

Methodist college drops 'Indians' team name: Complies with denomination and NCAA

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United Methodist-related McMurry University in Abilene, Texas, has decided to discontinue calling its athletic teams “Indians” in keeping not only with the denomination’s two-year-old policy against using racially demeaning names and mascots but also with a National Collegiate Athletic Association prohibition of such team names and symbols in postseason tournament competition. The NCAA policy will take effect February 1.

McMurry was one of 18 schools listed as using Native American images termed “hostile or abusive”; McMurry was the only Methodist-related campus on the list. McMurry president John Russell said the Indian team name had reflected the school’s respect for Native Americans, their history and their culture since the campus was founded in 1923, but the university’s board of trustees voted October 13 to comply with the prohibition.