

Justice is the Pointe

Celebrate Freedom by Completing It

Known to most as Juneteenth, June 19 marks the end of slavery in the United States. In Texas, this freedom did not fully arrive until 2½ years *after* President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation became official. It took that long for Union troops to overcome Confederate resistance, to the “absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves.” Neither slave owners in Texas nor leaders in neighboring states accepted emancipation when it was ordered.

As African Americans prepare to recognize Juneteenth, it’s hard to avoid seeing lethal parallels in modern-day life. As we have seen over the last year, too often a blind eye is still turned to racial disparities. The death of George Floyd at the hands of police led to a sustained public protest not seen since the civil rights movement of the 1960’s. And Officer Derek Chauvin was convicted in Floyd’s death.

And yet, after African Americans took part in the 2020 presidential election in sizeable numbers – helping to put into office the first African American and female vice president in our nation’s history — Republican legislators have introduced 361 bills in Congress and 47 states to restrict voting rights, clearly aimed at suppressing turnout among persons of color. Inequality in death rates from Covid 19 revealed built in bias in health care.

This is the paradox under which we live: We can have an African American vice president and still have food deserts; we can have a rightful homicide conviction and still have a flawed criminal justice system.

We can use this time, Juneteenth, as a time for reflection and celebration to challenge institutions and individuals to do better when it comes to collaboration, empowerment, and equity. Here’s how you can help:

Public officials can work for policies and provide funding to redress unfairness tied to health, food, transportation and other essential needs.

Companies can implement diversity and inclusion policies that improve equity in hiring, pay and promotions and support a better work environment for all walks of life.

Individuals can challenge themselves to act in ways that lead to greater understanding, healing and communication. For example, take part in a 21-day equity challenge, as recently distributed by WE GP.

Recommitting to social and racial justice honors those who had to spend an extra 2½ years in servitude and keeps Juneteenth relevant as a celebration for the modern day.

Join us! We welcome your thoughts, questions, requests for signs, solidarity and financial donations at:
we-gp.org/Justice-is-the-Pointe



Paid for by:
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