



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Yocha Dehe Tribe to Air TV Ad Against R-dskins Name in Seven Major Markets During NBA Championship Game

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS (NY) (June 10, 2014) At halftime of tonight's Game 3 of the NBA Championship, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation will air in seven major T.V. markets a 60-second version of the National Congress of American Indians' [Proud To Be ad](#), which celebrates Native American culture and opposes the racist name of Washington, D.C.'s NFL team. This is the first time the ad has aired on television, and it is being run in order to educate the general public about Native American opposition to the R-word. The ad is airing in Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York, Sacramento, San Francisco and Washington, D.C. after airing in Miami during halftime of Game 2 on Sunday night.

The advertisement highlights the defining and distinguished characteristics, names and legacies of many Native American tribes throughout the United States. But as the video clearly states, there is one denigrating term which Native peoples never use to describe themselves: R*dskin.

As Chairman Marshall McKay of Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation underscored in a message posted to YouTube: "The R-word is as derogatory a slur as the N-word. When this name first came to be, it was a vehicle for people to bring the victims of violence into an office so they could collect

a bounty. I think the Change the Mascot campaign will shed some well-deserved light on the trauma and the disadvantaged people on reservations and throughout the country that are Native American that really haven't had this opportunity to talk about the pain and the anguish that this kind of racism puts us through."

James Kinter, Tribal Secretary of Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation also stated in the video: "The Change the Mascot movement is larger than Yocha Dehe or any one tribe. It's about all tribal people and non-tribal people raising their voices in protest."

In a joint statement, NCAI Executive Director Jackie Pata and Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter said: "We applaud the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation for having the vision and commitment to ensure that the American public receives the message loud and clear that Native Americans strongly oppose the use of this disparaging slur. Contrary to the team's absurd claims, this dictionary-defined racial epithet does not honor our heritage. The Change the Mascot campaign continues to gather strength every time that people are educated about the origin of the R-word and its damaging impact on Native peoples. By airing this ad during the NBA Championships, the message will be brought into the living rooms of millions of American all across the country."

The moral and civil rights issue of the team's unapologetic use of a dictionary-defined slur has come to the forefront of American consciousness more than ever in recent weeks. Half of the U.S. Senate recently signed a letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell urging a change for the D.C. team's mascot. Shortly thereafter, 77 leading Native American, civil rights and religious organizations representing millions of Americans wrote to every player in the league asking them to stand up against the team's use of a racial epithet as a mascot.

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