

## **Statement from the Spirit Lake Committee;**

It is being said that our name and likeness is hurting the University and its athletics. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our name and likeness has played a large part in bringing a small University out of countless number of schools in obscurity to the number one recognized name and logo nationally. It is revered though out the world. It has brought UND into the national spotlight with the many championships banners in division 1 and 2. It has instilled pride and honor in its athlete's and given them fighting Sioux spirit. We have gotten top quality athletes because of our tradition of winning and who we are. That winning tradition is now being threatened not only by the NCAA but those who have lost that fighting spirit, if they ever truly had it.

If the NCAA feels Native Americans are hostile and abusive and wishes to erase us from history, we would hope that the citizens of North Dakota would not stand with them. As has been demonstrated thus far "we are right", but through distortion and fear mongering, that resolve maybe weakening.

### **It is time for a truth campaign.**

For the last 5 years the citizens of North Dakota have stood shoulder to shoulder with the Sioux of North Dakota. We have fought long and hard for truth and justice thinking our enemy was only the NCAA. **This is not the case.** The truth must be told for an informed decision on Measure # 4.

For us in the front lines it took two years to realize that was not the case. That realization finally came on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009 when just after 3 weeks since Spirit Lake in one of its largest turnouts voted 67% in support of the name and logo and 18 months ahead of the Settlement deadline, the State Board retired the name and logo. You can read it for yourself in the State Board meeting minutes of May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Even after that we still held out a little hope that maybe we were wrong, but not so. The list of deceit is too long to state here, we would need days not minutes to go through them.

At this point we challenge the State Board and Kelly Administration to provide even ONE document or attempt to communicate or work with supporters in this last 5 years. There were never any such attempts, to the contrary we were minimized and ignored as **real** Sioux supporters and UND staff has even worked with the opposition. It has even reached the attempt by these people to stop the very citizens of North Dakota from having any say. Now they have resorted to a campaign of distortions and twisting the truth.

Minnesota and Wisconsin have joined the Big 10 conference and would only meet the Sioux in NCAA playoffs because the Sioux are in the Big Sky and hockey is in the NCHC. So there would be no scheduling anyway. They did not move because of our name but for money. Do you believe they would forfeit a playoff game because of the name? Both Minnesota and Wisconsin adopted their policy on Native names and imagery in 2005, how many games in hockey have been cancelled?

South Dakota State and NDSU are in the Summit League which Kelley chose to dump on the very day we were to join November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, so who is responsible for us not playing them? Why did President Douple of the Summit League say he was pressured to oppose the name and logo by Kelley and State Board?

We would like to make our response to some of the latest distortions by the alumni association and UND administration.

Few people are happy that we have to retire the UND Fighting Sioux nickname, but the cost of keeping it is just too great.

***Response:***

Are you among those few who have encouraged the NCAA? How do you put a price on honor, what is 80 years of proud and honorable traditions valued at! What is your personal dignity worth? We say the price of capitulating is way too high! You do not have to retire your honor.

NCAA will enforce sanctions that will severely damage the athletic and academic programs at UND.

***Response:***

This is another distortion and fabrication; we have been living under the NCAA sanctions since Nov 30, 2010. The NCAA sanctions ARE exactly what the NCAA says they are, and was testified to in Federal court **VERY MINIMAL**, uniforms and logos in NCAA playoffs, home field in NCAA playoffs, that does not affect conference playoffs as witnessed by WCHA playoffs men's and women's 2012 and 2011 playoffs. UND football has played all scheduled games for the last two years and will continue to play the scheduled games through into the 2016 season, these are just simple facts.

Several top regional universities, including Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa, have institutional policies prohibiting their teams from competing against schools under NCAA sanctions for American Indian imagery. This has already cost our football, basketball, track and volleyball teams several competitive opportunities, and it will soon impact hockey as well.

***Response:***

As for Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa their policy on Native American names and logos were adopted in 2005, how many games did they cancel....NONE! The only reason they won't play us now there in a different league and conference for money. Iowa state call themselves the "Hawkeyes" named after an Indian and how ironic is this they won't play UND because it's an Indian name!

Eight other states had only one tribe give permission to keep their Native name and imagery. We believe had the State board of higher Ed, Attorney General, and University officials stood with the Sioux supporters in ND and the one tribe who gave perpetual use of their name would the NCAA have seen this differently. Why did they not stand with the supporters?

Our membership in the Big Sky conference is also at risk, as is our ability to recruit top athletes and coaches. Athletes and coaches don't want to be a university that is barred from competing with top tier schools.

***Response:***

This statement is so full of holes and lies, the university finally signed the hockey coach long after they should have. When UND was so adamant about joining the Summit league and one day before they were to join, they dropped the Summit league and joined the Big Sky Conference, (BTW, when the Big Sky conference made the announcement it was splashed all over their website "the Sioux are coming", and the day we were to testify at the legislatures, President Douple from the Summit league comes out and makes his statement that "he was pressured by Kelley"). Why would President Douple come out with his statement? What did he have to gain? And a legal contract has been signed with the Big Sky Conference.

Sports play a critical role in the national reputation of universities and donors are less likely to invest in schools under NCAA sanctions. As our athletic program suffers, it will also affect our academic programs by reducing the amount of donations and grants the university receives on an annual basis.

***Response:***

Education plays a critical role in the national respect of a university, sports builds pride in that university not the other way around. When you lose your pride in your university you are less likely to get contributions. Athletes are recruited by a winning tradition, unless Kelley forces the team to play third strings we will continue that winning tradition and recruiting will be just fine.

The Fighting Sioux nickname has been a source of pride, honor and excellence, but that isn't enough anymore, and for the first time in history the leadership at UND is in full agreement on this issue. The UND Student Senate, University Senate, Staff Senate, Administration, Athletics (including all head coaches), Alumni Association and Foundation are all in support of retiring the nickname.

let UND retire the Fighting Sioux nickname.

***Response:***

With all the lies, distortions, and bull coming from statements like this out of the university this lacks credibility, our committee is in touch everyday with alumni who believe this is wrong on so many levels. Let the ones who brought this on the university figure out how to deal with the sanctions they have helped the NCAA bring to North Dakota. We can only image the pressure that may have been put on these groups.

We'd like to leave you with this thought... when Spirit Lake voted in 2009 every step we tried to resolve and thought we were one step closer to saving our honorable name and logo, yet another obstacle was thrown in the way. Our committees has always been on the side of truth and honor, and have not used lies and distortions but have stayed on the path our ancestor's stood on.

WE ASK YOU TO STAND WITH US ON TRUTH AND PRINCIPLE! AND VOTE "NO" TO KEEP THE NAME JUNE 12th....80 years of tradition and pride that has never been a source of harm for the University.

Spirit Lake Supporters and  
The Committee for Understanding and Respect