



# Change the Mascot!

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## Change the Mascot Applauds McGill University Students for Vote to Change Redmen Mascot

**Oneida Indian Nation Homelands – November 14, 2018** – The Change the Mascot campaign today is applauding students at McGill University for their vote to remove the school's "Redmen" mascot. Earlier this week, 78.8 percent of students voted in favor of the change, in an effort to pressure the respected Montreal university to formally replace the name.

"Today, as students, we are defending values of respect and inclusion on campus," said a statement from McGill's student union, which organized the referendum.

Change the Mascot leader and Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter praised the students in a statement today:

"The admirable actions of the McGill University students this week are yet another example of youth lighting the path for educational institutions and sports franchises, which continue to use derogatory mascots despite the proven damage they cause," he said.

"We thank the McGill University students for their integrity and bravery in seeking to right this wrong. We hope the University's leaders heed this growing call for change and send a message to sports franchises including the Washington NFL team that there is absolutely no place for racist team names."

This is not the first time that students have led the push to change an offensive mascot. In 2013, students at Cooperstown High School in New York voted to drop the R-word slur as their school's nickname, a move that inspired the launch of Change the Mascot.

In the years since, additional schools in Texas, Indiana, Oklahoma, Oregon, Wisconsin and Delaware have also acted to remove the use of R-word mascots, and California banned R-word mascots in all of its public schools statewide.

### **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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