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GVI Offices to Close Friday as Bryan Recognizes Juneteenth

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. said Juneteenth is a time to reflect on history, honor those who endured the struggle for freedom, and recognize the contributions of African Americans, with government offices closed Friday.

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June 23, 2018: Children on a float wave to the crowd during the annual Juneteenth parade in Center City Philadelphia, PA. By. GETTY IMAGES.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. is joining residents across the territory in recognizing Friday, June 19, as Juneteenth, a federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States and celebrating the contributions, resilience and achievements of African Americans.

In observance of the holiday, all Government of the Virgin Islands offices will be closed Friday. Normal government operations will resume on the next business day.

“Juneteenth is a moment to reflect on our nation’s history, honor the generations who endured the struggle for freedom, and recognize the progress that has been made while continuing the work toward equality and opportunity for all,” Governor Bryan said. “As Virgin Islanders, we understand the importance of remembering our history and preserving the stories, traditions, and contributions of our African American ancestors who helped shape our communities.”

Juneteenth marks June 19, 1865, when enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, learned of their freedom under the Emancipation Proclamation, more than two years after it had been issued. The day has since become a symbol of freedom, reflection and the ongoing pursuit of justice.

Governor Bryan encouraged residents to observe Juneteenth through education, community engagement, cultural activities and reflection on the values of freedom, dignity and unity.

“Juneteenth reminds us that freedom is a journey that requires awareness, responsibility, and commitment from every generation,” Governor Bryan said. “I encourage everyone to take this opportunity to celebrate our shared humanity and the strength found in our diversity.”

The Government of the Virgin Islands wished residents and visitors a meaningful and safe Juneteenth observance.