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June 2021

A Proud Juneteenth



Dear Friends,

Recently, I have made time to both reflect and celebrate. During the past month, I was reminded of the wisdom of Octavia Butler — “what you pay attention to grows.” It is often easier for many of us, me included, to focus only on the problems, injustices, and inequities that we need to fix and change.

But, by singularly focusing on inequities, we can drift and lose sight of our values. As Butler’s words remind me time and again, it is critical to also focus on what we cherish and love, because it gives us energy and keeps us rooted in our principles.

In June, the Port Community heeded Butler’s wisdom. Thanks to the leadership of our employee resource groups Port-wide Pride and Blacks in Government, we honored and celebrated Pride and Juneteenth.

Employees wrote blogs recognizing the incredible sacrifices and achievement of [LGBTQIA+ champions and advocates](#), organized staff events focused on [Black Excellence](#) and the importance of Juneteenth, and, through ways big and small, exemplified a community that values diversity and inclusion.

There is much work ahead, and it won’t be easy. But the relationships we are building and the community that we are cultivating will allow us to transform and grow.

I am so incredibly proud, grateful, and humbled by the employees of the Port and their work to create a culture of belonging.

Happy Juneteenth! Happy Pride!

In Unity,



Bookda Gheisar
Senior Director, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Centering Equity and Taking Action



Flying the Juneteenth Flag High

For the first year in its more than 100 year history, the Port of Seattle celebrated Juneteenth as a Port-paid holiday, recognizing the importance of this historical day and celebrating the memories, stories, music, achievements, and progress of African Americans that have brought our nation to where we are today. In honor of Juneteenth, the Port raised Juneteenth flags at every facility.

DE&I: Beyond the Acronym

On June 17, Bookda Gheisar spoke as a panelist at the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce's June Luncheon. Bookda



discussed strategies and initiatives for organizations to foster equity, diversity, and inclusion in their culture, programs, and policies. She spoke about the progress and barriers that the Port has experienced. [Enjoy a recording of the event.](#)

Connected Communities Help LGBTQIA+ Businesses Thrive

One of the Port's top priorities is to support small business growth and workforce development and has prioritized contracts with these firms. The [Diversity in Contracting program](#) offers resources and workshops to help business owners learn how to do business with the Port. [Read more](#) about this work and the partnership between the Port and the Greater Seattle Business Alliance.



Environmental Justice and Cleaning Up the Duwamish River



The Port of Seattle Commission voted to authorize further clean-up action on the middle third of the Lower Duwamish Waterway Superfund site. The Port will continue the cleanup with its partners — the City of Seattle, King County, and The Boeing Company — known as the Lower Duwamish Working Group (LDWG). [Learn more](#) about the clean-up efforts.

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