

Commemorating Juneteenth

June 19th, also known as Juneteenth, marks the day in 1865 when enslaved African Americans in Texas learned of their emancipation—more than two years following the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Recent events remind us that the Black community is still waiting to achieve the promise of equality Juneteenth represents. Systemic injustices continue to harm far too many, and the Black Lives Matter movement is a necessary and powerful reminder of the urgent need for change.



I am encouraged by the passion of demonstrations continuing throughout our country, in big cities and rural towns like the one I grew up in. While civil rights laws have changed since 1968 when I protested in the streets, the reality is that legal protections are still not universally applied. We've made progress, but discrimination and trauma continue. Steadily widening economic and health inequalities have been exposed again in the current pandemic.

Together, we must support each other to speak up and speak out. Organizations including our own need to look inward and see how we can do better. I personally commit to continuing this dialogue and hope you will too.

— *John Woodward, Chief Executive Officer, Front Porch*