

Tulane MakerSpace to be named in honor of donor, graduate

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Dr. Scot Ackerman graduated from Tulane in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering.

The [MakerSpace at Tulane University](#), which offers students and professors access to digital fabrication tools like 3-D printers, laser cutters, milling machines and lathes as well as traditional hand and power tools, will be named the Scot Ackerman MakerSpace, thanks to a generous gift from Dr. Scot Ackerman.

Ackerman, who graduated from Tulane in 1978 with a bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering, is a board-certified radiation oncologist and medical director

of the Ackerman Cancer Center in Jacksonville, Florida, which he originally founded in 1997 as First Coast Oncology. He has been a leader in his professional and civic life, holding memberships and serving on boards of numerous organizations.

"MakerSpace is an indispensable resource for Tulane scholars and researchers who teach and discover across the fields of architecture, engineering, art, medicine and more," Tulane President Mike Fitts said. "We are so grateful to Scot for supporting this vital part of our mission of interdisciplinary research and learning."

A portion of Ackerman's gift will go toward current operations of the MakerSpace, which opened in 2016, but the bulk will be used to establish the Scot Ackerman Endowed Fund.

Ackerman attributed his success as an innovator to the education he received at Tulane, and he wants students to experience that same sense of accomplishment.

"Over the years, I mentored many students who utilized the MakerSpace as part of their Science and Engineering projects – many of whom have gone on to national competitions," Ackerman said. "I want to ensure that these students have all the tools they need to become the next generation of innovators."

Cedric Walker, professor emeritus of biomedical engineering and director of the MakerSpace, said Ackerman's gift will be used, in part, to buy a water jet cutter, and a large-format laser cutter. A water jet cutter is a large tool used to sculpt and for machining of metal parts up to 6 inches thick.

"The large format laser cutter is the most asked-for tool among current MakerSpace users," he said. "This additional laser cutter will expand our ability to help students in the Novel Tech Challenge as well as assisting with student creations in engineering, art and architecture." The Novel Tech Challenge is a competition that helps students commercialize their ideas for new technologies.

Walker said Ackerman was a student in the first biomedical engineering class he taught at Tulane, and he has stayed close to his engineering roots through mentoring and advising students.

"He has a genuine interest in their work and his generosity has given them tools to do so much more than was possible when he was here as an undergraduate," Walker said.

At Tulane, Ackerman served on his 35th Reunion Committee and currently serves on the Tulane Hillel Board of Directors and the School of Science and Engineering Board of Advisors. In 2018, Ackerman received the Outstanding Service Alumnus Award from the School of Science and Engineering. He and his wife Alexandra “Alex” Ackerman served on the Tulane Parents Council when their daughter Sacha “Gigi” Ackerman attended. The Ackermans have two other children, Max and Isabella. They live in Jacksonville, Florida.

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