

# Anaheim High School Alumni Association



P.O. BOX 389 - ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA - 92815

[www.anaheimcolonists.com](http://www.anaheimcolonists.com)

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TO ALL ANAHEIM COLONISTS . . .

At the behest of the Anaheim Union High School District, the 2021-22 Anaheim High School (AHS) student body will be engaging in a civic inquiry regarding the Colonist mascot. This civics exercise is the result of a petition demanding that the mascot name be changed due to it being offensive to indigenous people.

The Anaheim High School Alumni Association (AHSAA) respects the history of America's indigenous people, and specifically, the Tongva people, who originally inhabited the area we grew up in, as they are an important and essential part of Anaheim's history that has long been overlooked.

As the first city to incorporate in what is now Orange County, Anaheim has been known as the "Mother Colony" since its founding, a recognition of the German farmers and vintners who established their wine growing colony by the Santa Ana River in 1857. Six and a half decades later, when the students at Anaheim Union High School voted to choose a mascot for their sports teams, they chose "Colonists", as they wanted to proudly represent their home, the "Mother Colony" ... the City of Anaheim.

The contention that the name "Colonists" was chosen by Anaheim High students to celebrate or commemorate the conquest and genocide of native people, is factually inaccurate and fundamentally wrong. Any attempt to insert a retroactive redefinition of our name to ascribe hateful, brutal, and violent acts committed by people who have no connection whatsoever to Anaheim is insulting and abhorrent to anyone who has been proud to call themselves an Anaheim Colonist. This goes against every ideal of conscientious and responsible citizenship and respect that generations of Anaheim Colonists have been taught by their teachers and coaches and demonstrated in the halls, classrooms, gyms, and athletic fields of Anaheim High School.

For the first 60 years of its existence, Anaheim Union High School was the only high school in the city. The students and graduates of “Old AU” created the proud Colonist tradition, one we alumni have always sought to live up to. Generations of students of all ethnic backgrounds have been proud to call themselves Anaheim Colonists, passing from mothers and fathers to their sons and daughters, and from sisters and brothers and cousins down through the years.

Over ten years ago, proud Anaheim alumni, steeped in that Colonist tradition, gathered together to form the Anaheim High School Alumni Association, which to date, has raised and donated approximately \$500,000 to support the current students of AHS. Our beloved “Old AU”, which we alumni often call “the Colony”, is more than a school, it is a home, it is a family. It’s where we came together with others to build and be part of something great, whether it was a campus club, playing on great sports teams, performing in the band, or just being with friends. We are proud of that history and tradition; and calling ourselves an Anaheim Colonist is a reminder of that.

Being an Anaheim Colonist is more than just a name, it’s our heritage, and it’s part of who we are. Other schools have generic mascots shared with hundreds of other high schools in the country, but being a Colonist is something unique and special to being from Anaheim High School. We are proud to be Anaheim Colonists and we stridently and steadfastly oppose any effort to take that name away from us and from future Colonists of our beloved “Old AU”.

**ONCE A COLONIST, ALWAYS A COLONIST!**