

ASU medical school gains accreditation — and a new name

9-figure gift creates John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering, which can now begin recruiting its first class of students for 2026

By Scott Bordow, ASU News
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John Shufeldt knew he wanted to be a physician when he was 5 years old.

“I realized early on that everyone should have a shot at health, no matter where they are in the birth lottery,” said Shufeldt, who would go on to become an emergency medicine physician and the founder of multiple health initiatives.

So when the Arizona State University alum heard President Michael Crow talking about ASU Health — a broad effort to transform how health care is designed and delivered while also producing new physicians, nurses, specialists and scientists — he was all in.

“All I could think of was, ‘Well, I know what I want to do for the next 30 years.’ I am on board to provide whatever help I can, however I can be of use,” Shufeldt said. “Literally, if it’s sweeping the floor, I’m in because I’m so excited about this medical school and what it is going to do for humanity.”

Shufeldt is doing more than picking up a broom. The university on Wednesday announced a nine-figure gift, the second largest in university history, from Shufeldt to operate the new medical school, which will be known as the [John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering](#), a central component of [ASU Health](#).

In addition to the gift, ASU this past week received preliminary accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, an important milestone that will enable the school to begin recruiting its first class of students to start in the fall 2026 semester.

(Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIPUrIGozMM>)

“While it is something we expected, accreditation is not to be taken lightly,” Crow said. “We are grateful to LCME and to our team that has been working tirelessly to help make that happen.”

The generous investment in naming the school made the news even more impactful, Crow said.

“John Shufeldt is the embodiment of the kind of student we want to produce. He is a doctor, an entrepreneur developing new things that impact people’s health and well-being, and is always looking ahead,” Crow said. “He sees the scale of ASU Health impacting all of Arizona and beyond, and he sees the unique design of a school focused on both medicine and engineering. He is not only contributing financially and lending his name — he is giving his time and talent to what we are building here.”

Shufeldt is a man of many accomplishments: He holds an MD, JD and MBA, and is board certified in emergency medicine; he obtained his MBA ('95) and JD ('05) from ASU, as well as a Six Sigma Black Belt from the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering in 2015. He is an emergency medicine physician who founded the urgent care company NextCare in 1993, growing it from a single clinic to a network of 60 facilities across six states. He has founded a number of other health ventures, including national telehealth provider MeMD in 2010 and Tribal Health in 2015 to address critical health care disparities in Indigenous communities.

“For decades I’ve worked at the intersection of medicine, business, law and innovation. I’ve seen where the systems work from the inside, and where they don’t work,” said Shufeldt, a [professor of practice](#) in the new medical school. “From the inside, I’ve treated patients in overcrowded emergency departments, I built companies to address health care inequities, care in underserved areas and improve the efficiency and the patient experience.

“But one truth with a capital T stands out to me: We don’t simply need more physicians. What we do need are more physicians who can innovate, who are leaders, who can do it with a high degree of compassion. That’s why I’m so excited about the new school at ASU, because I know that’s what we’ll be teaching.”

The John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering, together with primary clinical affiliate HonorHealth, will train students to blend multiple disciplines — medicine, engineering, technology and humanities — in order to create a health care leader with a strong sense of innovation and problem-solving.

Understanding accreditation

Preliminary accreditation is granted by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, which is the official accrediting body for medical degree programs in the United States.

The preliminary accreditation means the school has successfully completed the early phases of the rigorous accreditation process and is authorized to begin recruiting and enrolling students. LCME accreditation is required for students to be eligible for federal financial aid, residency programs and licensure exams.

Next, the John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering will be subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation by the LCME before receiving **provisional accreditation**, which is granted once the school has enrolled students and demonstrated progress toward meeting standards.

Full accreditation would be granted after the first class graduates and the school continues to show that it meets all LCME standards in practice.

Students will receive two degrees in four years, concurrently earning an MD and a Master of Science in medical engineering. Graduates will leverage new tools such as AI and data science to connect with patients and develop innovative practices.

“Why I’m so excited about the School of Medicine is that it allows me the chance to help create something and to be on the ground floor of something that doesn’t just add to the health care system,” Shufeldt said. “It drastically improves it. It literally bends the needle.”

Shufeldt’s donation also will support the creation of an endowed professorship for a professor of entrepreneurship in medicine, as well as a health-tech venture philanthropy fund that will be operated by the [ASU Foundation](#). The university will identify entrepreneurs funded through the fund, who will be called Xcellerant Ventures Founders.

Dr. Holly Lisanby, the founding dean of the new school, called Shufeldt’s gift “transformative” and said that with the preliminary accreditation, the wait is over and the school can begin to recruit students whose interests and qualifications match the school’s unique offering.

“Our students are going to be fully immersed in both cultures from the very beginning, the medical culture as well as engineering,” Lisanby said. “They’ll be dually trained. They’ll learn how to read both literatures and how to work with faculty and mentors who are not just coming from clinical fields and engineering, but also entrepreneurship and the VC (venture capital) sector so that they will be physician-engineer-entrepreneurs who will really transform the future of health care.”

The John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering is one part of ASU Health, which is creating new schools, connecting existing ones and leveraging the entire university to focus on the health needs of the state and the nation. In addition to the John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering, ASU Health includes the new School of Technology for Public Health, the Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation, the College of Health Solutions and the new ASU Health Observatory, all of which will be headquartered in downtown Phoenix as part of the Phoenix Bioscience Core.

“Today’s news is another important step forward in building the learning ecosystem that is ASU Health,” said Dr. Sherine Gabriel, executive vice president of ASU Health. “We have and continue to assemble an incredibly talented faculty. The medical and engineering school is aligned with a high-quality and like-minded [primary clinical affiliate in HonorHealth](#). We have a [fantastic location for our future headquarters](#). And now, with accreditation, we can begin the process of recruiting and welcoming the medical and engineering school students who will make up our first class. It is a very exciting time for everyone who is involved and contributing to this new beginning.”

Arizona Board of Regents Chair Doug Goodyear praised the forward momentum with ASU Health.

“The board challenged our universities to accelerate efforts to address Arizona’s health care workforce shortages, and ASU has answered that call to action,” Goodyear said. “With generous support from John Shufeldt, strong backing from our state lawmakers and the strategic leadership from the team at ASU Health, the vision of an engineering-focused medical school is now a reality. We welcome ASU Health’s first applicants and look forward to the impact they’ll have on improving health care for Arizonans.”

The new medical school will be located at the Mercado in downtown Phoenix until the ASU Health headquarters is complete. Groundbreaking on the headquarters is expected in spring 2026, with a

planned completion date in 2028.

“This isn’t for me. This isn’t about legacy. It’s about impact,” Shufeldt said. “It’s about training the kind of leaders that I wish I had when I was going through this process as a physician starting out. It’s about building a school committed to the future of medicine and not simply trying to reinvent the past. ASU is not only the right place to do this, it may be the only place to do this, because it is already redefining what a public university can be.”

Those interested in applying to be in the fall 2026 cohort of the John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering can learn more on [the school’s website](#).

Changing Futures campaign

This investment is part of ASU’s [Changing Futures campaign](#). Fueled by philanthropic investment and unique partnerships, the campaign focuses on six key areas: enhancing education access, developing leaders, promoting sustainability, strengthening communities, advancing health and developing impactful technology.

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

Main image



John Shufeldt, an emergency medicine physician, health entrepreneur and ASU alum, is giving the university a nine-figure gift in support of the new School of Medicine and Medical Engineering, which will now bear his name. “We don’t simply need more physicians,” he says. “What we do need are more physicians who can innovate, who are leaders, who can do it with a high degree of compassion. That’s why I’m so excited about the new school at ASU, because I know that’s what we’ll be teaching.” Photo by Emma Fitzgerald/ASU

Text image(s)



The new John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering will incorporate both medicine and engineering into the curriculum, and students will receive two degrees in four years: an MD and a Master of Science in medical engineering. Photo by Fervor



With the preliminary accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the new ASU medical school can now begin accepting applications for its first class, to begin with the fall 2026 semester. Photo by Fervor