

## Juneteenth - The second Independence Day

By Robert D. Martin, USAWC PAO 12 June 2022



### RELATED LINKS

[National Museum of African American History](#)

*Juneteenth is a "second" Independence Day celebrating the end of slavery*

The Juneteenth National Independence Day officially became the eleventh federal holiday in 2021 and is the first new federal holiday since the recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday in 1983. Our nation's Civil War ended on May 9, 1865. Not until more than one month later, on June 19, 1865, when Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced that formerly enslaved African Americans were now free.

For many Americans, Juneteenth is a “second” Independence Day celebrating the end of slavery and the formal extension of the liberties enumerated in the Declaration of Independence to Black Americans. Army actions ensured the enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation, advancing fundamental issues of justice, morality, and humanity.

For the Army, Juneteenth honors Black Soldiers who fought and sacrificed to ensure the Constitution fulfilled its promise to all Americans. Courageous, selfless, and dedicated service by Black soldiers in units like the XXV Corps and 10th Colored Infantry helped cement the gains provided by the Civil War and opened the door to widespread military service for Black men for the first time in American history.

We honor and remember Juneteenth and the lessons of history. We encourage you to reflect upon the promises of freedom and continue working together toward equity and opportunity. On Juneteenth, we honor the generations of Americans whose unpaid labor and service built our nation. And, we reaffirm our commitment to develop and inspire current and future generations to serve in our honorable Profession, which honors and protects dignity and respect for all people.