrifices, endured much, how their daily lives were marked not only with inequality but also by determination to maintain the freedom. Most have achieved this through education and have made a difference in their family and community.

**LOOK INTO YOUR FAMILY HISTORY, SHARE YOUR STORY with the next generation.**

**"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots"**  
Marcus Garvey.

**For information contact: Director/PR Engagement, Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School (516) 867-6202.  
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