



REBRAND WASHINGTON FOOTBALL

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Rebrand Washington Football (RWF) Calls the Name Review a First Step: Calls for Complete Disassociation from Native American Mascots

Rebrand Washington Football (RWF), a grassroots advocacy organization of fans who seek a name change, is pleased that the team has announced a formal review of its name. RWF regards the name as a dictionary defined racial slur that demeans and stereotypes Native Americans. Academic studies conclude that the name and Native American mascots promotes bullying, belittling, and contributes to racism against Native Americans.

While RWF applauds the team's review, a rebrand must involve a total change away from names that involve Native American names or imagery. [Even so-called positive mascots](#) extolling purportedly laudatory characteristics such as bravery have been shown to cause harm by constraining and stereotyping Native Americans. A half rebrand to a name like the Warriors or Indians is not acceptable. Native American advocates and civil rights organizations like the National Council of American Indians have decried the use of all Native American mascots. We should follow the lead of indigenous women like Suzan Harjo and Amanda Blackhorse who have dedicated their lives to Native American dignity.

After declaring all Native American mascots off-limits, Mr. Snyder should engage the community just as Abe Pollin did when he changed the name of his team from the Bullets to the Wizards. Mr. Pollin asked the community for suggestions. This generated excitement for his team. Mr. Snyder can likewise make a name change a positive development for his team by reviving his fan base.

“I had been a life-long fan since 1973, but as a Jew, I cannot support this team any longer as long as it blazes a racial stereotype and slur on its uniforms, stadium, and gear. For centuries, slurs, symbols, and stereotypes have been used against Jews in attempts to keep us in subordinate positions in society. It burns, it hurts. Even so called positive associations like extolling Jewish intelligence fundamentally amount to cornering us and confining us to certain positions in society. It is 2020 and time for a new era. Change the name!” declares Josh Silver, Co-Founder of Rebrand Washington Football.

Ian Washburn, another Co-Founder of RWF, states, “We must have a full rebrand away from harmful stereotypes and playing Indian themes. As a legacy devotee of multi-generations, I cannot re-enter fandom without a full rebrand away from all destructive stereotypes. It is time to stop playing Indian once and for all.”