

Atchison welcomes Unity Street

(KAIR) - A street name seen by many as representing a racial divide in Atchison is no more.

At an official unveiling on Thursday, city of Atchison crews took down the Division Street sign at its intersection with 2nd, and mounted a new sign – carrying the name Unity – in its place.

Members of numerous local organizations looked on and cheered as the Unity Street sign was hammered into place. Among those in attendance were city of Atchison officials, representatives from nearby Benedictine College, members of the civic group Atchison United, and teachers and schoolchildren.

Sean Crittendon with Atchison United shared his feelings with MSC News.

“You know, this is just a breathtaking moment. This is something that has been talked about for years and to finally see this happen – it is just tremendous. I told somebody else that this is just glorious.”

“This is just a small step of the work that’s being done and that will continue in the community. I think everybody in the community can build off this as we all move forward for unity.”

Speaking about the crows, Crittendon continued, “I love seeing the kids because it’s all about them and the future. I’m so hopeful (with) these young people stepping up and using their voices, and helping be a part of this change. It’s just tremendous.”

The renaming of Division Street to Unity Street was approved by city Commissioners in July.

While the vote was unanimous, it came after some impassioned discussion on the issue, which included a failed motion to table it.

A total of about 40 signs will need to be replaced, as the street, located on the north side of Atchison, runs about 14 blocks, east to west.

Many Signals Communications