

Ground Broken For Expansion of Atchison YMCA

(KAIR)--Ground is officially broken for the \$11 million expansion of the Atchison Family YMCA, with ceremonies held Thursday during the noon hour. A crowd, consisting of community members, City and County leaders, donors, Y volunteers, and others, gathered in front of the current facility as speakers spoke and accolades were given to those who worked to make the project a reality. Among the featured guests was David Byrd, the President and CEO of the Greater Kansas City YMCA, who, along with other speakers, praised the efforts of Atchison's Rick Berger. "You're going to see over the next several months this building being transformed, and when you come back, in a year or so, you will not believe what you're going to see," Byrd told the crowd. "It takes individuals behind this, and Rick Berger, you have gotten a lot of congratulations, but I've got to say, I've worked with so many volunteers in my years...but Rick, your passion, your dedication, your heart, has been in this from the beginning. You have been unwavering, you have not backed off one single minute." Berger was called to the podium; and, during his time at the microphone, thanked the major donors while unveiling the name of the expanded facility. "I'm pleased to announce that in honor of the Cray family, who are major donors to this capital campaign and major supporters of the YMCA, the new and expanded facility will be named the Atchison Family YMCA Cray Community Center." Karen Seaberg, a member of the Cray family, and Board Chair of MGP Ingredients, addressed the crowd. She said her father, Cloud L. "Bud" Cray, Jr., could not attend due to illness, but was thrilled to help play a role in making the expansion project possible. "He's really excited about it, and he's really sorry to miss today. My dad has been a Y person, volleyball player, racquet ball player when that was cool to do. He is really supportive and has made us all be supportive. It's kind of in the genes, you have to do it. So we're really, really happy to be part of the project." A ceremonial turning of the dirt concluded the groundbreaking, followed by lunch for all in attendance. Construction of the 30,000 square foot project, which will expand the Atchison Y to the east of the existing building, will allow the Y to double the number of patrons served. Work is expected to be complete by 2017.



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