



# Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

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Re: Native Mascots & Native American Heritage Month

Tekwanonhwerá:tons/Greetings,

As the federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe; the Tribal Council stands in unison and supports efforts by tribal nations, community organizations, advocacy groups, individuals, and others to eradicate the use of derogatory and harmful stereotypes of Native Americans -- including the usage of Native mascots by schools, colleges, universities, and professional athletic teams.

We adamantly object to the ongoing practice of using Native images, names, and likenesses; including in the form of caricatures and logos; and view their continued usage as offensive and a form of institutional racism -- particularly by educational institutions and systems that should strive to be supportive environments for inclusiveness and diversity.

Secondary school systems and educational systems that promote ethnic stereotypes -- despite the civil rights movement that took place decades ago -- still have not fully embraced racial equality and continue to do an injustice and disservice to the young impressionable students under their guidance. Their failure to take corrective action by immediately banning Native names and mascots only serves to perpetuate the negative and prejudicial treatment toward Native Americans and the contributions we have made and continue to make across the United States.

Native Americans have a long and distinguished history of educating and building the groundwork for this global pillar of democracy and, once proud, world leader of racial equality on multiple levels -- from the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Nations serving as an example of the oldest living form of participatory democracy for this country's founding fathers in crafting the U.S. Constitution; the usage of Native languages by American Indian Code Talkers that proved unbreakable and successfully directed massive military operations in winning World War II; to

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the prowess and fearlessness of Native ironworkers that constructed many of the skyscrapers, towers, and bridges across this country, just to name a few.

So, with the annual Native American Heritage Month taking place in November, let's improve the historic relationship between settlers and this country's Indigenous Peoples by raising the general awareness of the mistreatment and challenges that Native Americans continue to endure- including the offensive portrayal of Native people through negative stereotypes and mascots.

Along with celebrating our rich culture, traditions, and histories: let's finally eliminate Native mascots and logos; investigate and provide a full accounting of Indian residential and boarding schools; safeguard and protect Indigenous sacred sites and resources, such as clean drinking water; and devote more attention and measures towards searching for and preventing anymore missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

If the intent is to honor Native peoples, including the Mohawks, then the greatest form of flattery is to make our challenges your own. The time has surely come for all of us to be treated as equals and respected.

Skennen/Peace,

SAINT REGIS MOHAWK TRIBAL COUNCIL