



Los Altos Racial Equity <losaltosracialequity@gmail.com>

[test] Los Altos for Racial Equity Newsletter - Juneteenth

1 message

LARE via ActionNetwork.org <info+community-members-info@sg.actionnetwork.org>

Wed, Aug 13, 2025 at 11:54 PM

Reply-To: losaltosracialequity@gmail.com

To: losaltosracialequity@gmail.com

Hi Friend!

**Juneteenth 2024**

Los Altos for Racial Equity's (LARE) mission is to advocate for all people, especially Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) who live, work, and play in Los Altos and surrounding communities, to be treated equitably in all aspects of their lives. We are a group of Los Altos residents who share a commitment to the work of social justice.

LARE has several Working Groups focused on the following areas: Policing & School Resource Officers (SROs), Racial Identity and Profiling Act (RIPA) data analysis, Education, Membership, Local Government. If one or more of these Working Groups resonate with you and you would like to participate in making change happen in our community, reach out to us and let us know how you can help! We are looking forward to hearing from you!



What is Juneteenth?

On June 19th, 1865, Union Army Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, TX, and announced, two and a half years late, the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln which, in essence, freed those who were enslaved. This Proclamation only applied to people enslaved in the states that were rebelling against the Union during the Civil War and were specifically listed in the Proclamation (South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, and North Carolina).

But what did this 'freedom' really mean? The formerly enslaved were policed with every step. Their bodies and their free will remained very intertwined with the former white enslavers and how much freedom they wanted to give, or not. The formerly enslaved were encouraged to remain with their 'employers' to work for pay, "freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages."

This order also had a curious stipulation: that freedmen would "not be supported in idleness."

A few days after the Major General's announcement The Galveston Daily News printed a notice from the Major General to inform the public that "no persons formerly slaves will be permitted to travel on the public thoroughfares without passes or permits from their employers," and "idleness is sure to be productive of vice, and humanity dictates that

employment be furnished these people, while the interest of the commonwealth imperatively demands it, *in order that the present crop may be secured.*"

The [13th Amendment](#) was then ratified on December 6th, 1865, and applied to all enslaved people across the entire United States. It outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude, "except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted," a loophole Southern states and businesses exploited when working with the jails to lease out incarcerated Black people as unpaid labor, which was not much different from being enslaved. Mass incarceration, [Black Codes](#) and [Jim Crow Laws](#) were put into place following the 13th Amendment which allowed white people to continue to restrict the lives of 'freed' Black people.

The practice of using those who are incarcerated as cheap labor continues today, And most of those who are incarcerated today are disproportionately Black men. A report by the Associated Press entitled, '[Prisoners in the US are part of a hidden workforce linked to hundreds of popular food brands](#),' published on January 29, 2024, highlights the markets that still use the cheap labor of those who are incarcerated (you may want to check your cupboards and pantries to see if any of the products you bought are mentioned in the article and support this practice).

Corey Walker, the director of the program in African American studies at Wake Forest University, emphasizes the idea of freedom, particularly for Black people in this country, as continuously being negotiated and contested, so "Juneteenth marks a moment in the ever-evolving and expanding project of American democracy. It is a project that is never complete. It is never fulfilled, even at the moment of Juneteenth. And it's one that is ever evolving to this day."

Despite the work of so many providing accurate historical context beginning with those who were kidnapped from across the ocean and seas and brought to the colonies as an enslaved work force, Black men, women, and children today continue to face systemic racism, inequity, and violence.

But throughout the hundreds of years since 1619, it is clear that Black joy cannot be stifled! [Dr. Opal Lee](#), aged 96 and known as the Grandmother of Juneteenth because of her dedication to ensuring that Juneteenth is recognized as a federal holiday, believed that by achieving this goal, the day would return to its original intent of educating, celebrating, informing, and bringing all people together. "I don't mean just Black people," she muses. "Nobody is free until we're all free."

5th Annual Juneteenth Festival

The community near and far is invited to [Justice Vanguard's](#) 5th Annual Juneteenth Festival taking place this Saturday, June 22nd, 12pm - 5pm, at [97 Hillview Ave, 94022](#). There will be all of the great things you have grown to love about the Juneteenth Festival: food, dancing, music, vendors, art, culture, community and more! Sign up [here](#) for your FREE tickets. See you there!



Juneteenth Fundraiser Today, Wednesday, June 19th!

TODAY! Wednesday, June 19, from 4pm - 6pm, Justice Vanguard and State of Mind are holding a Juneteenth Fundraiser! Place your order and use the code 'Juneteenth' for online orders or mention 'Justice Vanguard' in person and 15% of the proceeds of today's sales will go to JV! You may order from the [Los Altos location](#) or the [Slice House in Palo Alto](#).

The official Juneteenth poem, 'We Rose', was written by artist and writer Kristina Kay Robinson at the age of 9. In the years since, she has gone on to write, produce and perform numerous productions recognized nationally and abroad.



Already a people, our faces ebon, our bodies lean,

Skills of art, life, beauty and family
Crushed by forces we knew nothing of, we rose

We rose to be you, we rose to be me,
Above everything expected, we rose

To become the knowledge we never knew,
We rose

Dream, we did
Act we must

Kristina Kay,
We Rose © 1996, Juneteenth.com

[Click here](#) for a Juneteenth reading list curated by author, Cole Arthur Riley, whose most recently published book is titled **Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human.**

Read more about LARE on our [website](#) and follow us on social media (Instagram, Facebook), [@losaltosforracialequity](#). Questions? [Email](#) us.



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