

1 Resolution to Eliminate the Mascot and Form a Task Force to Investigate the Aztec Identity

2 Author: Diversity, Equity, and Outreach Committee

3 WHEREAS, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that: “No person in the United States
4 shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be
5 denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving
6 federal financial assistance.” and;

7 WHEREAS, the State of California’s Education Code Title 1, Division 1, Part 1, Chapter 2,
8 Article 3 [220] states: “No person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability,
9 gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual
10 orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth
11 in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code in any program or activity conducted by an educational
12 institution that receives, or benefits from, state financial assistance or enrolls pupils who receive
13 state student financial aid.” and;

14 WHEREAS, the State of California’s Education Code Title 1, Division 1, Part 1, Chapter 2,
15 Article 3.5 [221.2] states: “(a) The use of racially derogatory or discriminatory school or athletic
16 team names, mascots, or nicknames in California public schools is antithetical to the California
17 school mission of providing an equal education to all; (b) Certain athletic team names, mascots,
18 and nicknames that have been used and remain in use by other teams, including school teams, in
19 other parts of the nation are discriminatory in singling out the Native American community for
20 the derision to which mascots or nicknames are often subjected; (c) Many individuals and
21 organizations interested and experienced in human relations, including the United States
22 Commission on Civil Rights, have concluded that the use of Native American images and names
23 in school sports is a barrier to equality and understanding, and that all residents of the United
24 States would benefit from the discontinuance of their use; (d) No individual or school has a
25 cognizable interest in retaining a racially derogatory or discriminatory school or athletic team
26 name, mascot, or nickname.” and;

27 WHEREAS, Executive Order 1097, from the Office of the chancellor of the California State
28 university system states: “The California State University (CSU) is committed to maintaining an
29 inclusive community that values diversity and fosters tolerance and mutual respect, and further
30 goes on to state that “The CSU strives to be free of all forms of Discrimination, including
31 Harassment, because of a Protected Status. It is CSU policy that no Student shall be excluded
32 from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, any CSU program or activity because of any
33 Protected Status,” with examples of Protected Status being Age, Disability, Gender, Genetic
34 Information, Gender Identity or Expression, Nationality, Marital Status, Race or Ethnicity,
35 Religion, Sexual Orientation, and Veteran or Military Status. and;

36 WHEREAS, the United States Commission on Civil Rights, by Resolution dated April 13, 2001,
37 called for an end to the use of American Indian images and team names by schools: “Schools
38 should not use their influence to perpetuate misrepresentations of any culture of people.
39 Stereotypes of American Indians teach all students that the stereotyping of minority groups is
40 acceptable, a dangerous lesson in such a diverse society”; and

41 WHEREAS, in 2005, the American Psychological Association called for “the immediate
42 retirement of all American Indian mascots, symbols, images and personalities by schools,
43 colleges, universities, athletic teams and organizations,” stating that their position is based on “a
44 growing body of social science literature that shows the harmful effects of racial stereotyping
45 and inaccurate racial portrayals, including the particularly harmful effects of American Indian
46 sports mascots on the social identity development and self-esteem of American Indian young
47 people.” and;

48 WHEREAS, Native symbols and mascots have been used, but then later acknowledged as
49 inappropriate and retired by institutions of higher learning including the following: Dartmouth
50 College, Eastern Michigan University, Marquette University, Seattle University, Southern
51 Oregon University, Stanford University, Syracuse University, University of Massachusetts,
52 Amherst, University of Oklahoma; Arkansas State University, and the University of North
53 Dakota; and;

54 WHEREAS, more than 100 organizations across the nation have endorsed the discontinuation of
55 Native American mascots, including: National Congress of American Indians, the National
56 Indian Education Association, the Society of Indian Psychologists, the Anti-Defamation League,
57 Commission on Human Rights, United States Civil Rights Commission, Asian Americans
58 Advancing Justice, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP),
59 American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), American Jewish Committee, Museum of Tolerance,
60 National Education Association (NEA), California Teachers Association (CTA), University of
61 California Student Association (UCSA), and;

62 WHEREAS, in 2005, the NCAA adopted a policy to prohibit NCAA colleges and universities
63 from displaying hostile and abusive racial/ethnic/national origin mascots, nicknames or imagery
64 at any of the 88 NCAA championships.

65 WHEREAS, the research described in a San Diego State University graduate student’s thesis,
66 entitled, Fail Montezuma!: The Last Vestiges of an Obscured Yet Stubbornly Persistent Culture
67 of Racism at San Diego State University, provides information on the formation of SDSU’s
68 present-day institutional identity.¹ and;

69 WHEREAS, San Diego State University’s Policy file, section 4.4 states: “The university shall
70 cultivate a campus climate that promotes human dignity, civility, and mutual appreciation for the
71 uniqueness of each member of our community. Because the university’s educational goals are
72 founded on the values of intellectual honesty, appreciation for diversity, and mutual respect, it is
73 critical that our academic and co-curricular programs, scholarships, courses, workshops, lectures,
74 and other aspects of campus life reflect diverse perspectives. Freedom from discrimination,
75 harassment, and violence against persons or property is a basic right and is requisite for learning.
76 Freedom of speech shall be protected. By the same token, the campus community shall denounce
77 and confront acts of intolerance, abusive behaviors, and the beliefs and past events that have
78 separated us as a people.” and;

¹ For more information, please see Ozzie Monge’s master’s thesis.

79 WHEREAS, San Diego State University’s Diversity Pledge states, calls on students, faculty and
80 staff to pledge “To embrace the diversity of all individuals respecting such attributes as their sex,
81 gender, race, ethnicity, age, class, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation, nationality,
82 socioeconomic status, religion, physical ability, mental ability and expression; To strive toward
83 social justice for all people in order to create and sustain a safer, more productive, and inclusive
84 campus environment; To refrain from using derogatory terms or statements that are harmful and
85 disrespectful to others; To not contribute to stereotypes or make generalizations about
86 individuals but rather to use my own experiences and interactions to better understand and
87 embrace all people; To educate myself about cultures other than my own; To engage in and
88 contribute to the diverse world around me; To actively honor this pledge within my everyday
89 life.” and;

90 LET IT BE RESOLVED, that San Diego State University retire the current human representation
91 of an Aztec as the school mascot as well as retire usage of spears or weapons that connote
92 barbaric representations of the Aztec culture.

93 LET IT BE RESOLVED, that San Diego State University form a task force to investigate and
94 make recommendations regarding the appropriateness of the continued usage of the Aztec
95 moniker including symbols, signage, logos, branding, buildings, statues (e.g., Monty), awards
96 (e.g., Zuma) and other references to the possible misappropriation of Aztec identity. This task
97 force shall also make recommendations regarding an education component in relation to the
98 Aztec identity.