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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **FROM RAMESES TO PTERODACTYL: SAVE THE MASCOTS' CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT ANIMALS**

SMYRNA, Ga. – Save the Mascots announced Jan. 25 that it is launching a campaign to persuade public universities to change their mascots to prevent animal cruelty. Save the Mascots is calling upon the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to be the first to change its mascot and has offered a solution: the pterodactyl. The pterodactyl is an extinct prehistoric flying reptile, so there would not be a possibility of using a live animal.

Jillian Hawser, the founder of Save the Mascots, said: “With the COVID-19 pandemic, more people have turned to sports as a way to stay entertained. We have seen a cultural shift recently that society has been looking critically at mascots. This is the perfect time to advocate for these animal mascots.”

Save the Mascots specifically chose UNC-CH as the first to change its mascot because the animal’s appearance is altered. Currently, UNC-CH uses Dorset Horn sheep with painted blue horns as its mascot at various university events.

The origin of the UNC-CH Rameses mascot dates back to 1924 with the star fullback, Jack Merritt. Merritt’s nickname was “the battering ram” because of his performance on the football field. With the UNC-CH football program’s recent successful season, it is a great time to rebrand and leave this outdated mascot in the past.

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Save the Mascots was founded in 2008 by Jillian Hawser with the mission to guard the dignity and safety of mascots everywhere. For more information about Save the Mascots and its campaign, visit [www.SaveTheMascots.org](http://www.SaveTheMascots.org).

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