

# COMMEMORATING THE IMPORTANCE OF JUNETEENTH



As a native Texan, [Juneteenth](#) holds profound significance in my life. It represents more than just a historical event and a celebration of freedom; it embodies the resilience and the triumphs of African Americans who came before me.

Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day or Freedom Day, commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States. On January 1, 1863, the [Emancipation Proclamation](#) was issued by President Abraham Lincoln declaring that “all persons held as slaves ... are, and henceforward shall be free.” However, for more than two years, it was defied and unenforced and African Americans remained enslaved in Texas. On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation, [declaring](#) that all slaves were meant to be freed.

For me, Juneteenth is a time to reflect on both the injustices and the triumphs of those who came before me. I give honor to [Ms. Opal Lee](#), who worked for decades to make Juneteenth a federally-recognized holiday and to ensure that this part of our history is not forgotten.

In 2021, June 19 was designated a [federal holiday](#) in the U.S. to commemorate Juneteenth. I am so proud that my employer, BMC, recognizes the importance of Juneteenth. The company demonstrates its commitment to acknowledging and celebrating this historic event by giving all U.S. employees the day off work so we can reflect and continue to educate ourselves about Juneteenth.

Moreover, ongoing support from BMC for the Juneteenth Legacy Project in Galveston, Texas, exemplifies its commitment to preserving and honoring the history and heritage of Juneteenth. This

year, BMC will donate \$5,000 to the Juneteenth Legacy Project and 40 computers to the [Nia Cultural Center](#) in Galveston, Texas. The company will also join forces with parent company KKR to sponsor a virtual discussion on the documentary *The Powerbroker: Whitney Young's Fight for Civil Rights*, which is streaming now on [Tubi](#).

I hope that Juneteenth continues to create opportunities for celebration, education, and conversation. Together, we can all do the work to create a culture and a society that values our history and recognizes the impact that historical events like Juneteenth have on the lives of African Americans today and to continue to pursue an equitable society for generations to come.