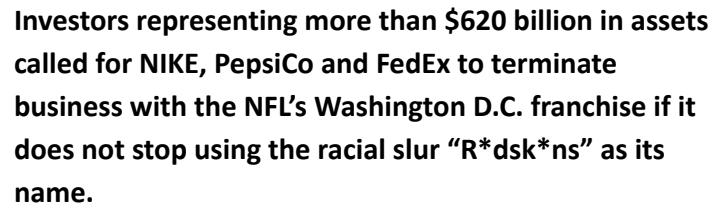


[RESOURCES](#) | [NEWS & FURTHER BACKGROUND](#) | [ARCHIVED SOCIALS](#)



The letters, which were sent on Friday, June 26, 2020, were an initiative of the **Investors & Indigenous Peoples**

Following receipt of the letters on July 2, [FedEx issued a statement](#) in support of the name change and [NIKE removed all R*dsk*ns apparel](#) from its online store. By July 3 [the Washington team announced it was reviewing its name](#), after which [PepsiCo](#), [Bank of America](#) and [NIKE](#) also issued statements in support of the name change. Retailers [Walmart and Target](#), [Dick's Sporting Goods](#) and [Amazon.com](#) subsequently dropped all Washington team merchandise. The investors group responded with [a call for the team to invite Native leaders into the review process](#) and address "all hurtful words, imagery and stereotypes, including the logo and mascot."

[illegible]

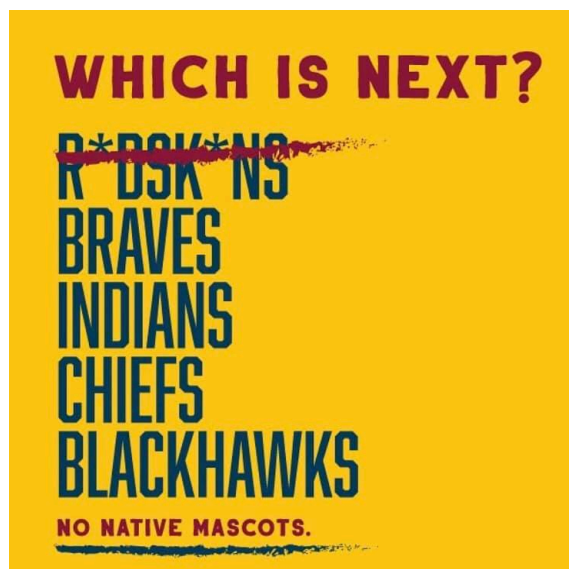
The letter requested specifically:

- ⚠️ Immediately change the name R*dsk*ns, a dictionary defined racial slur for Native Peoples
- ⚠️ Cease the use of racialized Native American branding by eliminating all imagery of or evocative of Native American culture, traditions, and spirituality from the team franchise, and end the use of Native terms, feathers, arrows, or monikers that assume the presence of Native American culture, as well as any characterization of any physical attributes
- ⚠️ Cease the use of the 2016 Washington Post Poll and the 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey, which were not academically vetted and were called unethical and inaccurate by the Native American Journalist Association, and deemed damaging by other prominent organizations that represent Native peoples
- ⚠️ Encourage journalists, writers and reporters to use the team name in print only by using asterisks (i.e. “R*dsk*ns”) and to refer to the term verbally as the “R-word”
- ⚠️ Ban all use of Native imagery, names, slur names, redface, appropriation of Native culture and spirituality, as well as violence toward Native peoples from the NFL
- ⚠️ Apply the NFL’s “zero tolerance” for on-field use of racial and homophobic slurs to all races and ethnic groups, especially Native Peoples
- ⚠️ Complete a full rebranding of the Washington team name, logo, mascot, and color scheme, to ensure that continuing harm is not perpetuated by anyone

On Monday, July 13, [the Washington team announced it was retiring its name and logo](#), owing to [decades of Native-led advocacy](#) on the ground, in courtrooms and through corporate and shareholder engagement. Discussing the historic occasion, advocates call for the need for continued engagement given that the team has yet to unveil its new name and logo and that [“2,200 high schools use Native imagery in their school names and mascots”](#) in the U.S. today.

See statements on the name retirement from:

[Suzan Shown Harjo](#)
[Amanda Blackhorse](#)
[National Congress of American Indians](#)
[Oneida Nation Change the Mascot](#)
[Native American Rights Fund](#)
[National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center](#)
[First Peoples Worldwide](#)
[IllumiNative](#)
[NDN Collective](#)



We invite everyone to please share news of this initiative widely. Please find further resources, engagement tools and archival social media content suggestions below.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[IllumiNative](#)

- Campaign: [Change the Name](#), including social media-ready graphics, e.g.:



- Statement: [Offensive to Native Americans, Racist Mascots Have No Place In Sports](#) (02/13/2020)

[NoMoreNativeMascots.org](#)

- [Take Action](#) - A growing list of petitions from students, alumni and community members, throughout the U.S. working toward changing “Native” imagery and Native themed names in their local schools.

[National Congress of American Indians](#)

- Resolution: [Opposing the Washington NFL Team’s Return to the District of Columbia until the Franchise Changes Its Offensive Name](#) (2018)
- [Ending the Era of Harmful ‘Indian’ Mascots](#) (Video)

[ChangeTheMascot.org](#)

- [The psycho-social effects of Native American mascots: a comprehensive review of empirical research findings, Race Ethnicity and Education](#) by Laurel R. Davis-Delano, Joseph P. Gone & Stephanie A. Fryberg (2020)
- [The Harmful Psychological Effects of the Washington Football Mascot](#) (PDF) (2013)

See also:

[Owning ‘Red’: A Theory of Indian \(Cultural\) Appropriation](#) by Angela R. Riley and Kristen A. Carpenter

RECENT NEWS & FURTHER BACKGROUND

[Behind the scenes of the investor push to change Washington's football team name](#)

Tisha Thompson, ESPN - September 2, 2020

[Braves work with tribe to address cultural concerns](#)

Joseph Martin, *Indian Country Today* - August 28 2020

[Teams must do more than ban Native American headdress, offensive gestures](#)

Dr. Natalie Welch and Christopher Buccafusco, *The Undeclared* - August 27, 2020

[The Chiefs offload their racism problem on their fans, who they'll be letting in their stadium amid coronavirus](#)

Dennis Young, *New York Daily News* - August 21

[Kansas City Chiefs to prohibit Native American imagery at Arrowhead](#)

Associated Press (via *The Guardian*) - August 20, 2020

[A look at the history of racism in mascots at Stanford and schools across the country](#)

Elizabeth Wilson, *The Stanford Daily* - August 13, 2020

[Native mascots still a sticking point in high school sports](#)

Sophia Eppolito and Felicia Fonseca, *Associated Press* - August 9, 2020

[For activist Amanda Blackhorse, Washington's NFL team finally dropping racist name is far from enough](#)

Katherine Fitzgerald, *Arizona Republic* (via *USA Today*) - July 19, 2020

[I am Native American and a former football player. Our history is much darker than racist mascots.](#)

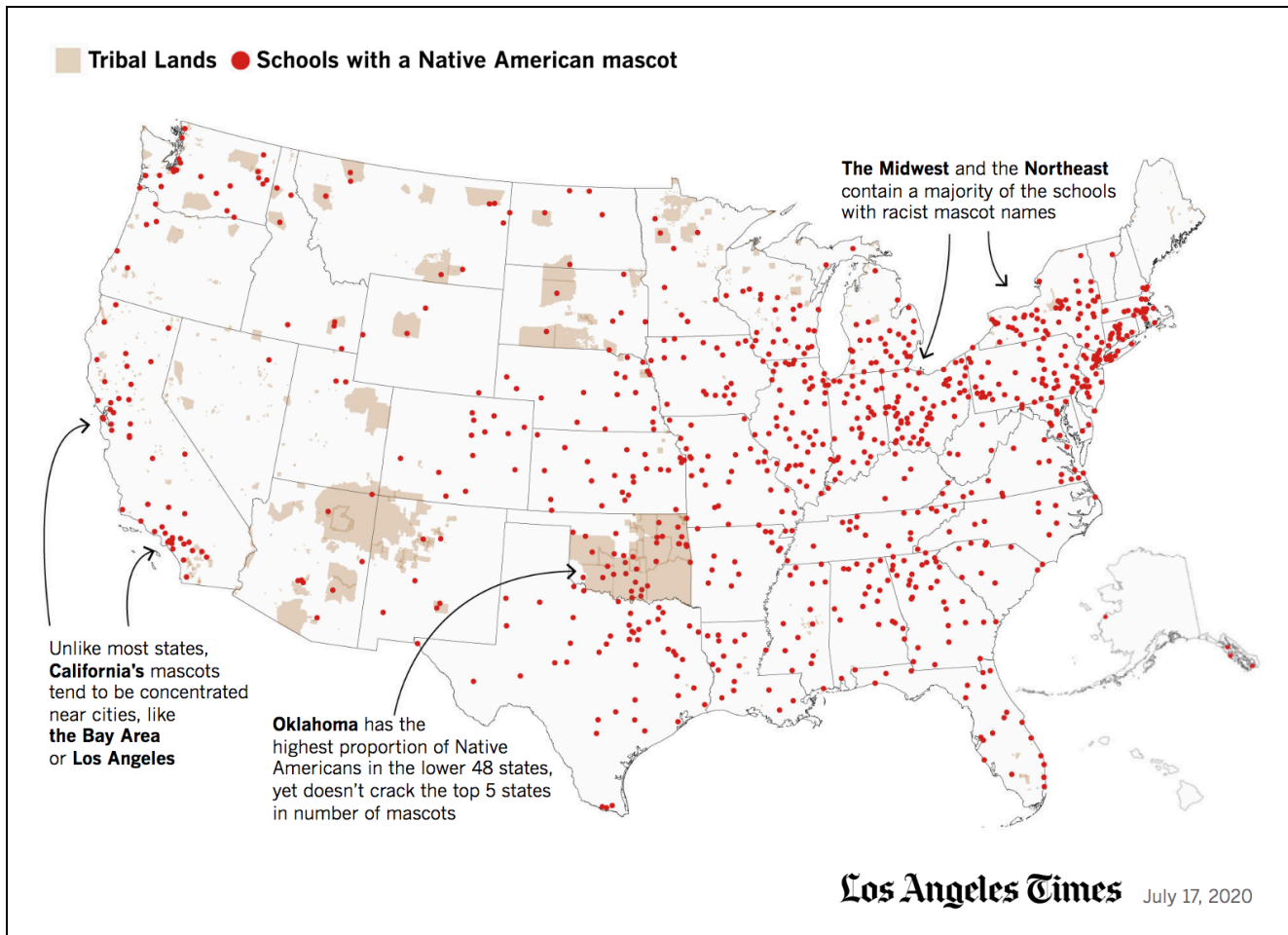
Rory Taylor, *VOX* - July 19, 2020

['It was just elation': Tribes in Washington celebrate name change in other Washington](#)

Larry Stone, *The Seattle Times* - July 18, 2020

[Pro sports teams are starting to get rid of racist names. Hundreds of U.S. high schools still have them](#)

Rahul Mukherjee, *Los Angeles Times* - July 17, 2020



[Decision to retire Washington NFL team name was a 'decades' long battle](#)

Chuck Todd, "Meet the Press" / MSNBC - July 17, 2020

[High schools are front lines in mascots fight](#)

Mary Annette Pember, *Indian Country Today* - July 17, 2020

[The Cleveland Indians Need to Do More Than Change the Team's Name](#)

Nick Francona, *GQ* - July 17, 2020

[Time to reconsider Native American names, say activists and academics](#)

Amy Tennery, Reuters - July 16, 2020

[A Team by Any Other Name Is Fine, It Turns Out](#)

Kevin Draper, *The New York Times* - July 16, 2020

[Report: Canadian Football League team to change controversial mascot](#)

Dalton Walker, *Indian Country Today* - Jul 16, 2020

[Indigenous groups push for mascot ban and state seal change](#)

Philip Marcelo, *Associated Press* - July 16, 2020

[Washington NFL team retires mascot](#)

Donovan Quintero, *Navajo Times* - July 16, 2020

[How the events of 2020 forced the Washington NFL team's name change](#)

John Keim, *ESPN* - July 15, 2020

[What the Redskins Name and Confederate Statues Have in Common](#)

Philip Deloria, *Politico* - July 15, 2020

[The Deep History—and Troubling Impact—of Sports Teams Using Native American Mascots](#)

Anna Purna Kambhampaty, *TIME* - July 14, 2020

['David and Goliath': Arizona leaders applaud name change of NFL Washington team](#)

Jordan Roger, *Cronkite News* (via *Indianz.com*) - July 14, 2020

[Suzan Harjo fought for decades to remove the Redskins name. She'll wait to celebrate.](#)

Courtland Milloy, *The Washington Post* - July 14, 2020

[Mascots honor an Indian who never was](#)

Mary Annette Pember - *Indian Country Today* - Jul 13, 2020

[Will the Braves and Indians change names?](#)

Craig Calcaterra, *NBC Sports* - July 13, 2020

[An Activist Shares Her Reaction To Washington NFL Team Finally Retiring Its Name](#)

Sarah McCammon, "All Things Considered" / *NPR* - July 13, 2020

[For Native American Activists, Washington Name Change Was 'a Long Time Coming'](#)

Kevin Draper and Gillian R. Brassil, *The New York Times* - July 13, 2020

[The Washington Redskins Will Change Their Team Name](#)

Mary Emily O'Hara, *Adweek* - July 13, 2020

[Washington's name change happened fast, but it was decades in the making](#)

Adam Kilgore and Scott Allen - *The Washington Post* - July 13, 2020

[Pressure shifts to other pro teams after Washington drops its Native American nickname and logo](#)

Tom Withers, *Associated Press* (via *Chicago Tribune*) - July 13, 2020

['Symbol of erasure, exploitation, racism': Arizona community reacts to Washington nickname controversy](#)

Jordan Rogers, *Cronkite News* (via *Indianz.com*) - July 13, 2020

[Washington NFL team kicks out R-word](#)

Aliyah Chavez and Kolby KickingWoman, *Indian Country Today* - July 12, 2020 (Updated 7/13)

[In Campaign Against Racism, Team Names Get New Scrutiny](#)

Gillian R. Brassil, Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio, Billy Witz and David Waldstein, *The New York Times* - July 10, 2020

[In private letter to Redskins, FedEx said it will remove signage if name isn't changed](#)

Liz Clarke, *The Washington Post* - July 10, 2020

[FedEx Made a Demand Dan Snyder Couldn't Afford to Dismiss](#)

Ken Belson and Kevin Draper, *The New York Times* - July 10, 2020

[Native Youth to NFL: We are not your mascot](#)

Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute, Indianz.com - July 8, 2020

[The Time Is Now: National Native Town Hall - Mascots, Native Rights, and Justice](#)

IllumiNative, Native Organizers Alliance and NDN Collective, Facebook Live - July 8, 2020

[Amazon joins 'tidal wave' of pressure on Washington NFL team](#)

Aliyah Chavez, *Indian Country Today* - July 8, 2020

[Redskins to ditch American Indian imagery in next name, logo: report](#)

By Matthew Paras, *The Washington Times* - July 8, 2020

[Native American groups ask NFL to force Redskins name change](#)

Stephen Whyno, *Associated Press* - July 6, 2020

[Leaked Letter to NFL by Native American Leaders Demands Immediate Action on Redskins Name](#)

Mary Emily O'Hara, *Adweek* - July 6, 2020

[Cleveland Indians Will Review Name After Redskins Controversy](#)

Mary Emily O'Hara, *Adweek* - July 6, 2020

[Washington NFL team's Standing Rock moment](#)

Mark Trahant, *Indian Country Today* - July 5, 2020

[3 Washington Redskins Co-Owners Want Out, But Daniel Snyder Remains All-In](#)

Scott McDonald, *Newsweek* - July 5, 2020

[Dan Snyder won't deserve an ounce of credit if he changes his team's name](#)

Jane McManus, *New York Daily News* - July 4, 2020

[Don't dance in the end zone ... yet](#)

Mary Annette Pember, *Indian Country Today* - July 3, 2020

[Washington Redskins launch review of controversial team name](#)

Rick Maese, Mark Maske & Liz Clarke, *The Washington Post* - July 3, 2020

"The Washington Redskins said Friday they were beginning a thorough review of the team's controversial nickname, a stunning step that came as a number of the team's largest corporate sponsors called for a change. The decision followed years in which the franchise refused to even consider such a move."

“Carla Fredericks, among the leaders of the corporate investors representing \$620 billion in assets that pressed FedEx, Nike and Pepsi to cut ties with the team if it didn’t change its name, on Friday called for the Redskins’ review process to be expedient and be led by native voices.”

“We don’t think that a long review process is necessary for a dictionary-defined racial slur,” said Fredericks... “And whatever review process is undertaken should be undertaken with native leadership at the forefront.”

[Washington Redskins Products No Longer Appear on Nike’s Apparel Site](#)

Doug Zanger, AdWeek - July 2, 2020

“Nike appears to have removed all of its NFL fan apparel for the Washington Redskins from its website. The move follows pressure from another sponsor, FedEx, which asked the team to change its name.”

[FedEx calls on Redskins to change name following investors’ demands on sponsors](#)

Liz Clarke, The Washington Post - July 2, 2020

“FedEx on Thursday became the first major corporate backer of the Washington Redskins to call on the team to change its name, the most significant development yet amid mounting financial and political pressure on team owner Daniel Snyder in the long-running controversy...”

Memphis-based FedEx said, “We have communicated to the team in Washington our request that they change the team name.”... The company’s request comes less than a week after a group of more than 85 investment firms and shareholders representing \$620 billion in assets called on FedEx, Nike and PepsiCo to sever ties with the team unless Snyder changes its name.”

“[Investors] are not threatening to boycott or divest from the companies. Rather, their move represents a campaign to work from within those companies to pressure their respective CEOs to put pressure on Snyder. FedEx’s statement Thursday is the first public result.”

“The shareholders see the name as a racial slur, and they feel FedEx, Nike and PepsiCo have obligations to honor their stated corporate values of inclusion and diversity. Thus, they believe the value of their investments will suffer if the companies continue supporting an NFL team that doesn’t reflect those values. In other words, they are demanding the companies ‘walk the talk’ of their stated values as they relate to the Washington team’s name.”

[Investors Ask Nike, FedEx and PepsiCo to End Relationships With the Washington Redskins](#)

Mary Emily O’Hara, Adweek - July 1, 2020

“Investment firms that put pressure on the Dakota Access Pipeline are now setting their sights on the Washington Redskins.”

“I’m very encouraged by the rising awareness of how every dollar you spend is a vote you cast on your values. And that applies to money you have in investments as well as any brands you support,” said [First Peoples Worldwide’s Carla] Fredericks. She added that because FedEx, Nike and PepsiCo are Fortune 500 companies, “anyone that has a simple stock portfolio with an index fund owns a share of these companies.”

“Institutional investors are especially concerned, said Fredericks, about the brands’ actions “that run counter to their stated commitments on diversity and inclusion” and how not abiding by those commitments violates basic corporate governance and raises questions about whether the brands are trustworthy. Each of the individual letters quotes the brands’ own very recent pledges to commit to the fight against systemic racism and to increase efforts toward diversity and inclusion.”

[Washington NFL team name is the ‘equivalent of the Confederate flag’](#)

Kolby KickingWoman, *Indian Country Today* - June 27, 2020

“Statues and logos with racist depictions are being dropped like bad habits as momentum continues to grow across the country for racial justice and equality. On Friday, nearly 90 investors representing more than \$620 billion in assets sent letters to three NFL sponsors: Nike, FedEx and Pepsi... calling for the termination of business and public relationships to the Washington NFL franchise until they change their controversial and racist team name... The letter cites PepsiCo dropping Aunt Jemima from syrup bottles and the removal of the “Native American” woman from packaging of Land O’ Lakes butter. Yet, the Washington football team name remains, a racial slur that dehumanizes Native people.”

“If there is one language the NFL and team owners speak and are influenced by, it’s the money language. According to MarketingDaily, sponsorship spending on the NFL and its 32 teams exceeded \$1.47 billion last season.”

[The NFL Wants to Fight Racism. Where Does That Leave Washington’s Football Team?](#)

Louise Radnofsky and Andrew Beaton, *The Wall Street Journal* - June 23, 2020

“The name of Washington’s team, owned by Dan Snyder, has long been the hardest icon to topple in sports, even as national and corporate pangs of conscience have taken out Aunt Jemima, ‘Gone With the Wind,’ Confederate flags in Nascar and Confederate statues in cities.”

“The league is amplifying messages to combat racial injustice amid calls that one of the game’s most prominent franchises employs a derogatory nickname for American Indians and an eyebrow-raising image on its logo.”

[New calls for American football team Redskins to rename](#)

Sara Germano, *Financial Times* - June 21, 2020

“Sports marketing and licensing analysts say that any potential move to change the National Football League team name, which many Native Americans consider a slur, would probably be followed with a bump in merchandise sales.”

“There are always times you have to throw off a brand’s history and reinvent it. “There could be short-term logistical bumps in the road, but most people are going to reward brands that make this conversation real about ending racism.” –Lisa Baird, US Olympic Committee

[Debate on racism renews calls for Redskins to change name](#)

Stephen Whyno, *Associated Press* - June 17, 2020

“... A peer-reviewed UC Berkeley study co-authored by Eason and University of Michigan diversity of social transformation professor of psychology Stephanie Fryberg that was released earlier this year revealed 49% of the 1,000 Native Americans surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the name was offensive. That number goes up to 67% among those who strongly identify as Native.”

“it’s not a leap to go from the concerns of protesters over police brutality to the name [R*dsk*ins]... a recent study... showed Native Americans were more likely to be killed by police than any other group when considering the size of their population. Fryberg and Eason... science shows the existence of these names and mascots increases depression and suicide among Native Americans.”

[The Redskins’ name is the shameful statue of the NFL. Tear it down.](#)

Barry Svrluga, *The Washington Post* - June 16, 2020

“The same arguments for changing the name that have been applied over the years apply now: If even some Native Americans are offended, that’s too many... It’s not an honorific. It is a stereotype at a time when we can’t afford them...”

[D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser says it’s ‘past time’ for Redskins to change their name](#)

Jake Russell, *The Washington Post* - June 12, 2020

“I think it’s past time for the team to deal with what offends so many people... this is a great franchise with a great history that’s beloved in Washington. And it deserves a name that reflects the affection that we’ve built for the team.” –DC Mayor Muriel E. Bowser

“The [Washington team] have been mired in heated battles for decades over the team’s name, which is widely considered an anti-Native American slur. The team has been sued by Native American leaders, including Suzan Shown Harjo and Amanda Blackhorse, in trademark court...”

“The Washington team’s R-word name derives from policies of colonization in which bounties were paid for the bloody skins of American Indian and Alaska Native men, women and children as proof of their killings.” –National Congress of American Indians’ [2018 Resolution](#)

[Native American Advocates Call Out Redskins and Other Teams Condemning Racism](#)

Mary Emily O'Hara, *Adweek* - June 3, 2020

“If the team was really interested in standing in solidarity for racial justice, they would change their name from the dictionary-defined racial slur they continue to use.”

See also:

[Q&A: Why a Native American Leader Chose This Moment to Ask Players on Washington’s NFL Team to Protest Its Name](#)

Andrew Beaujon, *Washingtonian* - June 25, 2020

[Stop Printing the R-Word](#)

Nick Martin, *The New Republic* - June 25, 2020

[Opinion: Now is the Time for the Washington NFL Team to Drop its Racist Name](#)

Levi Rickert, Publisher, *Native News Online* - June 22, 2020

[Washington Redskins' name, Native mascots offend more than previously reported](#)

Yasmin Anwar, *Berkeley News* - February 4, 2020

[A survey explores how Native Americans feel about the name Washington Redskins. No, it's not that survey. This one is new.](#)

Theresa Vargas Columnist, *The Washington Post* - August 9, 2019

[The NFL Needs to Stop Promoting a Racial Slur](#)

Jacqueline Pata and Ray Halbritter, *TIME* - July 27, 2017

[The Washington Football Team Can Legally Keep Its Racist Name. But It Shouldn't](#)

Kevin Gover, *Smithsonian Magazine* - July 12, 2017

[A brief history of the word 'redskin' and how it became a source of controversy](#)

Ian Shapira, *The Washington Post* - May 19, 2016

['Redskins' Is Officially a Dictionary-Defined Racial Slur—in All Cases](#)

Indian Country Today - July 2, 2014

Mascot appropriation generally:

[Native American mascots are dehumanizing and need to be banned](#)

Angelique EagleWoman, *Indian Country Today* - August 2, 2019

[Native American athletes and fans face ongoing racism](#)

Kalen Goodluck, *High Country News* - April 10, 2019

[We're missing the most glaringly racist brands](#)

Jeva Lange, *The Week* - June 18, 2020

[Maine Just Banned Native American Mascots. It's a Movement That's Inching Forward.](#)

Christine Hauser, *The New York Times* - May 22, 2019

[How the Kansas City Chiefs got their name, and why it's so controversial](#)

Leah Asmelash, *CNN* - February 1, 2020

[The Genocide Bowl \(or what most people call Super Bowl LIV\)](#)

Vincent Schilling, *Indian Country Today* - Jan 30, 2020

“Native mascots are a monument to racism, just as the Confederate statues that dot public grounds across the country are monuments to racism... It makes sense, then, that Native mascots and team names took off at the turn of the [twentieth century](#), just as America was sprinting into its next phase in colonization: The [erasure and assimilation](#) of traditional Native governance and culture.” –Nick Martin, *The New Republic*

ARCHIVE: SAMPLE TWEETS / TALKING POINTS

See First Peoples Worldwide's [tweet thread](#).

- With the #BlackLivesMatter movement bringing to focus centuries of systemic racism, there is a fresh outpouring of opposition to the @nfl team name @Redskins – a racist, dehumanizing word with hateful connotations. Sponsors @Nike, @PepsiCo & @FedEx must call to #ChangeTheName.
- Sponsors @Nike, @PepsiCo & @FedEx can meet the magnitude of this moment and make opposition to the @nfl @Redskins team name clear, and take tangible and meaningful steps to exert pressure on the team to cease using its racist name. #ChangeTheName #TheTimeIsNow
- Racist team names like @Redskins are not just words – they are symbols that loudly and clearly signal disrespect to Native Americans. @nfl sponsors @Nike, @PepsiCo, @FedEx: show Native Americans are worthy of respect and call for the Washington team to #ChangeTheName.
- From @NCAI1944: The use of R*dsk*ins “is offensive and hurtful to American Indian and Alaska Native people and causes direct, harmful effects on the physical and mental health and academic achievement... particularly youth.” @nfl @Redskins: #ChangeTheName
<http://www.ncai.org/resources/resolutions/opposing-the-washington-nfl-team-s-return-to-the-district-of-columbia-until-the-franchise-changes-its-offensive-name>
- It's good business for companies to align with #humanrights and public calls for justice. Material loss from #DAPL alone cost financiers and shareholders \$12 billion.
<https://www.colorado.edu/program/fpw/DAPL-case-study> Sponsors of the @nfl @redskins – @Nike, @Pepsi, @FedEx – must call to #ChangeTheName.
- From @FedEx: “There is absolutely no place for racism or unequal treatment anywhere, and we must unequivocally speak out and reject it when we see it.” As @nfl sponsors now call on @redskins to change its racist name. #ChangeTheName
<https://newsroom.fedex.com/newsroom/letter-from-frederick-w-smith-and-raj-subramaniam-to-u-s-employees-and-global-leadership/>
- From @Nike: “Systemic racism and the events that have unfolded across America over the past few weeks serve as an urgent reminder of the continued change needed in our society.” As @nfl sponsors, call on @redskins to retire its racist name. #ChangeTheName
<https://news.nike.com/news/nike-commitment-to-black-community>
- @PepsiCo discontinued its Aunt Jemima brand and committed to “the urgent need for racial and social justice” in response #BlackLivesMatter racial injustice protests. As @nfl sponsors, now call on the @redskins to retire its racist name. #ChangeTheName
<https://www.pepsico.com/racial-equality-journey>

For extracts from the letters, see the [media kit](#).