



“The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor. The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.” — [General Orders, Number 3](#); Headquarters District of Texas, Galveston, June 19, 1865

Despite what the media says, we are thriving. There is still hatred, there is still fear, yet there is still progress. Imagine if we were working together? We are encouraging you to tell your kids, mother, brother, auntie, neighbor, cousin, teacher, mailman, doctor, carpenter... Tell any and everyone that it is time to celebrate and claim our Independence Day. That’s right OUR Independence Day. We are in this together! The week of Juneteenth will have many opportunities to explore our rich history, and bright future. We must also discuss some of the tough issues facing our communities: mental health, education, politics, and economics. We must connect, collaborate, and empower ourselves with knowledge. If you can run to the bar for St. Patrick’s Day and make pranks on April 1st.. you can take the time to engage in a time of rebirth. We must showcase the pride we have in our families, communities, businesses, and creativity.

Family/Legacy

Connecting generations, let’s explore our rich history. Why is Juneteenth important? Let’s ask our elders for their earliest memories of Juneteenth, [make](#) lasting prideful memories for our children, and fellowship. This is a Family Affair. We must all rely on one another to connect ideas, resources, and relationships. We must stop judging one another, pointing fingers, and looking the other way. The time is now to create a BRIDGE between generations, communities, and socioeconomic strata, that will stand the test of time. Freedom is for everyone. If one of us isn’t free, then none of us are free. “Without vision the people will perish”

Health

While we have come a long way, we have a long way to go. Our bodies are our temple. We must confront mental health and chronic illness that often goes untreated in our communities. What about our children? The current COVID19 Pandemic and Civil Unrest is impacting us all. We will have medical professionals to discuss a range of topics on mental health, chronic illness, and blended families. To continue the journey, we must be whole: mind, body, and soul.

Education

While the attainment of higher education is on the rise, and so is student loan debt. Why do some look down upon career successful career paths that do not include a 4-year University? How do we edify our children outside of the classroom? Why do public schools continue to struggle with “Black History” Curriculum? What are we doing about the school to prison pipeline? How do we leverage African American Parent Networks?

Business

How can we create and pivot businesses to make opportunity out of our obstacles? Are our businesses making it through second, third, and fourth generations? Why and why not? Why do small black businesses often find barriers to receiving technical assistance from government funded resources?

Faith

The past few months of the looming COVID19 Pandemic, Civil Unrest, and Economic Uncertainty, have given me the opportunity to pause, reflect, and listen. We know that everyone that joins this movement will not be a believer in the power or word of GOD. We respect everyone's human right to choose. We understand the perspectives of folks that say us "Christian Folk" are following the same doctrines used to enslave and oppress. Still, prayer is so powerful.

"We cannot stand still, we cannot burn down our communities, we can seek GODs guidance. His plan is perfect. I'm calling you to action. Make no mistake I will defend humanity by ANY MEANS necessary, BUT not without the armor of GOD. " -Tylen Henry

Service

Can you see the opportunity in the obstacle? Some say we have come a long way; some say we haven't come far enough. We can all agree that we must keep going. The time is now to take inventory of ourselves. How can we contribute to the change we want to see? How are we empowering our children to thrive, how are we supporting folks willing to take on leadership roles? There is no right or wrong answer. We do believe that some of us have viable solutions, yet we lack the resources and relationships necessary to implement.

Politics & Freedom

Lack of Social Justice and Equity is at the center of it all. We must educate ourselves and our neighbors. Relationships are key. This is why historically police practice was to walk the neighborhoods, to know and love their communities. Children should be excited to see police, yet many of our children are scared... Scared to death. We must learn who represents our values and interest and hold them accountable to do so. Let's get to know our public servants. Let's celebrate those who protect and serve with honor. Let's engage in meaningful conversations. Let's work together to find common ground, higher ground, let's truly make AMERICA GREAT! We can do this by acknowledging past transgressions, only then can we truly begin to heal, TOGETHER.

The goal is to leverage all the passion, love, and tension to shift the atmosphere. Burning and looting will not bring our lost men, women, and children back. We must leverage subject matter experts and creativity to find a way to continue to survive and thrive. Economic stability is a key indicator of freedom. True no matter how much money one has they can still suffer injustice. However, collectively we already have the power to make change. The time is now to come together. I encourage you to share with a friend, contribute, focus on our desired outcome. If only for a week. We are only messengers. We know don't have enough time, resources, creativity, or relationships, but GOD will stand in the GAP so long as we are obedient to HIM. We thank you for taking the time to read this far and hope you will share how you found yourself here and what you plan to do to celebrate, collaborate, and excel.

Peace & Love,

Team June9teen

"The marathon continues"