JUNE CELEBRATES

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DEAR YWCA COMMUNITY,

As the sun shines brighter and summer officially begins, we are delighted to welcome June and all the empowering opportunities it brings. This month, we have some exciting updates and announcements to share with you.

We have some important news about our email platform. Starting this month, we will be transitioning to a new platform, and you will now receive our messages from Bloomerang. This switch should not impact on your ability to receive our emails. However, if you do encounter any issues or notice a disruption, please reach out.

June also holds special significance as we celebrate both Juneteenth and Pride Month. While we previously shared information about various community events, we understand that attending may not always be possible. To ensure you can stay connected and learn more about these important celebrations, our dedicated Social Justice team has compiled Juneteenth and Pride Month resource guides for you to use. These resources will provide you with opportunities to engage, learn, and show solidarity with Juneteenth celebrations and the LGBTQ+ community.

Wishing you a joyous and empowering month ahead!

Best regards,
The YWCA Alaska Team
During June, our country celebrates the LGBTQ+ community through Pride Month. The first Pride march in New York City was held in 1970 as both a protest and commemoration of the six day Stonewall Inn uprising that began the year prior on June 28th, 1969. The resistance to this raid was led by Drag Queens, transgender people, queer youth, and other gender nonconforming individuals—many of whom were Black and Brown activists fighting for both gay liberation and civil rights. In the five decades since those initial protests, Pride Month has become a celebration of LGBTQ+ visibility and love.

**QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON**

What new information have I gained here and how has it shifted my perspective on the LGBTQ+ community?

What does a deeper commitment to these issues look like for me?

To access full resource document download here.
On June 19th, our nation also celebrates Juneteenth. Juneteenth memorializes the arrival of Union soldiers in Galveston Bay, Texas, and the subsequent liberation of the 250,000 Black Americans who resided there from slavery. President Abraham Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation—which declared enslaved people free in many Confederate-held territories, including Galveston—over two years earlier, but it wasn’t until that late spring day in June of 1865 that Black residents of Galveston learned of their freedom. It was still six months before the 13th Amendment—which abolished slavery throughout these United States—was ratified and added to our Constitution, but for many Black Americans, June 19th stands as a day that marked the end of enslavement and the beginning of freedom. Now, we celebrate Juneteenth as a nation; this day marks a second Independence Day for the United States—one that commemorates a first step for a nation striving toward the promise of freedom, liberty, and justice for all its citizens.

**QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON**

What new information have I gained here and how has it shifted my perspective on Black history and culture in America?

What can I learn from the concept of "Black Joy?" How can I use joy as a tool for resistance and resilience?

To access full resource document [download here](#).
As we celebrate Juneteenth and Pride this month, let us all revisit our individual and collective imperative to promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. Amidst these celebrations, we must also recognize and challenge the erasure of Black history from public school curriculums and the passage of laws targeting queer and transgender youth. These events threaten to overturn half a century of progress in racial justice and queer liberation. At YWCA Alaska, this imperative of promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all lies at the heart of all we do, and we hope you will join us in living out this mission—both this month and beyond.

In solidarity,
Ian Murakami and Fiona Schaeffer
Social Justice Team

YWCA ALASKA STORE

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

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