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Office of the President

Community Message from President and Cabinet Regarding Juneteenth

June 18, 2020 [President's Messages](#)

The University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias join the state and the nation in observing Juneteenth Independence Day. In 2011, [Maine became the 38th state](#) to recognize the day that freedom was proclaimed to all slaves in the South — 2 1/2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. As noted in the [109th Congressional Resolution](#), the day is a source of inspiration and encouragement for future generations, honoring African American freedom while encouraging respect for all cultures.

As confirmed in our [May 30 community message](#), as well as in our [June 4 statement](#), our community works continually to ensure that inclusivity and respect — not hate and intolerance — define us. At UMaine, we work together not just to be free of bias, but to learn how to be antiracist, attacking structural anti-Black racism and inequities wherever they exist. Ours is a diverse and welcoming university community, brought together by our differences and our most highly held values — among them civility, inclusion, compassion, understanding, personal responsibility and respect.

As noted so effectively by so many areas of our community since the death of George Floyd, including UMaine's [Office of Multicultural Student Life](#), we stand with the students, faculty, staff and community members who have dedicated themselves to cultivating a more just and equitable society for all.

In observance of Juneteenth, we celebrate the end of slavery in the United States and commit ourselves to undertaking transformative steps to ensure literacy and action regarding diversity, equality and inclusion in our university communities. Our commitment to social justice will be the focus of the President's Commission on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and will be renewed in our Diversity Action Plan for UMaine. Action to bring about meaningful change, including dismantling systemic oppression, cultural bias and racism, is needed and we will redouble our efforts to this work. UMaine and UMM will be safe, caring and compassionate communities for all, and Juneteenth is a perfect opportunity for all of us to reflect on needed changes and commit to personal responsibility in the battle for justice.

Joan Ferrini-Mundy, President

Faye Gilbert, Interim Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Robert Dana, Vice President for Student Life and Inclusive Excellence, and Dean of Students

Chris Lindstrom, Vice President of Human Resources

Daniel Qualls, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Head of Campus

Ken Ralph, Director of Athletics

Claire Strickland, Chief Business Officer

Kody Varahramyan, Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School

Christopher Richards, Interim Vice President for Enrollment Management

Jake Ward, Vice President for Innovation and Economic Development

Kimberly Whitehead, Chief of Staff

Jeffery Mills, President and CEO of the University of Maine Foundation