



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, June 19, 2020

Organization: National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS)

Contact: *Bradley J Sommer* | President & CEO | president@nagps.org

Fang Zhang | Vice President & COO | vice-president@nagps.org

National Association of Graduate-Professional Students Statement on Juneteenth: We Still Have Work To Do

On June 19, 1865 in Galveston, Texas, Union army general Gordon Granger announced the news of the Emancipation Proclamation which meant all people held as slaves in Texas were free. Juneteenth commemorates and celebrates that day when, finally, all slaves in the U.S. received the news of their emancipation, and the realization of their freedom.

Let us not forget, however, that even though the Emancipation Proclamation took effect on January 1, 1863, that the newly “freed” people continued to live under the bondage of slavery for another two and a half years. That lag between the rights that our nation expresses and is supposed to confer on all of its people: freedom, justice, and liberty for all; and the ability for our black brothers and sisters to realize them has continued throughout our history.

An era of Jim Crow laws, lynching, and other forms of state sanctioned violence and discrimination immediately followed the freeing of the enslaved. It was not until one hundred years after the enslaved were freed, that black people were legally given the right to vote. This struggle continues today as we confront glaring disparities in the way black people are treated in our society which have had a spotlight shone on them in recent weeks with the murders of Ahmad Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd and the protests that have ensued.

The National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) celebrates Juneteenth in solidarity with our black brothers and sisters, and encourages our elected officials, institutional leaders, and society as a whole, to use this moment as an opportunity to reflect, and to commit to working towards the full realization of those high ideals of our country: freedom, justice, and liberty for all, that have not yet been fully realized by all.

###