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Author of Juneteenth state holiday legislation endorses the second annual Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival

State Representative Al Edwards, who is known as “the father” of the Juneteenth holiday in Texas, has endorsed the second annual Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival presented by UnitedHealth Group as an officially sanctioned event of Al Edwards’ Juneteenth USA.

The second annual Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival presented by UnitedHealth Group will kick off June 21st at Discovery Green Park in downtown Houston. Just as Al Edwards was tenacious in his efforts to have Juneteenth recognized as an official state holiday, the Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival is dedicated to reach those minority communities that have the greatest health care barriers and gaps in care through this family-oriented event.

Edwards said the festival highlights the need for urgent attention to health education and initiatives to reduce disparities.

“The festival reminds us that we can’t be late in getting information that will better our lives and in some cases save our lives,” said Edwards. “The purpose of this health festival is to provide information to our communities. We have to make changes before it’s too late.”

Edwards sponsored House Bill 1016 to make Juneteenth a state holiday. The bill passed in 1979. Edwards’ office still continues to work to spread the message about the importance of Juneteenth in supporting community events and organizations such as the Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival.

The festival will offer FREE health screenings, live entertainment, fitness demonstrations, a cooking competition, health conference and goods, services and products from more than 100 vendors. It will offer something for the entire family to enjoy and learn. This important celebration seeks to promote a healthier lifestyle within African Americans, Hispanics and Asians.

The second annual Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival presented by UnitedHealth Group will operate from noon to 6 p.m. kicking off immediately after the Juneteenth Parade.

Although the celebration of Juneteenth originated in Texas, the holiday is widely celebrated in many big and small cities across the country. Celebrated on June 19, the holiday commemorates the announcement of the abolition of slavery in Texas.

For additional information and media downloads regarding the event visit <http://www.houstonhealthfestival.org/press.html>

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