



President's Office

Letters to the UMB Community

Juneteenth Holoday

March 29, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

I'm pleased to share that Juneteenth — June 19 — is now a holiday for the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB). Originally commemorating the announcement of the abolition of slavery in Texas on June 19, 1865, more than two years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, Juneteenth is now the preeminent national celebration of freedom from slavery in the United States. It serves as a day to reflect on the fight for freedom and justice — then and now — and to joyfully celebrate Black history and culture, and Black resistance and resilience.

Going forward, Juneteenth will be observed as a regular holiday across the University System of Maryland. Since Juneteenth falls on a Saturday this year, we will observe the holiday by closing the University on Friday, June 18, and granting administrative leave to employees. Employees who are required to work June 18 (for operational reasons) will be granted a substitute day off within 90 days of the regular holiday worked.

I invite you to learn more about Juneteenth and have included some resources below.

[*The Historical Legacy of Juneteenth*](#)(National Museum of African American History and Culture)

[*Juneteenth: Our Other Independence Day*](#)(Smithsonian Magazine)

[*What Is Juneteenth?*](#)(PBS: This website also hosts [*The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross*](#), a video series on African American history, culture, and perspectives.)

As I wrote in [*last week's letter*](#), using earned time off is critically important to your mental, emotional, and physical health, and it is important for the health and safety of our entire community. Please add June 18, 2021, to your plans for using your earned time off.

Sincerely,

Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS

President

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