

## FRANK E



My name is Frank E. Thompson, Jr. and I'm thrilled to join Our Walk to Freedom for the 2024 Juneteenth Emancipation Walk. As a native of Fort Worth, TX, I grew up participating in annual Juneteenth celebrations. However, I was not exposed to most of the layered history behind this bittersweet commemoration until I was in college in Massachusetts. This endeavor is special to me for several reasons: 1) It represents a chance to pay homage to freedom-seekers from my home state and the national holiday their experience inspired; 2) It will provide a renewed appreciation of the

Juneteenth celebrations from my youth (and a chance to share that with my children and grandchildren); 3) I will be able to honor those in both my mother's and father's families who survived enslavement, sharecropping, Jim Crow laws and other indignities based on the color of their skin to build families that now span the nation and planet; and 4) To share the experience of doing a Freedom Walk with my long-time friend, Kenny Johnston. I truly believe that by the end of this Emancipation Walk I will not be the same person who started this endeavor. Already I have learned new stories about the original Juneteenth storyline. I look forward to learning more as Kenny and I complete our 51-mile journey from Galveston to Houston! I invite all my family and friends to support the Emancipation Walk in any way you can: financial support, lodging or meals, walking first mile or last mile or all of the above.

Frank is the Co-Founder and CEO of BHTJ Consulting, LLC, a Kansas City, MO firm that empowers organizations by providing capacity building and leadership development support. (The name BHTJ honors the maternal and paternal family lines for both my wife, Carole Bowe Thompson, [Bowe & Hadley].and myself [Thompson & Johnson].) Previously I served as Deputy Director and Interim Director of Health for the Kansas City (MO) Health Department.