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STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER FOR UNIVERSITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD

EST. 1935



Alejandro Abarca/LOGOS STAFF

Forty members of the Diverse Dance Academy from San Antonio perform Friday, June 18, in Alice McDermott Convocation Center for a Juneteenth celebration. The event took place a day after President Joe Biden signed an act making it a new federal holiday.

Celebration Time!

New tradition recognizes end of slavery in Texas

Nearly 200 people gathered for a spirited Juneteenth celebration Friday, June 18, at the University of the Incarnate Word. The event, planned for weeks, coincidentally took place a day after President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law, making Juneteenth a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. Friday's program began inside Alice McDermott Convocation Center and ended with a fellowship outside the center featuring hamburgers and hot dogs.

But the planning grew from student interests in observing Juneteenth. Students Gerald Bowie and T.J. Wright, two of the founders of "As One We Will," a social justice organization, enlisted the help of Kenyon Spears, an associate athletic director for administration who is charged with overseeing diversity, equity and inclusion among his duties. Meeting with the university's DEI administrator -- Dr. Arturo Chavez, associate vice president for University Mission and Ministry -- and others the list of sponsors and co-sponsors grew as well as the program. Keynote speaker Cary Clack, a columnist for the San Antonio Express-News,

was unable to attend due to illness but the show went on. Besides students, the audience included several administrators, faculty members, community representatives, guest dancers and members of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word founders of the university. The spacing in the Convocation Center was made more intimate for the crowd based on suggestions from the Department of Theatre Arts. Department set designer Christopher McCollum and the chair, Dr. David McTier, suggested concentric circles of chairs. As One We Will's Wright, a recent grad and former football defensive

end, welcomed the crowd as the emcee. The Rev. Dr. Bishop Trevor Alexander, who serves as Protestant chaplain for University Mission and Ministry, gave the invocation. Dr. Thomas M. Evans, UIW's president, and Dr. Barbara Aranda-Naranjo, the provost and chief academic officer, greeted the crowd. Evans said it was significant to have the program the day after Juneteenth was declared a federal holiday. The provost shared how she had encountered prejudice growing up as a Mexican American in Texas, but it steeled her through her

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Historian tells Juneteenth story

By Dr. Laura Cannon

I teach Texas History and classes on labor, revolutions, and activism, among other things.

So, as you can probably imagine, I think it's crucial for us to recognize and face our history, including the history of Juneteenth, and why this holiday remains such an important part of American history.

We have some really joyful, hopeful moments in our history, such as Juneteenth. Many of you may be familiar with the story of Juneteenth – the day Union Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston and read General Order No. 3 to the residents of the city.

Now, this wasn't the first time Black Americans were emancipated. For generations, enslaved men and women across the South had been emancipating themselves by escaping their enslavers. During the Civil War, some men and women were being freed by Union troops as early as 1861. Then, after the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863, both the enslaved – and the enslavers – knew that if/when the Union crushed the rebellion, all Black Americans would have a permanent status as freed people.

But Texas was a unique case. Situated on the edge of the Confederacy, Texas was really far removed from most of the Union troops' offensives. It was so isolated during the war, that slave owners from other states actually sent enslaved men and women to Texas to "protect" their property. So, after the war ended in April 1865, the status of the 250,000 enslaved men and women in Texas didn't change... until Gen. Granger arrived in Galveston on June 19, 1865. He read General Order No. 3 from the balcony of the Ashton Villa hotel. He announced "all slaves are free" and that they would now take on the new status of employees working for wages.

Gradually, news spread from Galveston to the rest of the state. And on June 19, 1866, Texas Freedpeople held the first Juneteenth Celebration. The celebrations would continue to grow to include parades, picnics, dancing, singing, sporting events, family reunions, speeches – a whole lot of love and a whole lot of fun!

As Black Texans moved to other parts of the country, particularly during the Great Migration, they took Juneteenth celebrations with them. Texas declared Juneteenth a state holiday in 1980.



Alejandro Abarca/LOGOS STAFF

Dr. Laura Cannon, a history professor, shares research about Juneteenth with the crowd in Alice McDermott Convocation Center.

And (June 18, 2021), Juneteenth officially became a federal holiday!

So, Juneteenth symbolizes this beautiful, hopeful moment in American history. Juneteenth proved the world really could change! Slavery, which was so intricately woven into American politics, the economy, and society, had ended. There's so much potential here. So much to celebrate. Juneteenth is often referred to as Jubilee Day – going back to the Old Testament and the Year of Jubilee when slavery would end, and the land would be redistributed. A lot of formerly enslaved men and women believed they were living in the moment of the coming of the Lord!

This moment is so hopeful. So joyful. And this is the moment when the

United States could have actually lived up to its founding promises of equality, liberty, and justice for ALL.

But we end up falling very short of fulfilling those promises. Because Gen. Granger's arrival in Texas also represents the moment Reconstruction came to Texas. Reconstruction, which had already started across the rest of the former Confederacy, was about "rebuilding," right? And we have to really think about the language here and what this actually means. What exactly did the white men in power want to "reconstruct?" If they're "rebuilding" the nation – RE-constructing it – it's a nation that never included Black Americans as full citizens. A national system that

excluded and oppressed people of color at every turn. And we know those men in power successfully reconstructed that system, which is why so many people across this country don't know the history of Juneteenth. Because the stories and experiences of people of color have been ignored or erased.

So, we have these moments in our history, like Juneteenth, which are so full of promise and hope and joy, that have always mattered. But moments like this often aren't taught in schools. Juneteenth is now a federal holiday. And it might be the only federal holiday that state politicians have banned teachers from teaching about.

Now, we're in another important moment in our history. A critical moment when we've seen a racial awakening across much of the United States – particularly in white communities. A moment where we can draw attention to the systems of oppression and unearned privileges that this country built... and that built this country.

This moment is frightening or threatening to a lot of people. Some people want to do whatever they can to reverse that racial awakening. They want to limit what parts of American history are taught in schools, at parks, and at museums. We have an obligation to tell the truth about our history: the good, the bad, and the ugly. And we have an obligation to teach and celebrate the history and experiences of Black Americans, which help counter the "default narrative" of what counts as "American history." Because Black history is our history. Black lives and Black history should be respected and celebrated.

Cannon is an assistant professor in the Department of History and coordinator of the new social justice and peace concentration at the University of the Incarnate Word. E-mail her at cannon@uiwtx.edu



“ We have an obligation to tell the truth about (American) history: the good, the bad, and the ugly. ”

– Dr. Laura Cannon





Alejandro Abarca/LOGOS STAFF

KaShori Lanier tells the audience what she learned about her great-great-great-aunt's 1896 lynching in Alabama. Molly 'Mollie' Smith was one of two 'negro girls' hung on trees in a small town.

Lessons learned from aunt's lynching

By KaShori Lanier

Why is learning from your past so important?

Learning from your past is so important because some of us don't know where



KaShori Lanier

we come from. We do not know the struggles our ancestors faced to survive.

I didn't know until two years ago that I had a great-great-great-aunt Molly Smith, a formerly enslaved person who was wrongfully accused of murder by her former owners.

Molly - sometimes spelled "Mollie" in family records - did not get justice. Instead, she got a lynching from a very angry mob of white men.

Learning from your past is so important so you're not doomed to repeat injustices or mistakes. I wanted to tell Molly's story to get justice to shed light, to bring my family together. The ones who didn't stand up for her was her own family - her own family being the ones who enslaved her in the first place that led to generational trauma down the line.

I have two sides of my family the Kelly Family and Molly's. The Kelly Family owned much land in Alabama and were very influential in the state. They ranged from ex-Confederate, high-ranking soldiers to lawyers. Molly was enslaved by the Kelly Family and a lot of resentment comes from this. It comes from the fact she really didn't get justice and they didn't stand up for her because of the color of her skin.

Her story is important because we're repeating the same mistakes today. Not listening to the voices of the disenfranchised. I'm here to celebrate Molly and the courage she had to stand up even when she knew her back was against the wall. I am a piece of her legacy and a hope to be free. Everything I do is to celebrate her and break barriers and have opportunities my ancestors never had. So, I celebrate them on this day.

E-mail Lanier, a University of the Incarnate Word theatre arts graduate, at klanier@student.uiwtx.edu

Lanier's play looks at tragedy

"The Murder of Mollie Smith" is a play based on research that KaShori Lanier did about the Alabama lynching of her great-great-great-aunt in 1896.

Lanier's work was done for Professor Margaret Mitchell's "Theatre for Social Change" class while Lanier was a theatre arts major at the University of the Incarnate Word. This spring, Lanier, now an alum, presented a scene from the play via Zoom during a research showcase.

Lanier said Smith was falsely accused in the poisoning deaths of her former owners, members of the Kelly Family, who were huge landowners in Alabama. Complicating the story is the fact that Lanier is descended from the Kelly Family and the Haitians they enslaved.

The lynching story, which has been passed down orally, has resulted in various versions and a range of conflicting responses to the story. Lanier said she hopes the research and the play will help heal her family.



The 1896 lynching of Molly 'Mollie' Smith in Madison County, Ala., made the front page of a local newspaper, 'Old Huntsville.'

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Several reflect on significance of new event

By Abigail Velez
LOGOS STAFF WRITER

University of the Incarnate Word administrators, faculty and students shared their thoughts about Juneteenth during a celebration Friday, June 18, in Alice McDermott Convocation Center. "As One We Will" co-founders -- UIW football players T.J. Wright and Gerald Bowie III -- were among the key planners for the event where most of the logistics were laid out over Zoom due to the pandemic. "We were expecting resistance when

we were planning this, but we were encouraged to keep going," said Wright, who served as the emcee. "When I was accepted at UIW [four years ago in 2018], only 7 percent of the student population was black. Things have definitely changed since then but I hope this event helps minority students feel at home while getting their education." "This is a great moment in American history," Dr. Barbara Aranda-Naranjo, provost and chief academic officer, said during her greeting Friday. "We, as Americans, stepped up to the occasion,

to ensure everyone's voices are heard. Whatever is good for minorities in America, is good for everyone at UIW." "We look for God in each of our students and we see Him when our students are called to serve their communities," Dr. Thomas M. Evans, UIW's president, said during his turn at the mike. "Students don't just contribute to their University. They contribute to the world. When we do anything together, we are stronger." As Dr. Laura Cannon, an assistant professor of history, shared

Juneteenth's legacy, she emphasized: "Black history is our history. American history promises liberty and justice for all, but we end up falling very short of those promises." Although the battle for racial justice and equality is not over, in his closing remarks, Bowie said: "We're going to continue to fight for inclusion. We're gonna fight for social justice -- on and off this campus."

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Student develops resource guide

A University of the Incarnate Word student volunteered to develop a "Wonderful Resources" packet for the Juneteenth celebration.

"I wanted to have some resources for (the) Juneteenth celebration to not only acknowledge the black history and black professors at UIW, but to have resources that pertain to mental health, professional work environment, and programs," said Safietou "Safie" Dorsey, 20, a junior business administration major concentrating in management information systems.

"I didn't know about Juneteenth until I came to Texas, and even then that history was never taught in school, I had to seek it," said Dorsey, who moved to the Lone Star State from hometown Cleveland, Ohio, 10 years ago.

"When I was invited to the Juneteenth planning meeting two weeks before the celebration, I knew I wanted to make sure it was memorable, like everyone else in the room. We often talk on how the event needed to not only show black joy but highlight black history, U.S. history."

Besides recommending the dancers secured for the event, Dorsey said, "I felt I could still be doing more to give back to the community and the group planning the Juneteenth celebration.

I made a nine-page packet to inform the attendees of black mental health resources, professional groups, STEM and volunteer events/opportunities, the new social justice and peace concentration, some of the black faculty and administration, and UIW's history with black students. I also talked a bit about how there is more to do in regards to having critical race theory taught in schools, addressing police reform and police violence, over-policing, passing anti-lynching bills, and there is more to do that was not mentioned but should be addressed."

A Cardinal Community leader, Dorsey said social justice is a special interest of hers that's developed since she moved to San Antonio about 10 years ago from her hometown Cleveland, Ohio.

"Juneteenth has been made a national holiday but our work doesn't stop there," said Dorsey. "We still have a lot of work to do but together we will get there."



Safie Dorsey



WONDERFUL RESOURCE PACKET

SCAN THE QR CODE



PLEASE SHARE

THANKS FOR VIEWING



Safietou "Safie" Dorsey, 20, a junior business administration major, is a Cardinal Community Leader who developed this flyer.

Celebration Cont.

nursing and academic pursuits.

Following presentations from UIW theatre arts graduate KaShori Lanier about an Alabama lynching of her great-great-great-aunt and Dr. Laura Cannon, an assistant professor of history, about the history of Juneteenth, 40 young members of the Diverse Dance Academy from San Antonio

performed. The circles of people cheered, clapped and laughed as the children aged 5 through teens did their routines. Some even did flips on the grass afterwards.

Dr. Joan Labay-Marquez, graduate studies coordinator for the Dreeben School of Education, said she was particularly impressed with the

academy and already following up on getting them more connected with UIW.

"The young women and girls from the dance company were incredible," she said. "I met the director after the program and located their Facebook page too. I would love to have them join our Young Women's Global Leadership Program and Summit."

And the rest of the program she helped co-sponsor as an adviser for the Compassion Student Peer Organization, was right on time, too.

"I absolutely loved the program," she said. "(I'm) so grateful I was able to be a witness."