



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Change the Mascot Applauds NFL Player A.J. Francis for Opposing the Name of His Former Team, and Responds to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct Against the Washington NFL Franchise

Oneida Nation Homelands (May 3, 2018) The Change the Mascot campaign, a grassroots movement working to educate the public about the damaging effects on Native Americans arising from the continued use of the R-word, today released the following statement.

It praises New York Giants Defensive Tackle A.J. Francis, a former R-dskins player, who used social media to describe his former team's logo as "racist" in an [Instagram post](#) which included the hashtag: #AndYourLogoIsRacist.

In recent days, an extensive investigative article in *The New York Times* detailed allegations that the team required cheerleaders to pose topless during photoshoots in front of the team's sponsors, and forced them against their will to serve as personal escorts during outings to nightclubs.

Statement from Change the Mascot:

"Change the Mascot thanks A.J. Francis for having the courage to state the obvious: the name and logo of the Washington NFL team for which he used to play is racist. Nobody in America deserves to be the

target of racial slurs, and Mr. Francis joins a respected group of professional athletes, civil rights activists, religious leaders, journalists and policymakers who have spoken out against the continued refusal of the team to treat people of color with respect.

“The latest disturbing allegations against the Washington team related to the mistreatment of its cheerleaders shows clearly this is a franchise that operates as if was still run by the former owner George Preston Marshall, a segregationist who bestowed the ignominious R-word name on the team. During the era of Marshall, it may have been socially acceptable to slander people of color and to treat women as pieces of meat, but those days have long since passed.

“The continued refusal of the Washington franchise to stand on the right side of history and finally retire the racist R-word logo demonstrates the very same lack of moral character which apparently runs rampant throughout the entire organization, which is a stain on the NFL.”

About Change the Mascot

Change the Mascot is a grassroots campaign that works to educate the public about the damaging effects on Native Americans arising from the continued use of the R-word. This civil and human rights movement has helped reshape the debate surrounding the Washington team's name and brought the issue to the forefront of social consciousness. Since its launch, Change the Mascot has garnered support from a diverse coalition of prominent advocates including elected officials from both parties, Native American tribes, sports icons, leading journalists and news publications, civil and human rights organizations and religious leaders.

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