

Direct to You

Thursday
6/21/21

Patricia Wells, OHA Executive Director

Hello OHA!



Happy Father's Week

As you likely already know, I hold a special place in my heart for fathers, as my own dad was what I consider the “mightiest of men.” He raised six children by himself after my mother passed, and I reflect on those years fondly, realizing that my father did the work of a father, as well as the tasks that have traditionally been considered mom’s work. While we no longer have “men’s work” and “women’s work” when it comes to raising our children, we still take the time to honor and thank those who rise to the challenge of preparing our children to lead our future.

This year, I think about the men who are present and those who have been lost, especially over the last year, recognizing that many didn’t have an opportunity to have a “proper goodbye” due to the circumstances surrounding the pandemic and the shutdown orders. I want to wish a heartfelt Happy Father’s Week to all the dads (and moms) who lovingly nurture, guide and care for their children and those around them.

I hope you had a wonderful weekend celebration with the fathers in your life, and may that celebration continue throughout the week!

Patricia



Juneteenth National Holiday!

On Thursday, June 17, 2021, President Biden signed a new law, making Juneteenth a Federal holiday. It is the first new holiday to go into effect since the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr holiday in 1983. Juneteenth, which has been celebrated as a state holiday in Texas since 1980, commemorates June 19, 1865, when Union Major General Gordon Granger announced the end of slavery in Galveston, Texas, in accordance with President Abraham Lincoln’s 1863 Emancipation Proclamation. Thursday’s action elevated the date to a national celebration. Long considered “Black Independence Day,” Juneteenth is the date that celebrates the day all slaves were recognized as free, two and a half years after Lincoln formally ended the practice.

With the establishment of Juneteenth as a Federal Holiday, America finds itself one step closer to reaching its promise of becoming “a more perfect union,” by realizing that all men [and women] are created equal. Celebrations of our unity as a nation will likely involve enjoying outdoor celebrations, and taking a moment to simply stop and think about the many people who have sacrificed so much to make this new holiday a reality. It is also a moment to reflect on our individual and collective roles in make the goals of equity and welcoming inclusion a reality.

As the bill was signed into law on Thursday, providing little notice, we were not able to honor the holiday this year. However, moving forward we will work with the Board of Commissioners to update OHA Holiday policies to include Juneteenth as an observed holiday for calendar year 2022 and beyond.

For now, enjoy the week ahead, stay hydrated and Happy Juneteenth!

All past issues of Direct To You are available on the OHA website for 24/7 access. In addition to the messages sent directly from the OHA executive director, you can also find links to other resources, articles, and up-to-date information about OHA operations and the ways we are addressing the current health crisis.



OHA Focuses on Equity and Inclusion

The Oakland Housing Authority, along with industry peers, commit to using our leadership role to effect change in the arena of equity and inclusion. Here, inside the OHA house, we are looking at several ways to enhance our policies and practices as an employer, business stakeholder, housing provider and community member to ensure more achievements in equity and inclusion. Locally and nationally, we take on this leadership role in solidarity with the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), the largest affordable housing industry group in the nation. A NAHRO statement declared, “We recommit ourselves to addressing continued structural racism and inequity—not just by helping our members fulfill the missions of their housing and community development agencies, but also by advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion as crucial to healthy communities.”

Earlier this year, NAHRO’s Board of Governors adopted a diversity, equity and inclusion policy framework, and NAHRO’s leadership committees have begun their work on it. With a grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation, NAHRO is also working to bridge the gap between existing research on housing and equity with the affordable housing industry, to create an equitable housing toolkit, and to train housing agencies on best practices for using the toolkit. OHA looks forward to being a part of this important work at home and in partnership locally and nationally.



REMEMBER: if you have reasonable suspicion that you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or if you are experiencing symptoms of fever (100.4 Fahrenheit or higher), coughing, or shortness of breath, do not report to work. Immediately contact your primary care provider and then your supervisor for instructions on what you need to do next. If you have any questions regarding your schedule, please contact your supervisor or Director. If you have questions in regards to pay or leave time, please contact Human Resources at (510) 874-1575.

