

## **Commemorate Juneteenth with SOU community**

All members of the SOU community are encouraged to participate in commemorating Juneteenth, the holiday that celebrates the end of slavery in the U.S., with a pair of local events.

SOU will host a flag-raising ceremony outside Churchill Hall at 11:15 a.m. on Thursday, June 18 - a day before the state and federal holiday. Volunteers are then invited to help represent SOU at a Juneteenth event from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, June 19, at Medford's Pear Blossom Park. SOU will have a booth at the Medford event, supporting the establishment of justice, domestic tranquility, promotion of the general welfare and securing the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.

Juneteenth, celebrated each year on June 19, is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery. It memorializes June 19, 1865, when Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas - two years after the Emancipation Proclamation - to announce that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved were free.

Today, many use Juneteenth as a day of celebration, but many also use it as a day for education and reflection. Juneteenth celebrates the day when enslaved Black people were set free from all states, and it raises important questions. How can we uphold the sacredness of all lives in the present day where systematic racism persists? How can we ensure that we remain a peacekeeper while also working out of love for all our brothers and sisters?