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Joan Ferrini-Mundy
University of Maine

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Maine Memo — The importance of Juneteenth

1 message

UMaine President's Office <umaine.president@maine.edu>

Fri, Jun 18, 2021 at 3:41 PM

Reply-To: UMaine President's Office <umaine.president@maine.edu>

To: UM-EMPLOYEES@lists.maine.edu



MAINE MEMO



From Joan Ferrini-Mundy

President of the University of Maine and the University of Maine at Machias

Juneteenth 2021 is a powerful moment in time for our nation and our state. From this year forward, we will collectively and deliberately observe this poignant independence day that was part of the effort to end slavery in the United States. It will be an opportunity for all of us to reflect on freedom — and the importance of what it means to live in a world free of structural racism, hatred, intolerance, inequity and discrimination.

The recognition of June 19 as a federal and state holiday will help ensure that we never forget where we have been as a society, and remember that we must continue to strive for what we could and should be to — and for — each other.

The year that Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas with news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved African Americans were free was the same year that the University of Maine was founded. While very different historical events in 1865, both share the promise of building a better, inclusive and just future.

As we've done in years past, we raised the Black Lives Matter flag on the Mall today in commemoration of Juneteenth, and as an ongoing symbol of our commitment at the University of Maine and the University of Maine at Machias to antiracism, diversity, equity and inclusion. I hope Juneteenth provides an opportunity for all of our community members to reaffirm the need for ongoing efforts to bring about meaningful change that will make a difference today and tomorrow. Each of us has a role in this collective effort to cultivate a more just, equitable society for all.

Joan Ferrini-Mundy
President