



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION



SCHOOL OF KINESIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Commemorating Juneteenth June 19, 2020

Greetings!

I hope all is well.

I want to remind/inform you that today - Friday, June 19 (which is referred to as "Juneteenth") - is a symbolic holiday, as it is the day that commemorates the "official" end of slavery in the U.S. Although the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect Jan. 1, 1863, it wasn't until two and one-half years later on June 19, 1865, that Union soldiers emancipated the last of the remaining enslaved Black Americans. To learn more about Juneteenth, I encourage you to visit juneteenth.com/history.htm.

Juneteenth is also both a historical and a contemporary reminder of freedom deferred for Black Americans. As we know (and as the recent events in our society have clearly illustrated), systemic racism has brutally prevented many Black Americans from living the true ideals of freedom. Racial injustices continue to pervade America's institutions, including those in our Kinesiology disciplines. Eradicating racial injustice will require monumental change. However, as Mother Teresa stated, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." She also encouraged us to "Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies."

I encourage each of us to take a moment to commemorate this day – Juneteenth. In our own unique way, may each of us pause to reflect on our freedoms and our individual strengths to do small things faithfully in our roles as faculty, scholars, staff, and students, and in our lives as citizens and humans to eradicate anti-Black racism and contribute to racial equality and social justice.

Sincerely,

Ketra L. Armstrong, PhD
Professor & Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

View Vice Provost Rob Sellers's Juneteenth statement at myumi.ch/0Wz54.