



# Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

P.O. Box 1326—Miami, Oklahoma 74355

Ph: 918-542-1445 Fax: 918-542-7260



## RESOLUTION NO. 20-31

### MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA POSITION ON ETHNIC OR RACE-BASED DEROGATORY MASCOT NAMES OR DEROGATORY MASCOT CARICATURES

**WHEREAS**, the Myaamia, recognized today by the United States as the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, are a distinct people originating from the Great Lakes lands of Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan, and

**WHEREAS**, after being forcefully removed from our homelands in 1846 we lived for a time on a reserve in eastern Kansas and were again removed to the Indian Territory where our seat of government still resides in the city of Miami, Oklahoma, and

**WHEREAS**, our history and that of all federally recognized tribes/First Nations of this land has been recorded by many observers through time and that written history has grouped all as one people under collective terms such as the "Indians", the "Natives", or the "redskinned", and

**WHEREAS**, as a sovereign and culturally distinct people we believe these terms have too often created a "one Nation", "one Tribe", "one people" perception and that this lack of understanding and respect for the unique cultural identities of each sovereign Tribal Nation has fostered the perception of "Indian" as an all-encompassing description for the citizens of the First Nations, and

**WHEREAS**, we believe this melded perception has negatively impacted the individual and distinct identities of our First Nations and encouraged the development of race-based icons and mascots in this country, and

**WHEREAS**, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma stands firmly against misrepresentation through stereotypical images and names which only serve to demean and misrepresent First Nations peoples, and

**WHEREAS**, it is our belief that the presentation of accurate information regarding Myaamia culture, history, traditions and language are vital in our efforts to stand against misrepresentation and misunderstanding, and

**WHEREAS**, we take full responsibility for how our culture and heritage are taught within our community and how we are identified culturally and historically by the world, and

**WHEREAS**, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has a deep, abiding commitment to Myaamia community education through our Myaamia Education Services & Programs Department and our unique Cultural Education Programs, and

**WHEREAS**, our Cultural Resources Office and our Myaamia Center at Miami University work together to support, create and deliver true knowledge of Myaamia culture, language, and history within our community and to external public education programs in order to aid in the accurate telling and understanding of our history and heritage, and

**WHEREAS**, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, in care and respectful support of our Myaamia citizens today and those generations to come, and also out of concern for greater public understanding, has demonstrated absolute opposition—founded in cultural knowledge—to the use of derogatory and stereotypical names and images of American Indians as sports mascots or icons for any purpose by any public school or institution, and

**WHEREAS**, this opposition is rooted in our strong belief that such words and images impart a negative or misleading perception which impacts the self-esteem of our Myaamia children, adults, and elders, and

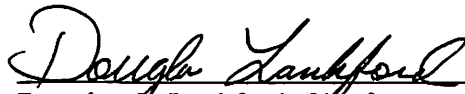
**WHEREAS**, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma demonstrated this opposition in a 1996 Resolution delivered to Miami University in Oxford, OH calling for the removal of the Redskins mascot; and through respectful consideration and mutual agreement that esteemed institution took the necessary action to correct the negative image and by doing so demonstrated respect to not only the Myaamiaki but all First Nations of this land, and

**WHEREAS**, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma recognizes and respects longstanding relationships existing between certain Tribal Nations and institutions and does not stand in opposition to their agreements or understandings related to any individual Tribally approved names, icons or mascots, and

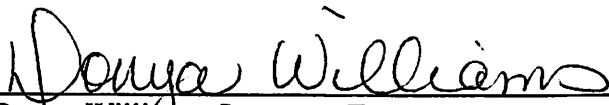
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma adopts this Resolution as our stated opposition to derogatory and stereotypical names, icons and mascots; and to reaffirm our commitment to providing meaningful and informed education about the culturally distinct indigenous peoples of this land.

**CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned, as Chief of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, does hereby certify that the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Business Committee is composed of five (5) elected members. The foregoing **Resolution 20-31** was duly adopted this 27<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2020 by the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Business Committee, through Special Meeting, with an approving vote of 5 for, 0 against, and 0 abstaining.

  
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Douglas G. Lankford, Chief

ATTEST:

  
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Donya Williams, Secretary-Treasurer