



EMPOWERED

IMPROVING LGBTQ+ MENTAL HEALTH

Juneteenth and Pride Month

Juneteenth, celebrated annually on June 19, commemorates the day that the last enslaved people in the United States were told of their freedom.

On **June 19, 1865**, 2,000 Union troops, many of whom were Black, finally arrived in Galveston, Texas and told around 250,000 enslaved people that they were free. This was two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued on January 1, 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln. The proclamation declared that all people held as slaves within the United States were to be free. However, the country was in the middle of the Civil War at the time and the majority of southern states were under the influence of the Confederacy. The Confederates, who were fighting to preserve slavery, didn't want to free the slaves in the South. They waited until they were forced to abolish slavery by the Union in 1865. Although states outlawed slavery on different dates, June 19 or Juneteenth became the day to celebrate emancipation throughout the country.

Even after slavery was abolished, there was and still continues to this day rampant racial inequality and oppression. Celebrating emancipation became an act of continued resistance against inequality. Although many in the African American community have celebrated the momentous event since its

inception, the majority of Americans are unaware of the holiday and its origins. In 2021, Juneteenth was recognized as a federal holiday to signify the demise of slavery, the righteous pursuit of freedom for all, and a pledge to remember the past and dream for the future.

In another momentous event on June 28, 1969 in New York City's Greenwich Village, the police raided a gay bar called the Stonewall Inn. One of the leaders of the responding protest, Marsha P. Johnson was at the front line fighting for people to be able to be open about their sexual orientation and gender identity without the fear of being arrested or harmed by the police. This moment in history, led by transgender women of color like Marsha, started the gay rights movement. During his term, President Barack Obama declared June to be LGBTQ+ Pride month.

June is a significant month for **diversity, equality, and inclusiveness** in the United States with two major events that have shaped the lives of many. This month, we celebrate the victories of those who have come before us and have paved the way to a better future that we continue to strive for.

5 Modern Black Queer Leaders Making a Difference

These five remarkable individuals represent the strength, resilience, and leadership of modern Black queer voices. Their contributions have made a significant impact on LGBTQ+ rights, representation, and social progress, inspiring many to continue the fight for equality and justice

Laverne Cox

An actress and LGBTQ+ advocate, Laverne Cox broke barriers with her role in "Orange Is the New Black" and champions transgender rights, particularly for Black transgender individuals.



lavernecox.com



5 Modern Black Queer Leaders Making a Difference - continued

Janet Mock

As a writer, director, and transgender activist, Janet Mock elevated the visibility and narratives of Black trans experiences with her memoir "Redefining Realness" and work on the series "Pose."



Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

Raquel Willis

A writer, speaker, and activist, Raquel Willis fights for the rights of Black transgender individuals, using her platform to shed light on intersectional issues.



Texas Isaleh

Phill Wilson

Founder of the the Black AIDS Institute, Phill Wilson was instrumental in addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic within Black communities, advocating for comprehensive care and combating stigma.



washingtoninformer.com

Tiq Milan

An influential writer, speaker, and advocate, Tiq Milan dedicates his work to promoting transgender rights and inclusivity, amplifying the voices of Black transgender men.



lifelearning.com

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM ENVISION:YOU 2023 GARDEN PARTY



Envision:You Staff & Board Members



Keynote speaker, Dara Hoffman-Fox



CEO Steven Haden



Drag Queens, Miss Zarah Misdemeanor & America Jackson

NEW STAFF HIGHLIGHT

We'd like to welcome **Alex Asare** (they/ them) to the Envision:You team as a program coordinator supporting the **LGBTQ+ Behavioral Health Provider Training Program**. Alex has a certificate in addiction and behavior coaching, as well as an undergraduate degree in international relations and a masters degree in social work. Alex believes the work at

Envision:You is important as someone within the queer community who has seen firsthand the mental health struggles that are perpetuated by social policies and attitudes. Aside from working towards Envision:You's mission, Alex enjoys sitting with a good beverage and looking out at the mountains.

