

Belonging- Celebrating Diversity



photo credit Bethel Place.com

Welcome all to the June 2022 Newsletter. This month we celebrate the diversity of our workplace, each other, and our communities. Enjoy this month's readings.



This issue:

- **Pride Month**
- **Caribbean Heritage Month**
- **Immigrant Heritage Month**

Other Events to Celebrate in June



- June 2** Indian Citizenship Act of 1924
- June 8** Race Unity Day
- June 8** Pride Month Coffee Conversation
- June 12** Loving Day
- June 15** World Elder Abuse Day
- June 16** Helen Keller Birthday
- June 19** Father's Day
- June 19** Juneteenth
- June 21** Summer Solitise

OUR STORIES

Submitted by
Kai Berzinskas, M.S. DSII
(He/Him/His)

Community Companion Home Program/WR

Marsha P. Johnson (1945-1992) was a black pioneer who helped advocate for transgender rights. She was a notorious figure in the LGBT community up until her death in 1992. Her activism started in 1969 during the Stonewall era. The Stonewall Inn is currently a historic landmark in New York City. Her bravery and activism during this time led to protests demanding rights for gay people. "Similar to the Black Lives Matter marches and protests around the world activism inspired others to join in the support for LGBT equality".

Further pioneers, such as Harvey Milk, assassinated 44 years ago, was a prominent advocate for the LGBTQ community. He was the first openly gay man elected to public office in California. He fought for anti-discrimination legislation and LGBT businesses. Foundations and organizations continue to support his legacy.

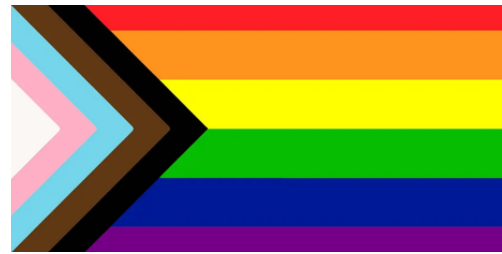
These two activists are important figures in my journey in coming out as an openly gay trans man. Like many others who are seeking equality and healthcare reform for the LGBTQ community, these pioneers helped pave the way to fight against discrimination in the workplace, in the community, in healthcare, spousal benefits, and more. When I was a young child. I knew that I was different from my peers. Growing up I suffered tremendously from dyslexia, but I also knew that I struggled with my own gender identity, which is now known as Gender Dysphoria. Having grown up in the 1970s there wasn't much in terms of "transgender" information. The only known openly transgender person was tennis star Denise Richards at that time.

Fast forward to 2012, was when I first started my gender transition my journey started slowly, acclimating to changing my name, followed by hormone replacement, then coming out at work. It wasn't until 2013 that I officially "came out", which I felt was going to be most difficult, but it wasn't. I had an amazingly supportive family, friends, co-workers, and supervisors. In fact, when I transferred to the West Region, I felt that I truly could be myself. Last year, a friend who is a published author, completed an Anthology of transgender folks who had transitioned called "The Real Lives Of Transgender and Nonbinary Humans". After my story was included in this book. I decided to make my story known to help others in the process of transitioning, to help pave the way for others and to give hope and understanding that they are not alone. For those reading this article, I hope this helps a family member, spouse or loved one, or any individual so that they too, are not alone. Life is too short to live without allowing yourself to be who you are.

References:

Mental Floss, 11 LGBTQ Pioneers You Should know. Debcazck, M. (June 12, 2008), retrieved on April 12, 2022

How many pride flags can you name?



A GUIDE TO PRIDE FLAGS

UMBRELLA FLAGS

LGBT Pride
umbrella pride flag



Philadelphia Pride
POC-inclusive variation



Progress Pride
trans-inclusive variation



Intersex-inclusive Pride
intersex-inclusive variation



SEXUAL ORIENTATION FLAGS

Bisexual Pride
sexual attraction to two or multiple genders



Polysexual Pride
sexual attraction to multiple (but not nec. all) genders



Pansexual Pride
sexual attraction regardless of gender



Polyamory Pride
consensual relationships with multiple partners



Lesbian Pride
women attracted to women



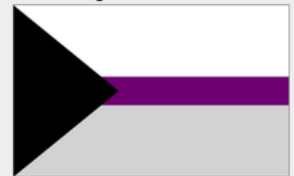
Gay Men Pride
men attracted to men



Asexual Pride
no sexual attraction



Demisexual Pride
sexual attraction only with a strong emotional bond



GENDER AND BIOLOGICAL IDENTITY FLAGS

Transgender Pride
having different gender from the one assigned at birth



Nonbinary Pride
having gender that's not exclusively male or female



Genderqueer Pride
having non-normative gender



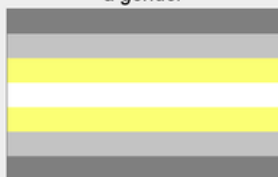
Genderfluid Pride
having no fixed gender



Agender Pride
having no gender



Demigender Pride
having a partial connection to a gender



Bigender Pride
having two genders



Intersex Pride
sex characteristics that aren't exclusively male or female



CARIBBEAN HERITAGE

Caribbean Heritage Month commemorated by the U.S. House of Representatives in 2005 was to recognize the significance of Caribbean people and their descendants in the history and culture of the United States. The resolution passed the Senate in Feb. 2006 and President George H.W. Bush issued the proclamation in June 2006. Since the declaration, the White House has issued an annual proclamation recognizing June as Caribbean-American Heritage Month. As of June 2019, the Caribbean-American population of the United States was almost 13.4 million (Note that these populations are not mutually exclusive, as people may be of more than one ancestry or ethnic group). Some of the largest Caribbean ancestry groups in the U.S. include:

- 5,828,706 Puerto Ricans
- 2,381,565 Cubans
- 2,094,222 Dominicans
- 1,171,915 Jamaicans
- 1,084,455 Haitians
- 218,783 Trinidadians and Tobagonians
- 68,234 Bajans
- 65,946 Belizeans
- 56,796 Bahamians
- 21,341 U.S. Virgin Islanders



photo credit: <https://www.caribbeanamericanmonth.org/>

Caribbean people are inhabitants of the Caribbean region or individuals of Caribbean descent living outside the Caribbean. The Caribbean region was initially populated by Amerindians from several different Kalinago and Taino groups. These groups were decimated by a combination of enslavement and disease brought by European colonizers. Descendants of the Taino and Kalinago tribes exist today in the Caribbean but are usually of partial Amerindian ancestry.

Modern Caribbean people further identify by their own specific ethnic ancestry, constituting various subgroups, of which are: Afro-Caribbean (largely descendants of bonded African slaves) White Caribbean (largely descendants of European colonizers and some indentured workers) and Indo-Caribbean (largely descendants of jahaji indentured workers). Other ethnic groups came after the demise of slavery including Asian Indians and the Chinese. These ethnic groups came as indentured laborers who largely escaped cultural suppression. As such these groups have been able to retain their cultural practices in relatively pure forms in the Caribbean. The Caribbean as a region has numerous religions which can be directly attributed to its multiplicity of cultures. Some of these religions are Hinduism, Christianity, Revivalism, Rastafarianism, and various strains adapted from a cumulation.

Resources:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/pr/about/civilrights>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caribbean_people
The Caribbean as a Melting Pot

IMMIGRATION HERITAGE!

Every day, all over the world, people make one of the most difficult decisions in their lives: to leave their homes in search of a safer, better life. Some people leave home to get a job or an education. Others are forced to flee persecution or human rights violations because of who they are for example their ethnicity, religion, sexuality, or political opinions. Millions flee from armed conflicts or other crises or violence. The terms “migrant” and “refugee” are often used interchangeably but a refugee is a person who has fled their own country because they are at risk of serious human rights violations and persecution. There is no internationally accepted legal definition of a migrant as a result migrants are not afforded the same legal rights as a refugee seeking asylum. Immigrants as a result sometimes have very different struggles for support and maybe the target of hate groups, lacking empathy for their plight.

DID YOU KNOW?

70.8 MILLION – people have been forcibly displaced due to conflict, persecution or natural disasters.

1.4M – refugees need resettlement right now

84% of refugees are hosted by developing countries

Immigrant Heritage Month formally began in 2014 and seeks to give immigrants and refugees in our country the opportunity to explore and celebrate their background and create awareness of how diversity and immigration are both essential elements of our social fabric. Currently, about 13% of the U.S. population is of recent immigrant origin. About 44% of companies on the Forbes 500 list were created by immigrants or by children of immigrants. Companies such as Google (founded by Sergei Bryn from Russia), Yahoo (founded by Jerry Yang from Taiwan), and eBay (founded by Iranian/French entrepreneur Pierre Omidyar). Immigrants and their children have shaped all aspects of U.S. society. For example, the last three consecutive winners of the Academy Award for Best Director have been Alejandro González Iñárritu, Alfonso Cuarón, and Guillermo del Toro, three immigrants from Mexico and Kehinde Wiley, the son of a Nigerian immigrant became the first African-American to paint a presidential portrait.

(Sources: remitly.com and Amnesty International)



Photo VOAnews.com June 2015



Photo: Languagemagazine.com 2019



What is Juneteenth?

Juneteenth, the oldest known celebration of the end of slavery in the United States, is observed every year on June 19. It has been celebrated in African American communities for many years with elaborate celebrations, community dinners, galas, and more. All Americans will recognize the holiday for the first time this year on a Sunday in 2022. Juneteenth for many African Americans is their fourth of July. It dates back to 1865 when the last enslaved African Americans were informed they were "free". On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger leading Union soldiers brought the news to Galveston, Texas that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. This occurred two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation became official on January 1, 1863. President Joe Biden signed legislation establishing Juneteenth as a federal holiday in 2021. It is the first new federal holiday established since Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday was approved in 1983.

Why is it called Juneteenth?

Juneteenth is a combination of June and 19. The holiday is also known by a few other names, including "Jubilee Day," "Emancipation Day," "Freedom Day" and "Black Independence Day."

story adapted from Keely Brown Cincinnati Enquirer



Photos credit: teachnewssource.com

Ways to Celebrate



JUNETEENTH WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

L Y C A R E D E F N O C R Q M G Y
 K A M E R I C A N X R P R P J N S
 W W D L Y N O I N U L I N C O L N
 U N O T S E V L A G V Z G M N X J
 E R M N T E H U N N J I E N D H J
 I R U O F L A G O N K R O O Y C L
 Y O U N J R Q D I W E Q O I R O G
 Z R Q T E X A S T C H F B T O Y W
 A F C E L E B R A T I O N A T I Q
 B U P U B U W F M K V F S P S B B
 O M S E U E C M A R M D L I I O Q
 L L O R V J L Y L E M R A C H M G
 I Y A D I L O H C G E T V N I F D
 T J R M E H Q U O N V O E A T I Z
 I Z N J K E L P R A N L R M R T Q
 O M E K H O R B P R G G Y E W E P
 N B R X S P J F G G P T N T V U D

Abolition

American

Celebration

Ceremony

Confederacy

Culture

Emancipation

Flag

Food

Freedom

Galveston

Granger

History

Holiday

Lincoln

Proclamation

Red

Slavery

Texas

Union



The World's Cookbook



Recipe by cookingwithria.com

Ackee & Saltfish

- 1 lb. salted cod saltfish
- 6 tbs extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion
- Hot pepper to taste
- 4 cloves of garlic sliced
- 1 large tomato
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 4 scallions chopped
- 4 thyme sprigs chopped (or leaves removed)
- Black pepper to taste
- Salt to taste
- 1 can ackee drained and rinsed

Fried Dumplings

- 4 cups of flour
- 4 tsp baking powder aluminum free
- 1 tsp Himalayan salt or more to taste
- 2 tbs brown sugar or more to taste
- 2 tbs butter good quality
- 1 1/2 cups water or more as required, or milk
- Oil for frying, preferably vegetable oil

Instructions

Ackee & Saltfish - Fill a medium pot halfway with water and bring to a boil over medium heat. Rinse saltfish to remove visible salt. Place into a pot, boil for 10 mins. Drain off water and refill pot, boil again for 15 mins. Rinse, cool, and break up into big chunks. Heat oil in a sauté pan, add onion, hot pepper, and garlic, and cook for 2 minutes. Add thyme, tomato, bell peppers, and 1/2 scallions and cook for 2 minutes, stirring. Stir in flaked saltfish, mixing well to combine. Season with black pepper. Drain and rinse ackee. Clear the saltfish from the center of the pan. Add ackee in the center and then scoop the saltfish and gently fold into the ackee mixing minimally. Sprinkle with more black pepper and remaining chopped scallions to finish.

Fried Dumplings- In a large bowl, add flour, salt, sugar, and baking powder. Rub in butter. Mix well to combine. While gradually adding water, knead for 3 minutes to make a soft, smooth dough. It's better to have a sticky dough that you can add a pinch of flour to, rather than a stiff, dry dough. Form into a large ball, brush with oil or butter and cover with a wet paper towel. Allow it to rest for about 15-30 minutes. You can place dough in a resealable bag or tight container and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. This helps to create a fluffier result. When ready to cook, heat oil in a deep, frying pan or Dutch oven pot over medium heat. Divide the dough into 4 balls then divide each ball into 4 golf-sized pieces. Flatten dough and then roll up to meet at the top, pinch and rotate to form a smooth ball. Repeat with the remaining dough. When ready to fry, flatten each ball into a disc about 2 inches wide, pressing the center with your thumb to create an indent. When the oil is hot, fry the dough discs, working in batches to not overcrowd the pan. Turn as required, 2 minutes per side until, golden brown, puffed, and fully cooked. If browning too quickly and is still not fully cooked, cook on low. Continuously pour oil on dumplings to help them to cook more quickly. Using a slotted spoon, drain excess oil on the side of the pot and transfer to a paper towel-lined tray. Repeat with the remaining dough. Serve hot with the ackee and saltfish.

July is not far away. Some Upcoming Celebrations:

- French-American Heritage Month
- July 4 – Independence Day (USA)
 - July 14 – Bastille Day
- July 18 – International Nelson Mandela Day
- July 26 – National Disability Independence Day (commemorates the signing of the Americans With Disabilities Act)
 - July 30 – International Day of Friendship
 - July 30 – Hijri New Year (Muslim)



Dear Colleagues,

We are looking for contributions to the newsletter for the month of July. If you have a story to share, a recipe, how you celebrate, or an interesting fact, please feel free to email Cheryl.Ellis@ct.gov. We are hoping to be able to include all DDS Stakeholders who have a story to tell or would be willing to speak to their heritage.