



JUNE

This Month in Black History

Fact Sheet

June 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tulsa race massacre (known alternately as the Greenwood Massacre, or the Black Wall Street Massacre) took place on May 31–June 1, 1921, when mobs of white residents attacked black residents and businesses of the Greenwood District in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It has been called the single worst incident of racial violence in American history. Ida B. Wells, the most prominent anti-lynching campaigner in the U.S., gave her famous speech: “Lynching: Our National Crime,” at the National Negro Conference, the forerunner to the NAACP, in New York City on May 31–June 1, 1909.
June 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underground railroad conductor Harriet Tubman, known as the “The Moses of Her People,” became the first woman to lead an armed assault during the Civil War. Under the command of Union Colonel James Montgomery, Tubman led one hundred fifty black Union soldiers in the Combahee River Raid in South Carolina, where more than seven hundred fifty slaves were liberated (1863). John Hope, the first African-descended president of both Morehouse College in 1906 and Atlanta University in 1929, was born in 1868.
June 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The surgeon and medical researcher Charles R. Drew, who researched blood transfusions and developed techniques for blood storage, was born in 1904. As the most prominent African American in the field, Drew protested against racial segregation in blood donation. In protest, he resigned from his position with the American Red Cross, which maintained the policy until 1950. Roland Hayes, an American lyric tenor who became the first African American to give a recital in Boston’s Symphony Hall, was born (1887). Josephine Baker, American born French entertainer, French resistance agent, and civil rights activist, was born (1906). She was the first black woman to star in a major motion picture, the 1927 silent film <i>Siren of the Topics</i>.
June 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After being held in jail for over a year, in 1972, political activist and academic Angela Davis was acquitted by a white jury in San Jose, California, of charges stemming from a 1970 courtroom gun shootout.
June 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1956, a Montgomery federal court ruled that any law requiring racially segregated seating on buses violated the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The city appealed the ruling in the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld the lower court’s ruling on December 17, 1956. Montgomery’s buses integrated on December 21, 1956, and the boycott ended. It had lasted 381 days.
June 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children’s Defense Fund, children’s rights activist, lawyer, and educator was born in 1939.

June 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Battle of Milliken's Bend was fought in 1863. The Confederate cavalry attacked the Union encampment on the Mississippi River at Milliken Ben. They encountered an infantry brigade of African-American troops, consisting of troops from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Iowa. It was one of the earliest battles in the Civil War where African Americans fought. More significantly, in this battle, most of the Union forces, bravery, and example invoked Union recruiters to encourage other African Americans to join the U.S. Army. • Poet, writer, activist, and educator Nikki Giovanni, whose notable works include the poem "Ego-Tripping," was born in 1943. • Poet, author, and educator Gwendolyn Brooks, the first African American to win the Pulitzer Prize, was born in 1917.
June 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Baseball Hall of Famer Leroy Robert Paige (better known as "Satchel Paige"), who was known for playing in both the Negro League and the Major League Baseball, died in 1982.
June 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first African American Black Rhodes Scholar, philosopher, and educator Alain R. Locke, who became known as the philosophical architect of the Harlem Renaissance and the New Negro Movement, died in 1954.
June 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint Georges, the first known classical composer of African ancestry and a conductor of a leading symphony orchestra in Paris, died in 1799. • Pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey, the founder and first President-General of the Universal Negro Improvement and African Communities League, died in 1940. • Jack Johnson, nicknamed the "Galveston Giant," an African-American boxer who, at the height of the Jim Crow era became the first African-American world heavyweight boxing champion, died in 1946.
June 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles B. Rangel, U.S. Congress representative for districts in New York from 1971 to 2017, died in 2010. • In 1963, Vivian Malone and James Hood, accompanied by U.S. Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, attempted to register at the University of Alabama. Governor George Wallace bodily blocks their entrance. When national guardsmen returned later in the day with Malone and Hood, Wallace stepped aside.
June 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medgar Evers, an American civil rights activist in Mississippi, the state's field secretary for the NAACP, and a World War II veteran who served in the United States Army, died in 1963. He worked to overturn segregation at the University of Mississippi, end the segregation of public facilities and opportunities for African Americans, which included the enforcement of voting rights.
June 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Congressman William H. Gray became the first African-American Democratic Party Majority Whip in 1989.
June 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Author, lyricist, and leader of the NAACP, James Weldon Johnson was born in 1871. He wrote the lyrics for "Lift Every Voice and Sing," which later became known as the Negro National Anthem.
June 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juneteenth is a holiday celebrating the emancipation of those enslaved in the United States (1865). In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation during the American Civil War, which declared more than three million slaves living in the Confederate states free. More than two years would pass before the news reached African Americans living in Texas. It was not until Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, that the state's residents learned that Lincoln had abolished slavery.

June 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1960, entertainer Harry Belafonte wins the Emmy Award for his variety special <i>Tonight with Harry Belafonte</i>. It is the first Emmy Award given to an African American.
June 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Henry Ossawa Tanner, an American artist and the first African-American painter to gain international acclaim was born in 1859.
June 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Katherine Dunham, legendary dancer, choreographer, and anthropologist, was born in 1909. Edward Rudolph “Ed” Bradley Jr., an American journalist, best known for his decades-long award-winning work on the CBS News television program <i>60 Minutes</i> was born in 1941.
June 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilma Rudolph, who was an American sprinter who became a world-record-holding Olympic champion and international sports icon in track and field was born in 1940.
June 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mordecai Johnson was elected the eleventh president of Howard University and became the first African American to serve as the prominent head of this institution. (1926)
June 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frederick Jones was an American inventor, entrepreneur, winner of the National Medal of Technology, and an inductee of the National Inventors Hall of Fame. In 1839, he received a patent the ticket-dispensing machine.
June 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sengbe Pieh, also known as Joseph Cinque, a West African man of the Mende people who led a revolt of many Africans on the Spanish slave ship <i>La Amistad</i>, was captured and enslaved with others illegally by slave traders in 1839. After the ship was taken into custody by the United States Revenue Cutter Service, Cinque, and his fellow Africans were eventually tried for mutiny and killing officers on board the vessel in the <i>United States vs. The Amistad</i>. This case reached the U.S. Supreme Court. Cinque and his fellow Africans were found innocent and to have rightfully defended themselves from being enslaved through the illegal Atlantic slave trade and were released.
June 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kwame Ture, formerly Stokely Carmichael, a crucial leader in the Black Power Movement, one of the original Freedom Riders, and former leader of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee was born. (1941)
June 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lena Horne, an African-American dancer, actress, Grammy-winning singer, and civil rights activist was born. (1917)