Celebrating Juneteenth

Associate Provost and Dean of Students Kenneth Elmore has been celebrating Juneteenth for as long as he can remember. "It’s always been a part of my life," he said. "I grew up with the celebration, and it’s always been something that’s meaningful to me."

The day commemorates June 19, 1865, when Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, to inform enslaved Black people that slavery had ended. The date is significant because it marks the end of the Civil War and the eventual freedom of those held in captivity.

Today, Juneteenth is celebrated by many communities across the United States. It’s a day to remember and reflect on the history of slavery and to honor the resilience of those who survived it.

Dean Elmore grew up in Brooklyn, New York, with fond memories of his family — and all the Black families in his neighborhood — gathering in the park on Francis Lewis Boulevard. "I remember the kids would be playing baseball, and the adults would be sitting around, listening to music and sharing stories. It was a time of celebration and connection," he said.

However, Elmore said he was not familiar with the holiday to learn more about Juneteenth and engage with its history. "I didn’t realize how much it meant," he said. "I realized it or not, we were always ritualized around Juneteenth. It was in our family’s DNA.

Since that date, Elmore has been celebrating Juneteenth as an official holiday at Boston University (BU). "Our values," President Robert A. Brown announced in a letter sent to the University community, "should be reflected in our calendar to make BU ‘the diverse, equitable, and inclusive community that best embodies our values.’ "

Last year, BU added Juneteenth as an official holiday on the University’s calendar to make BU “the diverse, equitable, and inclusive community that best embodies our values,” President Robert A. Brown announced in a letter sent to the University community.

This year, BU is inviting everyone to BU Beach for a cookout! Bring your friends and enjoy the sun-filled outdoor seating, enjoy some music, and grab a bite to eat.

BU Faculty & Staff of Color Community Network

CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH

The Rashaan Langley Project.

EVENTS ON CAMPUS

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

Thursday, June 16, 2022
4PM-6PM
George Sherman Union Courtyard
775 Commonwealth Ave

JUNETEENTH BBQ

Friday, June 16, 2022
1PM-4PM
BU Beach
775 Commonwealth Ave

LISTEN

The History and Meaning of Juneteenth

"Ebony and ivy" by Craig Steven Wilder

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Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery