
Date

RESOLUTION NO. _____(2020)

WHEREAS, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) is dedicated to building strong relationships with the universities, colleges, and schools that EBCI students attend; and

WHEREAS, improving and fostering relationships with these entities located on Cherokee ancestral homelands can include the implementation and use of a land acknowledgement statements; and

WHEREAS, these statements can help educate, inform, and bring to the forefront the history and status of the land these entities sit upon and the Cherokee people that influence and live in the area; and

WHEREAS, the Dinikanawidido'i (community advisory committee) at the University of North Carolina at Asheville, created and now presents this land acknowledgement statement for feedback and support.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in Tribal Council Assembled, at which a quorum is present that the Tribal Council of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians does hereby accept and support the following two (2) land acknowledgment statements for the University of North Carolina at Asheville:

VYᎠᎠᎠ - Togyasdi, Where They Race

Short Version

The University of North Carolina at Asheville acknowledges, with respect, that the land we are on today is ancestral land of the *Anikituwagi*, more commonly known as the Cherokee. We recognize the Cherokee as the native people and original stewards of this land. To the *Anikituwagi*, this land was known as *Togyasdi*, Where They Race, and was part of the Cherokee Nation, *Tsalagi Ayeli*, which covered as many as 108,000 square miles of the American Southeast as late as 1730 and consisted of sixty or more towns. The stories that come from this land teach how to live, interact and mutually care for all relations. We, as an institution, understand that there is a need to listen and learn from the people of this land. We acknowledge that an act of recognition is not enough to overcome the settler-colonial history that has attempted to eradicate indigenous people from the history and consciousness of these lands. The Eastern Band of

1 Cherokee and UNC Asheville seek to affirm our work together to ensure a strong relationship
2 rooted in relevancy, responsibility, respect and reciprocity. Therefore, as an institution UNC
3 Asheville has a responsibility to commit its efforts and resources to the health and priorities of
4 the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the students who attend this university and all the varied
5 Indigenous people who live in and around the lands this university is situated on. As these words
6 are spoken and heard, we renew and reaffirm this campus as Cherokee homelands.

7 8 **Long Version**

9 The University of North Carolina at Asheville acknowledges, with respect, that the land
10 we are on today is ancestral land of the *Anikituwagi*, more commonly known as the Cherokee.
11 We recognize the Cherokee as the native people and original stewards of this land. The stories
12 that come from this land teach how to live, interact and mutually care for all relations. We, as an
13 institution, understand that there is a need to listen and learn from the people of this land. Now
14 this place we stand upon is known to many as Asheville. To the *Anikituwagi*, this land is known
15 as *Togiyasdi*, Where They Race. This town sat in the shadow of the Blue Ridge Mountains and for
16 many centuries was a place of Cherokee life, trade, ceremony and culture. *Togiyasdi* was part of
17 the Cherokee Nation, *Tsalagi Ayeli*, which covered as many as 108,000 square miles of the
18 American Southeast as late as 1730 and consisted of sixty or more towns, each autonomous
19 but joined in ceremony and in times of war. Thus, the story of the people from Kituwah neither
20 begins or ends with the arrival of Europeans but intertwines and becomes a complex historical
21 legacy that defines both UNC Asheville and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in the present.

22 For more than 10,000 years, Cherokees and their ancestors lived around the junction of
23 the Swannanoa and French Broad Rivers. Cherokee land east of the French Broad River,
24 including where part of Asheville and the UNCA campus sits today, was taken by the Treaty of
25 Hopewell in 1785. The Cherokees agreed to major land cessions in that treaty after an armed
26 invasion, led by General Griffith Rutherford and more than 4000 troops, in the fall of 1776. The
27 town of Nikwasi was among thirty-six towns decimated in addition to crops, livestock and winter
28 food supplies. Cherokees held onto legal claim of the land west of the French Broad River, now
29 part of Asheville, until 1791.

30 On a cold November day in 1791 after years of bloody conflict, invasion and colonization,
31 leaders of the Cherokee Nation met on the banks of the river Holston to sign an agreement to
32 cede the west of UNC Asheville's campus to the very settlers who had been encroaching upon
33 Cherokee lands for the better part of a century. This agreement was neither the beginning nor
34 the end of the Cherokee people's struggle. For the city, now called Asheville, all associated lands
35 would be open to uncontested settlement. This treaty reinforced a nation-to-nation relationship
36 and was negotiated in good faith by forty-one Cherokee leaders and the governor of Tennessee
37 at the time, William Blount, to enforce the boundaries and sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation.
38 Without the cession of land and the brutal years of conflict with Cherokee that preceded it, the
39 Asheville we know of today is unthinkable. The 1791 Agreement designed to end war between
40 the two nations was not unique in that it was one of over four hundred treaties with Native
41 Nations that would not see their terms lived up to by the US government. This broken treaty
42 would culminate in another decade of intermittent war and further theft of native lands.

43 It was only within the lives of our grandfather's grandfathers that the forced Cherokee
44 Removal, *Ge go wo o dv nv i*, from these lands was an attempt by the US government to consign
45 a people to oblivion, resulting in the genocidal march westward. Within the time of our
46 grandfathers, policies were made to disassociate the Cherokee from their language,
47 their faith and their identity as a people; schools being a primary weapon used. That the
48 *Anikituwagi* persist as survivors, warriors, diplomats, mothers, doctors, aunts, teachers, artists,

1 and grandmothers is a testament to their resilience. The Qualla Boundary, the home of the
2 Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, situated a mere fifty miles away, presents a reminder of this
3 region's history.

4 The Eastern Band of Cherokee and UNC Asheville recognize this long history and seek to
5 affirm our work together to ensure a strong relationship rooted in relevancy,
6 responsibility, respect and reciprocity. UNC Asheville acknowledges that an act of recognition is
7 not enough to overcome the settler-colonial history that we are all a part of. Therefore, as an
8 institution UNC Asheville commits its efforts and resources to the health and priorities of the
9 Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, students who attend this university and all the varied
10 Indigenous people who live in and around the lands this university is situated on. As these words
11 are spoken and heard, we renew and reaffirm this campus as Cherokee homelands.

12
13
14 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that all resolutions inconsistent with this resolution are
15 rescinded, and that this resolution shall become effective when ratified by
16 the Principal Chief.

17
18
19 *Submitted by:* the Dinikanawidido'i
20 (community advisory committee)
21 from the University of North Carolina at Asheville
22
23