Below are relevant facts regarding our historic relationship with the Catawba people, as we recognize Catawba College and the Catawba Nation have been intrinsically linked since the founding of the College in 1851 and the taking of the name Catawba College.

Most importantly, the College and the Nation have worked together over the last two year to further strengthen our relationship and our athletic nickname remains the Catawba Indians with the continued support from the Nation to do so.

Upon reviewing the below facts, we feel this information far better demonstrates our commitment to recognizing the invaluable contributions the first Americans of the Catawba Nation have provided and continue to provide to Catawba College, our region, and our country.  The College and the Nation have mutually pledged to continue exploring new endeavors together so we can further expand our longtime, however, modern partnership.

* **Fact:** Catawba College was founded in 1851 and was first physically established in Catawba County, North Carolina.  The committee appointed by the founding trustees to choose the name of the school selected Catawba College “in view of the location of the school in Catawba County, which was bordered on the east by the Catawba River, along the banks of which the Catawba Indians once roamed” (Dedmond, 1989, p. 33). The College’s name selection was geographically based rather than named in recognition of the Catawba people.
* **Fact**: Catawba College began competitive athletics in the early part of the 20th century (Dedmond, 1989, p. 92).
* **Fact**: After relocating to Salisbury in 1925, the College formally adopted the name “Indians” for our athletic teams on February 19, 1927 “by unanimous vote of the student body” with support of the Catawba College Athletic Association. One of the main substantial reasons was the College’s name, Catawba, derived from the native people of the region (Catawba College 1927 Yearbook, p. 160).
* **Fact**: In August of 2005, The NCAA Executive Committee issued guidance on the adoption of a new policy, effective February 1, 2006, prohibiting NCAA colleges and universities from “displaying hostile and abusive racial/ethnic/national origin mascots, nicknames or imagery” and explicitly listed Catawba College and the Indians nickname as a member institution impacted by this policy (NCAA, 2005).  Prior to the NCAA ruling, the College had already formed a taskforce and took proactive steps over the previous years by discontinuing the College’s mascot and removing all renderings of Native Americans across campus citing the representations were not of Catawba Indians and their culture.
* **Fact**: In October of 2005, the Catawba College Board of Trustees authorized a formal appeal to the NCAA for the continued use of the athletic nickname, Indians.   The late Chief Gilbert Blue of the Catawba Nation spoke directly with the NCAA chair of the appeals committee, Dr. Bernard Franklin, and voiced support for the College to continue using Indians as the College’s athletic nickname.  In May 2006, the NCAA ruled Catawba College can use without penalty the athletic nickname, Catawba Indians specifically, not Indians, citing support from the Catawba Nation as the rationale for the continued use. The College continues to use the athletic nickname, Catawba Indians, still today (Gocatawbaindians.com, May 30, 2006).
* **Fact:** In 2007, Catawba College and the Catawba Nation came to an agreement for the continued use of the athletic nickname, Catawba Indians, in exchange for a full-tuition scholarship for a Catawba Nation student every four years.  This scholarship agreement remained in effect through the 2021-22 academic year, until the number of scholarships was increased this year. No other symbol or logo was included as part of this agreement.
* **Fact:** In the Spring 2022, Catawba College and the Catawba Nation entered into a new agreement to offer a full-tuition scholarship on an annual basis to a Catawba Nation citizen and mutually pledged to continue strengthening our partnership through additional educational pathways and opportunities in the new future.  No other terms were part of this agreement (Salisbury Post, April 8, 2022).
* **Fact:** In April 2022, Catawba College announced the return of the College’s historic block C as the official athletic logo of the College. The historic block C logo served the College for the greatest length of time in the College’s history (Catawba College, April 26, 2022).
* **Fact:** The College’s administration was responsible for the re-adoption of the historic block C as the College’s official athletic logo.  Catawba College students did not petition nor request the retirement of any previous athletic logo, nor were the previous collection of athletic logos used from the 1980s to 2022 retired due to a request from the NCAA, the Catawba Nation, or any other entity or agreement, including Nike. Furthermore, the previous athletic logos were not retired because they included elements often associated with Native American imagery.  Instead, the re-adoption of the historic block C was done as part of an overall branding strategy the College has undertaken over the past year (Salisbury Post, May 4, 2022).
* **Fact:** As the College has not had a sponsored mascot since the early 2000s, the College has begun the process of exploring the adoption of an official mascot. This includes conversations directly with the Catawba Nation leadership and Culture Center on appropriate mascots to complement the College’s athletic nickname, Catawba Indians. Regardless of the adoption of the mascot, the College’s athletic nickname remains the Catawba Indians with the continued support of the Catawba Nation.

**Timeline of Activity Related to Mascot Adoption**

* The Board of Trustees tasked the College with developing a process and recommending to the Board of Trustees a sideline mascot to complement the athletic nickname, Catawba Indians, in Spring of 2019
* In Fall of 2019, a survey was distributed to the entire Catawba College community soliciting input and ideas on a mascot with clear and core parameters.
* In Spring of 2020, a steering committee was formed consisting of student leaders, athletic department staff, alumni, faculty, and administrative staff to vet the mascot adoption. The committee met in March of 2020, but work was paused due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
* In Summer of 2023, a new steering committee was re-constituted with a similar makeup to steer the process during thee 23-24 academic year.
* The committee has met monthly throughout the fall 2023 semester with the following actions:
  + Approved a New Survey distributed to the entire campus community in September of 2023
  + Solicited and received proposals from design firms specializing in athletic logo and mascot design work in September 2023
  + Selected Summit Athletics as the successful partner in the process
  + With Summit Athletics as consultants, reviewed and vetted down semi-finalist mascots for consideration.
  + Additionally, Summit reviewed and recommended additional mascots for consideration with the committee
* Selection of three finalists for a sideline mascot in October 2023:
  + River Cat
  + Fox
  + Cardinal
* Summit provided detailed narrative and pros and cons for focus group questions
  + Focus Groups:
    - Alumni
    - Catawba Leadership
    - Student Leaders
    - Student-Athletes
    - Faculty
    - Staff
    - Coaches
    - Community Leaders
    - Chiefs Club
    - Trustees
    - Board of Visitors
* Early December: Feedback from Concepts shared with entire Catawba Community to solicit impressions and feedback
* January 2024: Board of Trustees Athletic Policy 🡪 Executive Committee 🡪 Full Board Vote by February 1st
* February 1st to April 15th – Silent phase of development/mascot costume build
* By end of academic Year: Public announcement
* August 1, 2024: Fully-on Brand new mascot, logos all launched