



Pearland MLKCC Celebrates Juneteenth

Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States. On June 19, 1865, led by Major General Gordon Granger, Union soldiers arrived to Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and slaves were now free. Note, this was two and half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation—which became official on January 1, 1863.

Pioneers of Juneteenth

Black Union Soldiers

By the end of the Civil War, roughly 179,000 Black men (10% of the Union Army) served as soldiers in the U.S. Army and another 19,000 served in the Navy. There were nearly 80 Black commissioned officers.

Major General Gordon Granger (1822- 1876)

In 1863, he led Union soldiers into Galveston, Texas to announce the end of slavery.

Frederick Douglass (1818?*-1895)

Assisted with the recruitment of Black men for the Union Army. He encouraged Black men to become soldiers to ensure eventual full citizenship.

Harriet Tubman (1820?*-1913)

Black women could not formally join the Army; however, they served as nurses, spies, and scouts, the most famous being Harriet Tubman, who scouted for the South Carolina Volunteers

**Historical inaccuracies with date of birth due to limited or no record of birth.*

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Significant Events

December 31, 1862 "FREEDOM EVE"

The first Watch Night services took place. Enslaved and free Blacks gathered in churches and private homes across the country awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect.

January 1, 1863

At midnight, all enslaved Blacks in the Confederate States were declared legally free. Everyone was not immediately free. [Even though the Emancipation Proclamation was made effective in 1863, it could not be implemented in places still under Confederate control.](#)

On **June 19, 1865**, about 2,000 Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas to deliver the news to more than 250,000 enslaved Blacks that they were free by executive decree.

References:

Juneteenth.com | National Museum of African American History & Culture, Washington, DC | National Archives, Washington, DC