

Subject: Juneteenth Holiday  
Date: Jun 18, 2020, 11:13 AM

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students,

Recent events such as the killing of George Floyd and other African Americans have once again raised issues of structural anti-Black racism to our national consciousness. As a community, we must all be dedicated to eradicating racism and other forms of inequality at the University of Michigan as well as in our larger society. This Friday marks the commemoration of the *Juneteenth* holiday. Celebrated annually on June 19, *Juneteenth* commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. The date represents the arrival of Union soldiers in Galveston, Texas in 1865 with news of the end of the Civil War and freedom for all who had been in bondage. In 2019, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer declared that June 19 would be officially recognized as *Juneteenth Celebration Day* in the State of Michigan.

As an act of solidarity, dedication, and mourning, I invite everyone to commemorate this holiday in some fashion. There will be special tributes and learning opportunities scheduled to take place at the University and across the state such as the Office of Health Equity and Inclusion at Michigan Medicine's [Juneteenth Tribute](#), Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department's [Juneteenth event](#), the [Penny Stamps Speaker Series + DPTV Present Osborne Macharia with Blinky Bill](#), and the [Anti-Racism Primer: What can I do?](#) developed by Organizational Studies, to name a few.

If you supervise faculty, staff, or students, I ask that you provide them with the opportunity to participate in *Juneteenth* events on Friday. Please encourage them to have a voice, contribute to the community, and learn more about addressing anti-Black structural racism. These shared experiences will contribute to the important and ongoing discourse on campus on how we as a community can embrace the diversity of our experiences and work to make our climate more equitable and inclusive.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Sellers  
Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer