



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

207 STATE HOUSE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

JB PRITZKER
GOVERNOR

June 5, 2024

Juneteenth Illinois
3510 West Arthington Street
Chicago, IL 60624-4105

Greetings,

It is my great pleasure to welcome everyone to the 4th Annual Juneteenth Illinois Fair, hosted by Executive Director of Juneteenth Illinois, Barbara Deer, and partnered with PepsiCo, who have worked tirelessly to bring an impactful and resourceful event to you. My administration is proud to have worked with Black communities and leaders throughout Illinois to recognize Juneteenth as an official holiday celebrating the end of slavery in the United States.

It took more than two years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation to formally free the last of the Confederacy's enslaved people when Union Major General Gordon Granger announced the enforcement of the Proclamation in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865. This is the day we celebrate the freedom of our Black siblings and the social, economic, and cultural contributions they have made to the United States of America and Illinois. Juneteenth takes on an even greater significance as the United States contends with its long history of anti-Black policing and Jim Crow laws, which are the foundation for 21st-century injustices.

Guided by the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus, the Land of Lincoln has taken a journey to actively dismantle systemic racism through robust reforms in the areas of criminal justice, education and workforce development, healthcare, and human services, and economic access, equity, and opportunity.

I urge you to participate in all this fair has to offer you, and I urge all Illinois residents to reflect on our history, our future, and the actions we can take, individually and collectively, to truly build ourselves into the equitable nation of our ideals - a land of freedom and opportunity for all. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate all recipients of scholarships – you should all be proud of the incredibly important work you all do.

On behalf of the people of Illinois, I offer my best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable occasion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JB Pritzker".

Governor JB Pritzker