

History of Progress

[See also: The Washington "R*dskins" Nickname: A Timeline](#)

Native American Names Used In Sports/Mascots Chronology

1968

National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) launches campaign to address stereotypes found in print and other media.

1969

Native American activists at Dartmouth College continue to promote changes that will result in that school's "Indians" nickname soon being replaced by "Big Green."

1970

April 17 – University of Oklahoma retires its "Little Red" mascot that had been a traditional part of the school's athletics since the 1940s.

Protests against the "Indians" professional baseball team's use of the "Chief Wahoo" mascot take place in Cleveland, Ohio.

1971

Marquette University (WI) abandons its "Willie Wampum" mascot. Prior to the 1994 season the university would also change its "Indian" related "Warriors" nickname to "Golden Eagles."

1972

A petition by American Indian students at Stanford University results in that school dropping its "Indian"

sports team nickname and logos.

Dickinson State (N.D.) changes from the "Savages" to the "Blue Hawks."

Increasing efforts begun in the 1960s, First Nations students at the University of North Dakota (UND) take steps to retire the school's "Fighting Sioux" nickname.

1979

Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, did away with its "Saltine Warrior" mascot.

St. Bonaventure, St. Bonaventure, New York, retired its "Brown Indians" and "Brown Squaws" sports team mascots.

1980

Southern Oregon University ends a tradition begun in 1950 when its "Red Raiders" sports teams cease using several depictions of Indian chiefs as mascots and symbolic logos for sporting events.

1988

The Michigan State Civil Rights Commission issues a report on nicknames, logos and mascots depicting Native American people in Michigan education institutions.

Minnesota State Board of Education adopts a resolution stating that "[t]he use of mascots, emblems, or symbols depicting American Indian culture or race (is) unacceptable" and encourages all districts to immediately proceed to remove such mascots, etc.

Public Schools in Wisconsin begin to change their American Indian related sports team logos, mascots and nicknames. As of 1998, 21 schools, almost one-third of the total using such icons, had changed so far.

Siena College in Loudonville, New York, drops its "Indians" nickname to become the "Saints."

Saint Mary's College (MN) changes its nickname from "Red Men" to the "Cardinals."

1989

Charlene Teters, a Native American graduate student attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, initiates efforts to eliminate that school's "Chief Illiniwek" mascot

1991

The Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs requests 27 public schools in that state to end their use of American Indian mascots and nicknames.

The National Education Association (NEA), the largest democratic education organization of its kind in the world, passes resolutions in two consecutive years (1991/92) denouncing the use of ethnic related sports team mascots, symbols and nicknames.

Eastern Michigan University changes its "Huron" nickname and logos to the "Eagles."

Advocates protest at the Minneapolis Metrodome where Superbowl XXVI found the Buffalo Bills pitted against the Washington Redskins****.

1992

The Portland Oregonian announces it will no longer use the "R-word" and several other American Indian related terms in print. Radio stations WASH and WTOP in Washington, D.C. also adopt similar policies.

Simpson College, a school affiliated with the United Methodist Church, drops its "Redmen" and "Lady Reds" nickname in favor of "Storm." The following year the college adopts "Thundercat" as its mascot.

Despite a lawsuit and more than 2,000 signatures signed in protest, Naperville Central High School (IL) switches its nickname from the "R-word" to the "Redhawks."

Grand Forks Central High School (ND) changes its sports teams' nickname from the "R-word" to "Knights."

1993

National Congress of American Indians issues a resolution which "denounces the use of any American Indian name or artifice associated with team mascots." Resolution #MID-GB-58

Arvada High School, near Denver, Colorado, drops its "R-word" sports team nickname.

1994

The State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction issues directive "strongly urging" all Wisconsin schools using American Indian related mascots to discontinue such uses.

Enumclaw Junior High School (WA) dropped its "Chieftain" mascot.

Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, exchanged its "Warriors" nickname for "Hawks."

As a show of appreciation for having changed its "Indian" mascot, Park High school in Cottage Grove, Minnesota, is awarded \$10,000 by the Prairie Island Mdewakanton Sioux Community.

Prior to the 1994-95 season Marquette University retired its "Warriors" nickname in favor of "Golden Eagles."

1995

St. John's, the largest Catholic university in America, drops its "Redmen" nickname in favor of "Redstorm."

1996

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga discontinues the use of its "Chief Moccannooga" mascot. The following year the teams' "Moccasins" nickname was shorted to "Mocs" in reference to Tennessee's state bird, the Mockingbird.

Miami University of Ohio (Oxford, OH) drops its "R-word" nickname.

The Toronto Bluejays triple-A farm team in Syracuse, NY, heeds concerns expressed by advocates and changes its nickname from the "Chiefs" to the "Skychiefs."

Hull Western Christian school in Hull, Iowa, is honored by the Sioux City Human Rights Commission for retiring the school's "Indians" mascot/logo.

In a process that began in 1995, Adams State University (Alamosa, CO) changes its mascot from an "Indian" to a "Grizzly."

Newtown High School in Sandy Hook, Connecticut drops its "Indians" nickname in favor of the "Nighthawks."

The United Methodist Church takes an official stance concerning demeaning names to Native Americans as well as on other related topics.

Fremont High School in Sunnyvale, California, changed its mascot from "Indians" to "Firebirds"

Students at Hortonville, Wisconsin, adopt a non-recognition policy stating their school will not use cheers, names, etc., related to "Indian" sports team tokens employed by opposing teams.

1997

Jay Rosenstein's documentary "In Whose Honor" is aired nationally on the Public Broadcasting System TV show "Point of View." Mr. Rosenstein's film highlights Charlene Teters' efforts to eliminate the "Chief Illiniwek" mascot used by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The Board of Education for the Los Angeles, California consolidated school district moves to eliminate "Indian" related mascots from four schools in its jurisdiction.

The minor league Canton-Akron "Indians" rename themselves the Akron "Aeros" and boost their merchandise sales from \$60,000 to \$1.2 million, the largest merchandise income of any minor league team.

1998

Yakima College (Washington State) respects concerns expressed by its American Indian community and elects to retire the institution's race-related mascot.

The Kansas Association for Native American Education (KANAE) issues a resolution that "...calls for the elimination of use of American Indian mascots and logos in all public and private schools in the State of Kansas..."

The American Jewish Committee approves a statement on team names which notes it "deplores and opposes the use of racial or ethnic stereotypes in the names or titles of business, professional, sport or their public entities when the affected group has not chosen the name itself."

Approximately 200 anti-"Indian" mascot activists from around the country converge at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana for the first national Conference on the Elimination of Racist Mascots.

A federal judge upholds the Los Angeles consolidated school board's 1997 decision to eliminate several "Indian" related mascots and nicknames from its district.

Southern Nazarene University, a small Christian school in Bethany, Oklahoma, retires its "R-word" nickname in favor of "Crimson Storm."

New York State Education Department Commissioner directs his staff to undertake a statewide review of public schools using American Indian related sports team tokens.

Despite personal hardships faced by a White Mountain Apache student and his family, a bitter five year struggle at a public school in Medford, Wisconsin ends victoriously when the school is compelled to drop its "Screaming Indian with Mohawk haircut" logo.

Oregon's Chemeketa Community College drops its "Chiefs" nickname and selects "Storm" for its new one.

Since the 1970s, twenty high schools in Oregon have also changed their "Indian" related nicknames and mascots.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee concludes that "Indian mascots that promote Indian caricatures and mimic ceremonial rites do not comply with the NCAA's commitment to ethnic student welfare."

Following a complaint made by the program manager for American Indian Education, 10 public schools in Dallas, Texas, make plans to retire their respective "Indian" mascots by the end of the 1998-99 school year.

Oklahoma City University, a college affiliated with the United Methodist Church, decides to replace its "Chiefs" nickname dating back to 1944.

Morningside College of Sioux City, Iowa, changes its nickname from the "Maroon Chiefs" to the Mustangs.

1999

The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, a consortium of twelve federally recognized Indian tribes, issues a resolution calling for the end of "the use of depictions of and cultural references to American Indians as mascots, logos, and team nicknames in Wisconsin public schools."

Erwin High school in Asheville, NC is investigated for discrimination by the United States Department of Justice because of its "Indian" related nicknames and mascot.

A panel in Utah decides that the "R-word" is derogatory term and forbids its use on motor vehicle license plates.

Citing educational concerns about misinterpretations of the crayon color's name, Crayola announces plans to change "Indian red" to something less ambiguous.

A landmark victory concludes a legal battle begun in 1992 as a three-judge panel of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules that the "R-word" is a term disparaging to Native Americans and tends to bring them "into contempt or disrepute." The decision has the potential to strip the Washington NFL team of trademark protections.

Millard South High in Omaha, Nebraska, one of the largest schools in the state, graciously decides to change its "Indians" spirit symbol.

Following the lead of its Champaign-Urbana branch, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) unanimously approves a second mascot resolution.

Detailing a number of important points and concerns, The Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs issues a mascot resolution.

Appalled by the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana's use of a stereotypic "Indian" mascot the prestigious Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas offers a formal position on Illiniwek.

Following almost ten years of controversy, a high school in Milton, Wisconsin, retires its "Redmen" nickname.

The U.S. Census Bureau adopts a policy on non-use of Athletic Teams with American Indian or Alaska Native Names in Promoting Census 2000

In a poll conducted by the National Spectator's Association, 60% of respondents indicate they want the "Wahoo" logo of the Cleveland Major League Baseball team to be changed.

Research conducted by a college professor debunks the myth that the Cleveland MLB team was named in "honor" of Louis Sockalexis, one of the first Native Americans to play for that club.

Rickards High in Florida wisely decides to retire its 40 year old "R-word" nickname.

Oklahoma City University finalizes plans to change its "Chiefs" nickname to "Stars"

ESPN airs a special program on Native Americans in sports and which contains a segment on the mascot issue. Follow-up coverage included an insightful online chat session with leading advocate, Suzan Shown Harjo.

The Society of Indian Psychologists of the Americas issues a position statement that receives recognition in a publication of the prestigious American Psychological Association.

The main Cleveland area public library enacts a dress code that prohibits its 700 employees from wearing garments bearing "Wahoo" images.

Ten schools in the Dallas, Texas, area follow through on a 1997 decision to change their "Indian" sports team tokens.

The Hutchinson Human Relations Commission, Hutchinson Kansas, issues a resolution

2000

Hendrix College in Arkansas retires its stereotypic "Indian-head" logo while retaining its "Warriors" nickname.

Seattle University, a Jesuit school in Washington State, completes its transition from the "Chieftains" to the "Redhawks."

Frontier High School in Deerfield, Massachusetts, changes its "R-word" nickname.

Niles West High School in Skokie, Illinois, retires its "Indians" nickname.

Onteora High School in Boiceville, New York, retires its "Indians" nickname and other related practices only to see reactionary school board candidates win seats and reinstate the school's "Indian" sports team token. The district is believed to be the first in the country to rescind an anti-discrimination policy in order to keep its racial icon.

Hiawatha, Kansas, retires the "R-word" nickname from all schools in its district.

The Canajoharie school district in New York state retires use of "R-word" nickname.

2001

Saranac Lake, New York, retires the "R-word" nickname from all schools in its district.

Finally taking action on an appeal that was filed five years earlier, the New York State Education Department calls for the retirement of institutionalized "Indian" sports team nicknames, mascots, and logos from its public schools.

The school board for Penfield High School, near Rochester, NY, displays a healing gesture and votes 7-0 to retire the school's "Chiefs" sports team token.

Sagamore Hills Elementary school in Atlanta, Georgia, decides it will no longer use a "Chiefs" mascot and prepares to consider alternative ways of showing support for that city's MLB team besides school-wide "tomahawk chops" and war chants.

By the unanimous vote of its school board, Afton, NY, public schools exhibits good judgment and retired its "Indians" mascot.

In an action that removes all doubt about the seriousness of concerns surrounding the use of "Indian" sports team tokens, The United States Commission on Civil Rights issues a position statement calling for educational institutions to avoid use of such ethnic nicknames and mascots.

Parsipanny High School in Parsipanny, NJ, exhibits courageous vision by retiring its racial slur "R-word" nickname.

Following its President's recommendation, along with support from coaches and student government leaders, Southwestern College in Chula Vista, California, wisely elects to change its "Apaches" mascot to "Jaguars."

The Bell-Chatham board of education in Illinois votes in favor of retiring the "R-word" and "Braves" nicknames used by its schools.

Illinois Valley Community College in Oglesby, Illinois, retires its "Apaches" nickname and provides a good example that the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana and other institutions using "Indian" sports team tokens would do well to follow.

Advocates from across the country convene at the Northern Plains Conference on American Indian Team Names and Logos held at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

The Minnesota Indian Education Association adopts a resolution in opposition to the University of North Dakota's use of the "Fighting Sioux" name and logo.

Irondequoit High School, near Rochester, New York, makes plans to replace its "Indians" nickname.

The Modern Language Association passes a resolution on mascots and symbols. The MLA includes over 30,000 members in the fields of English, foreign languages, and linguistics.

The Quinnipiac University Board of Trustees Votes To Discontinue Use of 'The Braves' Nickname

Cumberland College in Williamsburg, Kentucky, changes its "Indian" themed mascot to "Patriots."

Stating the district will not use any mascot that reflects any identifiable group by age, race, color, gender, religion or national origin, the District 87 school board voted to retire Bloomington High School's (Illinois) American Indian mascot. BHS kept the Purple Raiders nickname.

American Counseling Association passed a resolution that encouraged "its members to work toward elimination of stereotypical Native American images in institutions where they are employed."

The Seminole, Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Muskogee Nations, representing over 400,000 people throughout the United States, passed a resolution "to eliminate the stereotypical use of American Indian names and images as mascots in sports and other events and to provide meaningful education about real American Indian people, current American Indian issues, and, the rich variety of American Indian cultures in

the U.S.”

The National Conference for Community and Justice issued a Statement in Opposition of American Indian Mascots

The Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs approve “a Resolution in Support of The Elimination of the Use of American Indian Descriptions of Mascots, Logos and Sports Team Nicknames for Maryland Public Schools and Institutions of Higher Education.”

In its 2000-2001 session, the National Education Association passed a resolution which reaffirmed its 1991/92 Resolutions denouncing the use of ethnic related mascots, nicknames and symbols. The National Education Association (NEA), is the largest democratic education organization of its kind in the world.

2002

The Iowa Civil Rights Commission passed a Resolution Opposing the Use of Native American Images, Mascots, and Team Names in Iowa

The Durham (North Carolina) franchise in the summer collegiate Coastal Plain League changed its nickname from Braves to Americans.

34 presidents of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board unanimously adopted a resolution against discriminatory logos, names, mascots and nicknames

West High School in Oshkosh Wisconsin retired its “Indian” themed mascot.

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts decided its sports teams will no longer be known as Mohawks.

New Hampshire State Board of Education unanimously approved a resolution calling for local school districts to stop using American Indian sports mascots.

North Carolina State Advisory Council on Indian Education passed a resolution “in Support of Eliminating American Indian Descriptions Naming Mascots, Logos, and Sport Team Nicknames for North Carolina Public Schools.”

Illinois State University Student Government Association passed a resolution expressing “its support for the leadership and members of the Native American Student Association in their efforts to combat racially stereotypical mascots.”

Southeastern Community College, in West Burlington, Iowa, makes a smart and painless change by

dropping the “Indian” association to its “Blackhawk” nickname and changing it to reflect a bird of prey, the “Black Hawks.”

Martin Methodist College in Pulaski, Tennessee, changed its sports team nickname from “Indians” to “Redhawks”

2003

Joining the ranks of other newspapers that have also adopted similar guidelines the Nebraska Journal Star newspaper amends its style and, along with other related changes, will no longer print the “R-word” racial slur.

The Telegraph-Forum, a newspaper in Central Ohio, discontinues its use of “Chief Wahoo.”

The Michigan State Board of Education passes a resolution that “supports and strongly recommends the elimination of American Indian mascots, nicknames, logos, fight songs, insignias, antics, and team descriptors by all Michigan schools.”

The Peoria Chiefs, a minor league affiliate of the Chicago Cubs, changes its logo from an American Indian to a Dalmatian fire chief.

2007

Indiana University of Pennsylvania changed its nickname from the Indians to the Crimson Hawks

2013

The Cooperstown Central School Board of Education voted in March to remove the “R-word” mascot from its interscholastic athletic, extracurricular and academic programs. The move was prompted by a vote by the student body, asking that the mascot be changed. The Oneida Indian Nation was so moved by the actions of the Cooperstown students, that a \$10,000 contribution was made to help offset the cost of changing mascots.

2013

Radnor High School in Pennsylvania ends the use of the “Red Raider” as the school mascot.

In an effort to encourage students to see beyond skin color and stereotypes the Teton High School in Driggs, Idaho dropped the use of its “R-word” logo and mascot and made plans to change the name of its school newspaper “The War Cry”.

Ten members of Congress including Tom Cole, R-Okla., and Betty McCollum, D-Minn., co-chairs of the Congressional Native American Caucus, sent a letter to Washington "R-word" owner Dan Snyder and National Football League Commissioner Roger Goodell asking them to consider changing the team's name out of respect for the country's native people. Congress introduces bill that would amend the 1946 Trademark Act and cancel any trademark that used the "R-word"

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell declared that NFL league and team officials "need to be listening" to the mounting calls for change. The commissioner's declaration, made during an interview with D.C.'s 106.7 "The Fan," comes just days after the Oneida Indian Nation launched the first ad in its "Change the Mascot" campaign.

The Nepean Redskins, an Ontario football team, announced that it will no longer use the nickname 'Redskins' after the end of the current football season. Ottawa musician Ian Campeau, an Ojibway native, had filed a complaint in the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal asking Canada's National Capital Amateur Football Association to change the name of the team. Nepean is a city located close to Ottawa, the Canadian capital.

In December Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid speaks out against the name of the Washington team name saying it "[denigrates a race of people.](#)"

In December the [Houston Independent School District](#) approved a policy change to ban the use of offensive or culturally insensitive mascots. The ban affects four schools within the district.

2014

In January the [U.S. Patent and Trademark](#) office denied a company's request to sell pork rinds with the name "Redskins" under trademark laws because the term is "a derogatory slang word."

[In January the Oneida Indian Nation responded to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell's remarks defending the racist name of the Washington team.](#)

In April, human rights expert and United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples James Anaya today called the Washington NFL team's current R-word team name a "hurtful reminder of past suffering of Native American." [Oneida Indian Nation and National Congress of American Indians applauded the UN for condemning the hurtful name of Washington's NFL team.](#)

In late April the [Oneida Indian Nation praised the NBA for issuing a lifetime ban to Los Angeles Clippers Owner Donald Sterling](#) for racist remarks, and called on the NFL to take similar action against Washington owner Daniel Snyder.

In early May both houses of the [New York State legislature pass a resolution](#) calling upon professional sports leagues to stop using racial slurs, specifically citing the Washington NFL team's R-word mascot as a dictionary-defined epithet.

In May the [Oneida Indian Nation and the National Congress of American Indians praise 50 U.S. Senators for sending a letter to NFL urging change for the D.C. team's mascot.](#)

In May the Oneida Indian Nation and the National Congress of the American Indian send a [letter to all current NFL players](#) asking them to take a stand against the use of the racially offensive "R-word" as the Washington team name. The letter was signed by more than seventy civil and human rights groups. Read the letter [here](#).

In the beginning of June [Civil Rights Icon and Olympian John Carlos and former Washington, D.C. NFL player Tre' Johnson speak out against the Washington mascot](#), joining several other current and former NFL players speaking out against the name, including Richard Sherman and DeAngelo Hall.

In June the Yocha Dehe Tribe airs a [TV commercial against the Washington team mascot](#) in seven major markets during the NBA finals. The video now has more than 3 million views.

In June, the United Church of Christ Central Atlantic Conference [passes a resolution](#) calling for the Washington football team to change its' nickname and also calling for members of the church to boycott the team, games, merchandise and products.

June 18 – the [U.S. Patent and Trademark Office cancels the trademark for the Washington NFL team](#)

In September the Change the Mascot Campaign celebrated news of data showing that the National Football League broadcasters have [significantly reduced the use of the R-Word](#) on air.

In October, New Jersey State Assemblymen Patrick Diegnan and Ralph Caputo introduce a set of resolutions calling for a name change from the Washington D.C. NFL team.

On Nov. 2 more than 4,000 R-Word protestors gathered at TCF Bank Stadium in Minneapolis Minnesota prior to a game between the Minnesota and Washington NFL teams.

Dec. 8, the Oklahoma City School Board [votes 8-0](#) to change the R-word mascot of Capitol Hill High School

2015

Feb. 9. The United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc., during it's annual Impact Week meeting, endorsed a [bill](#)

by [Rep. Mike Honda \(D-CA\)](#) that would remove all trademark protections of the Washington NFL team as long as the franchise retains the R-word racial slur as its mascot.

Feb. 12. [Sandy Spring Friends School](#) in Maryland accepted a proposal submitted by this year's Native American History Class to ban the term "redskins" on campus.

June 17, 2015. As [landmark legislation banning R-word](#) clears key committee in California, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan calls upon Washington NFL team to drop offensive mascot

June 29, 2015. [National United Church of Christ](#) passes a resolution calling on team to change its name and for its 1.1 million membership to boycott games and merchandise

July 8, 2015. A federal judge rules for the [cancellation of the trademark](#) of the Washington R*dskins football team name.

July 27, 2015. The Goshen Community Schools in Indiana decides to [remove the r-word as the school mascot](#), effective Jan. 1, 2016.

Oct. 7, 2015. Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper orders executive action to create a commission that will study American Indian representations in the state's public schools and facilitate constructive dialogue with Native Americans on the topic.

Oct. 11, 2015. Gov. Brown of California signs the California Racial Mascots Act, a law that [eliminates the dictionary-defined R-word](#) slur as a mascot from all of the state's public schools.

Feb. 17, 2016: [U.S. Rep. John Katko](#) becomes the latest elected official to condemn the use of the racist r-word nickname of the Washington NFL team, sending a letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell encouraging him to endorse a name change. Katko called the term hateful and hurtful.

April, 2016: Colorado panel of state officials and tribal leaders urge state's public schools to eliminate derogatory Native American mascots. The panel was created by Gov. John Hickenlooper to address the important issue of Native American representation in the state's schools.

Sources: American Indian Sport Team Mascots / Aistm.org

Notable Colleges and Universities That Have Changed Their Names

(from usatoday.com)

- Stanford University – Indians to Cardinal (1972)
- University of Massachusetts – Redmen to Minutemen (1972)

- Dartmouth – Indians to Big Green (1974)
- Siena – Indians to Saints (1988)
- Eastern Michigan – Hurons to Eagles (1991)
- St. John's (N.Y.) – Redmen to Red Storm (1994)
- Marquette – Warriors to Golden Eagles (1994)
- Miami (Ohio) – Redskins to RedHawks (1997)
- Seattle University – Chieftains to Redhawks (2000)
- Louisiana-Monroe – Indians to Warhawks (2006)
- Arkansas State – Indians to Red Wolves (2008)
- North Dakota – formally dropped Fighting Sioux in 2012. No nickname currently.

ONE THOUGHT ON "HISTORY OF PROGRESS"

Pingback: [Sports teams that retired Native American mascots, nicknames | Local National News](#)