**Reflections on Juneteenth**

As a child in Texas, my family observed Juneteenth (Emancipation Day); it became a state holiday in 1980 due to legislation introduced by the late state representative Al Edwards. As a mom, my family celebrated Juneteenth when we lived in Ohio by attending events at Eden Park. To see Juneteenth as a national holiday, advocated by Opal Lee, is fitting given its widespread commemorations. Perhaps, its acknowledgement will open the door to a discussion about reparations for descendants of the enslaved, whose free labor is largely responsible for the wealth of the Western world.

It is also an interesting moment for this holiday when critical race theory (which involves a focus on racism and concepts of race in the law) is being addressed by various U.S. state legislators. Critical race theory is not typically taught in the pre-K through 12th grade system of U.S. education. Reconciling the past with visions toward a better tomorrow will be a task not for the faint of heart. Our Africana Studies program exists to facilitate conversations about the way forward among the intellectually curious.