

# ASU Foundation celebrates record-setting philanthropic impact

**Donors contributed \$630.8 million to support students, faculty, academics and research**

By Michelle Stermole, ASU News  
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Arizona State University Foundation for a New American University marked a record-setting year of philanthropic impact, demonstrating how donors' generosity is transforming lives, advancing research and strengthening communities.

From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, more than 113,000 individual, corporate and foundation donors made a gift to the [ASU Foundation](#), the nonprofit that raises and manages private contributions for Arizona State University. Donors' contributions generated \$630.8 million in new gifts and commitments to fund scholarships, launch new degrees and advance research, with more than 10% of donors giving to ASU for the first time.

"Every donor who invests in ASU becomes part of a legacy of transformation," ASU Foundation CEO Gretchen Buhlig said. "They are changemakers whose generosity fuels innovation, empowers students and strengthens the ASU Charter to serve our communities."

That transformation resonates deeply with students like ASU sophomore Jaida Scott, who was awarded a scholarship last year, enabling a gateway to opportunity.

"My college search was complicated because I'm a full-time wheelchair user, so staying in Ohio where it's rainy and snowy didn't seem beneficial to me. I was looking out West, and ASU was a place that resonated with me the most — the curriculum, the size, the honor's college," said Scott, who has used a wheelchair since she was 14 when a car accident paralyzed her. "It's expensive coming from out of state, so I looked up different scholarships and found one that was looking for people who had academic success and overcame an adversity. It was a big help last year with that scholarship."

Scott received the [Samantha Stachel Play Big Scholarship](#) through [Barrett, The Honors College](#), which assists with tuition, room, board and books. The scholarship, established in 2013, supports students who demonstrate academic success, leadership, character and resilience.

“I grew up knowing I wanted to go to college and study law,” Scott said. “There’s a lot of eyes looking to me for examples and inspiration, which has helped me to push for success and going to college despite my disability. ASU has been a great steppingstone for that path.”

Scholarships remained a top priority for donors, with more than \$68 million committed to fund scholarships. Among the gifts was a \$5 million donation from longtime supporter Annette Beus and her family to establish a scholarship for students in the new [School of Medicine and Advanced Medical Engineering](#). The gift is being leveraged to raise an additional \$15 million by July 2026 to support the first two student cohorts.

Beyond scholarships, donors supported new degrees, centers and research initiatives, including:

A [\\$10.5 million grant](#) from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to launch the [Knight Center for the Future of News](#) at the [Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication](#).

A [\\$1.7 million gift](#) from Lu Baird to help the [Biodesign Institute](#) support emerging scientific opportunities and urgent needs.

A [\\$10 million gift to Arizona PBS](#) from longtime donors Sue Hart-Wadley and Searle Wadley to fund a new broadcast tower, national science-based program and statewide educational outreach.

A [\\$25 million commitment](#) from the W. P. Carey Foundation to launch a new undergraduate real estate degree program this fall, and name and expand the [W. P. Carey Center for Real Estate and Finance](#).

The ASU endowment reached \$1.7 billion at the end of fiscal year 2025, placing ASU among a select group of public universities with endowments nearing \$2 billion. The endowment is managed by the ASU Foundation and comprises more than 2,600 individual accounts, each restricted by donor intent and distributed to ASU on a scheduled basis to support scholarships, academic programs, research, faculty positions, Sun Devil Athletics and more. In fiscal year 2025, there were 80 new endowed gifts established.

ASU President [Michael Crow](#) emphasized the strategic importance of philanthropy in advancing ASU’s mission.

“The world we live in today is changing in a multitude of ways, and the university is moving even faster to advance our ideas, to provide tools for learning and to produce the knowledge needed to advance society. The strength of the ASU Foundation and its enormously successful fundraising year generates resources from areas other than our appropriated funding and enables the university to continue being of service to the state of Arizona and beyond. The majority of these gifts, directed for a specific use, remain a small percentage in proportion to the overall university budget but provide vital support to initiatives that drive the university and its success in being a resource to the public,” Crow said.

Building on this momentum, ASU publicly launched the [Changing Futures campaign](#) in April to attract new philanthropic partnerships. The campaign is being managed by the ASU Foundation and will conclude June 30, 2029. Campaign priorities include expanding high-quality educational access worldwide, developing tomorrow's leaders, fostering a sustainable relationship with the planet, empowering resilient communities, improving health outcomes and advancing technology for good.

Campaign goals include reaching 250 million learners worldwide, sustaining \$1.5 billion in annual research investment and growing the university endowment to \$2.5 billion.

"Through the Changing Futures campaign, we celebrate the power of giving to shape the future," Buhlig said. "Every gift — big or small — helps us change the future from Arizona, for the world."

In fact, there were more than 413,400 gifts to support ASU that were under \$100 in fiscal year 2025, reflecting a growing community of donors who believe in ASU's mission and want to help shape a better future through their generosity, Buhlig said.

As the ASU Foundation celebrates 70 years of service, this year's record sets the stage for an even greater impact through the Changing Futures campaign.

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*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

## Main image



ASU photo