

## Juneteenth Commemorative Flag

Activist Ben Haith, founder of the National Juneteenth Celebration Foundation (NJCF), created the flag in 1997 with the help of collaborators, and Boston-based illustrator Lisa Jeanne Graf brought their vision to life.



### The star



The white star in the center of the flag has a dual meaning.

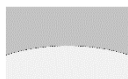
For one, it represents Texas, the Lone Star State. It was in Galveston in 1865 where Union soldiers informed the country's last remaining enslaved people that, under the Emancipation Proclamation issued two years earlier, they were free. But the star also goes beyond Texas, representing the freedom of African Americans in all 50 states.

### The burst



The bursting outline around the star is inspired by a nova, a term that astronomers use to mean a new star. On the Juneteenth flag, this represents a new beginning for the African Americans of Galveston and throughout the land.

### The arc



The curve that extends across the width of the flag represents a new horizon: the opportunities and promise that lay ahead for black Americans.

### The colors



The red, white and blue represents the American flag, a reminder that slaves and their descendants were and are Americans. June 19, 1865, represents the day that enslaved black people in Galveston, Texas, became Americans under the law.

The flag was revised in 2000, to include the actual date that the slaves in Galveston were freed - which meant that every Black man/woman/child who had been enslaved in America, and denied the rights and liberties, and the very recognition that every white American had been given - was not only free, but indeed an American - finally.

And while African Americans today are still fighting for equality and justice, Haith said those colors symbolize the continuous commitment of people in the United States to do better -- and to live up to the American ideal of liberty and justice