

**Yolo County
Board of Supervisors**

Resolution No. 22-68

Recognizing Juneteenth in Yolo County

WHEREAS, on January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, establishing that all enslaved people in Confederate States “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free;” and

WHEREAS, more than two-and-a-half years later, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers landed at Galveston, Texas, where slavery had continued, with news that the war had ended and that all enslaved people were now free. Juneteenth marks that day; and

WHEREAS, emancipation did not happen immediately for everyone, but in December 1865, slavery in the United States was formally abolished with the adoption of the 13th Amendment; and

WHEREAS, in 1866, former slaves in Texas organized the first of what became the annual celebration of “Jubilee Day” on June 19, the holiday that is now known as Juneteenth; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth, sometimes referred to as Emancipation Day or Freedom Day, is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States, honoring African American freedom, emphasizing education and achievement, and marking a time for reflection, rejoicing, assessment, self-improvement, and planning for the future; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Texas became the first state to recognize Juneteenth as a state holiday. Now, 49 of our 50 states, and the District of Columbia, recognize the momentous occasion of Black liberation in some way; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, President Biden signed a bill declaring June 19th as a federal holiday, officially known as “Juneteenth National Independence Day;” and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth was first celebrated in Yolo County in 2011 by Yolo County Library and Sandy Holman’s Culture C.O.O.P. at the Mary L. Stephens Branch Library in Davis. The holiday has been celebrated annually (except for 2020) in Yolo County since 2017 when the Friends of the Davis Public Library and other sponsors began offering expanded support; and

WHEREAS, thanks to Chancellor Gary May and UC Davis, Sandy Holman, and the Juneteenth Committee, this year’s celebration, will take place on Sunday, June 5, from 11am to 5pm, at the UC Davis Conference Center and the Manetti Shrem Museum of Art; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth’s importance is eloquently summarized in this quote from the civil rights activist and former Texas legislator, Al Edwards, who died in 2020 at the age of 83: "Every year we must remind successive generations that this event triggered a series of events that one by one defines the challenges and responsibilities of successive generations. That's why we need this holiday."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Yolo County Board of Supervisors recognizes the power and significance of observing Juneteenth as a day to commit to learning from our shared history, to celebrate African American culture, to make space for healing for those who experience bias and inequity in their daily lives, and to build toward a freer, stronger community that values the dignity and infinite potential of all humans.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 24th day of May, 2022 by the following vote:

AYES: Villegas, Saylor, Sandy, Provenza, Barajas.

Angel Barajas, Chair
Yolo County Board of Supervisors