



Montclair State University Statement:

For centuries, physical symbols, such as public monuments and town square statues, have played an important role in the life and traditions of communities around the world – and a university is very much a community. The idea for a Red Hawk statue originated eight years ago with a group of Montclair State students who wanted to create an iconic symbol that would be placed prominently on campus. Montclair State University adopted the Red Hawk – a mythological bird based on the Red-Tail Hawk that can frequently be seen on campus – as its symbol in 1989 or 25 years ago this past September. For the University community, the Red Hawk has come to stand for the determination of our students to make something important of their lives and for the courage it takes to challenge oneself to truly fulfill one's potential.

The Red Hawk statue is a student-initiated project that will go a long way toward helping the University to develop an even greater sense of pride and identity. College is a transformative experience for young adults and they take their identities as alumni of a particular institution with them through life. The creation of such an identity can be particularly challenging on a campus, such as Montclair State's, that has a significant commuter population. Symbols like the Red Hawk statue will help to solidify the ties between the University and our students, providing both a stronger sense of community and a greater sense of obligation to future students.

In 2014, the board of the Student Government Association (SGA) voted to approve a contribution of \$100,000 of its discretionary budget towards the cost of the Red Hawk statue. The SGA also did fundraising around Homecoming and other

activities to raise an additional \$4,000 for the Red Hawk statue. The University's Board of Trustees in 2014 publicly approved the use of capital plant funds that have been accrued over time for the funding of campus improvements such as this project. As additional donations are received for the project, they will be used to offset the amount of the University-provided contribution.

The Red Hawk statue is being designed and fabricated in Toms River (NJ) by Hanlon Sculpture Studio, which has created similar mascot statues for other universities, including the Seton Hall Pirate, the Rowan University Owl and the Florida International University Golden Panther. The Red Hawk statue will be installed in front of the Panzer Athletic Center, at the main entrance to the Montclair State campus, in time for the Fall 2015 semester. Among other things, the statue will help generate greater support and enthusiasm for our Division III athletics program, which comprises 17 varsity sports in which over 500 Montclair State students annually participate.