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## **McMurry University Board of Trustees Passes Resolution Eliminating Homecoming Activity**

**(Abilene, TX – July 14, 2020)** — McMurry University announced today the unanimous approval of a Board of Trustees resolution eliminating Tipi Village as a homecoming activity. Recently, the University began to examine Tipi Village and how the activity could be perceived by some to be dishonoring American Indian tribes rather than the original intention of bringing honor to their culture and lifestyle. In a June 26, 2020, meeting, the Board of Trustees voted to eliminate Tipi Village as a homecoming activity.

In alignment with a 2005 NCAA policy, in 2011 McMurry University adopted the War Hawk as the University’s mascot. This policy prohibited the use of potentially offensive imagery by institutions wanting to compete in NCAA championships. This resolution further aligns with that policy.

“While we appreciate and cherish the significance of Tipi Village in McMurry University’s history, it is imperative that we move forward embracing our new War Hawk mascot and in demonstrating and living by the institutional values consistent with the University’s Christian teachings,” said J. Stephen Sundby, chair of the Board of Trustees.

“We know this decision will be disappointing for many alumni, students, and community members who have fond memories of Tipi Village, as does my family,” said President Sandra S. Harper, PhD. “Yet, I am confident that our current students, with the support of our dedicated alumni, will design a new tradition that will guide the University through its second century. Let’s unite to create a thriving future for McMurry University.”

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### Resolution

*Whereas McMurry University is dedicated to the respect of all individuals through hospitality and gracious interactions in order to better prepare women and men of all backgrounds to engage others in working toward the common good;*

*Whereas McMurry University considers respect for diversity in its broadest sense to be an institutional core competency;*

*Whereas McMurry University expects its academic community and alumni to perform as servant leaders in diverse and complex environments;*

*Whereas solidarity against racism and injustice is important to embody as an institutional value consistent with our Christian teachings;*

*Whereas certain McMurry University traditions that initially may have been planned to honor Native American tribes could now be considered as dishonoring those groups by prospective students, current students, faculty members, staff, and the broader community;*

*BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the McMurry University practice of constructing Tipi Village and conducting Tipi tours will no longer take place in any form or at any time or on any spot on the McMurry University campus and will no longer be an institutionally sponsored activity that is condoned by the University, effective immediately, and alternative practices will be pursued to ensure a positive emphasis at McMurry University. This decision is made during this duly constituted meeting of the McMurry University Board of Trustees on this 26th day of June in the year 2020.*

### **About McMurry University**

*Founded in 1923, McMurry University is guided by our core values: Christian Faith as the foundation of life; Personal relationships as the catalyst for life; Learning as the journey of life; Excellence as the goal of life; and Service as the measure of life. As a vibrant, comprehensive institution of higher education, we offer a student-centered, relationship-based learning environment. McMurry University's intentional one-on-one focus allows students to build meaningful relationships with their professors and fellow students. The University provides students REAL discovery experiences throughout their college careers. Our diverse academic curriculum includes over 55 majors in the arts, business, education, and the sciences, as well as pre-professional programs in medicine, dentistry, engineering, law, pharmacy, and physical therapy. Enrollment at McMurry University is at 1,100 students. A member of the American Southwest Conference, McMurry University has 20 intercollegiate sports, as well as an evolving Esports team. Students engage with the community and average 24,000 hours of annual service. For our students, the pathway to REALize dreams, careers, and goals starts at McMurry University. McMurry University...Where REAL Happens.*