

Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States. Brought to Kansas City in 1980 by Horace M. Peterson III, founder of the Black Archives of Mid-America, Inc., Juneteenth pays tribute to the founders of our community. The people featured in this drawing by local African American artist Michael Toombs represent many influential pioneers, from Sojourner Truth to Barack Obama.

**1.) Abraham Lincoln: 1809–1865.**

Abraham Lincoln issued an executive order freeing slaves in ten states on January 1, 1863, called the Emancipation Proclamation. In 1864, he called for the creation of the Thirteenth Amendment, passed January 31, 1865, abolishing slavery and involuntary servitude except as punishment for a crime.

**2.) White Soldier and Black Soldier.**

During the Civil War, freed African Americans joined Union forces fighting against slavery. For the first time, black and white soldiers fought side by side; however, black Union soldiers did not receive equal pay or treatment.

**3.) Gordon Granger: 1821–1876.**

Gordon Granger was a Union commander of the District of Texas from June 19 to August 6, 1865. During this time, he gave his famous June 19–or “Juneteenth”– declaration announcing the end of slavery.

**4.) Frederick Douglass: 1818–1895.**

Frederick Douglass is one of the most influential African Americans of the 19th century. He spoke and wrote on behalf of many reform causes, including women’s suffrage, abolition of slavery, peace, land reform, and free public education. He escaped slavery at the age of 20, wrote three autobiographies, and was the first African American to hold a high U.S. governmental rank.

**5.) Harriet Tubman: 1822–1913.**

In the 1850s, Harriet Tubman became known as a “conductor” of the Underground Railroad, leading approximately 70 enslaved families and friends to freedom. Tubman also served as a scout, spy, and nurse during the Civil War. She dedicated her later life to humanitarian efforts and women’s suffrage.

**6.) Sojourner Truth: 1793–1883.**

Born into slavery, Sojourner Truth escaped to freedom with her infant daughter in 1826. She later won a court case to regain custody of her son. It was the first case in American history where a black woman won against a white man. She is best known for her 1851 speech “Ain’t I a Woman.” After 1843, Sojourner Truth devoted her life to women’s rights and the abolition of slavery.

**7.) Horace M. Peterson III: 1945–1992.**

Horace Peterson started *JuneteenthKC* in Kansas City in 1980. He founded the Black Archives of Mid-America, Inc., in Kansas City, which collects and preserves the history and stories of the African American experience in the Midwest. He received recognition for his contributions in bridging race relations.

**8.) Emanuel Cleaver II.**

Emanuel Cleaver II is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Missouri’s 5th Congressional District. He is a member of the Democratic Party as well as the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. He was elected as Kansas City’s first African American mayor in 1991.

**9.) Barack and Michelle Obama.**

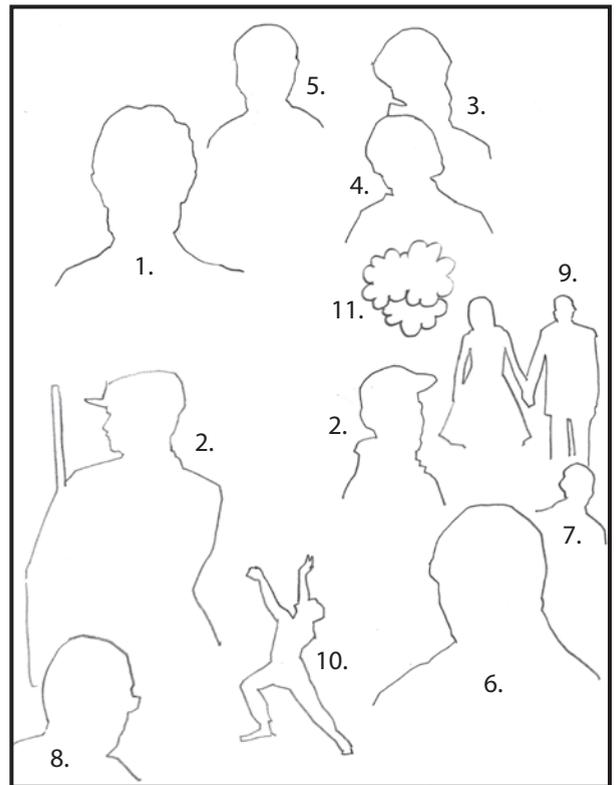
Barack Obama served as the 44th president of the United States from 2009 to 2017. The Obamas are the first black President and First Lady in Office. Barack Obama was awarded the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize, while Michelle Obama is a global role model for women.

**10.) Rejoicing Freedman.**

Freedom from slavery was the first step in a long battle for racial equality. Although much progress has been made, the fight and struggle continue today.

**11.) Blossoms of the Flowering Dogwood.**

Flowers from Missouri’s official state tree decorate the background.



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