

Utah college returns statue of Confederate soldiers to artist

- Artist will donate other artwork for campus to replace controversial piece
- Dixie State College 'rebranding' in search of university status



Workers remove a statue depicting two Confederate soldiers, one of whom holds the Confederate battle flag, from the campus of Dixie State College in December 2012. Photograph: The Spectrum and Daily News/AP

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A bronze statue of two Confederate soldiers removed from a southern [Utah](#) college campus two years ago has been returned to its creator.

Under a settlement announced this week, Dixie State University in St George returned a statue called *The Rebels* to artist Jerry Anderson of the town of Leeds, Utah, in exchange for Anderson's donation of other artwork for permanent display on campus.

At issue was his statue depicting a Confederate soldier on horseback helping an injured comrade, with a Confederate flag in hand.

“What it [settlement] means is that we can officially put the Confederate identity behind us,” a university spokesman, Steve Johnson, told the Salt Lake Tribune. “Now the university can move forward.”

The statue’s fate had been in limbo since Dixie State College officials removed it in December 2012 in an effort to “rebrand” the school ahead of attaining university status.

Critics said it symbolised racism and slavery, but others said the name “Dixie” is a part of local history that should remain. St George was called “Dixie” by Mormon settlers who tried to turn the mild region into a cotton-growing mecca.

Anderson sold the statue to the school for \$35,000 in the 1980s, and the school was considered its legal owner. The statue was placed in storage after its removal.

Dixie State included in the agreement a stipulation that the statue would not end up “within a certain distance of the university”, Anderson said.

“I would personally like to see it in the heart of Dixie. But if it’s going to cause controversy, I don’t want to fight that,” he told the Spectrum of St George.

The 80-year-old Anderson criticised the statue’s removal from campus, saying the problem with the “world today is everybody is too politically correct”.

The Dixie State president, Richard Williams, in a statement, praised the artist.

“We are very appreciative of Mr Anderson’s generous artistic contributions, not only to Dixie State University, but to the entire region,” he said. “We are grateful to Jerry for working with us and we look forward to displaying his work on this campus for everyone to view and enjoy in the years to come.”