



**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Monique Clement, Arizona State University

[monique.clement@asu.edu](mailto:monique.clement@asu.edu)

480-727-1958

**Arizona State University's Tooker House residential community  
celebrates grand opening with VIP guests**

*ASU President Michael Crow, Diane and Gary Tooker and others spoke about what the space means for the student experience and held an official ribbon cutting ceremony*

**Tempe, Ariz., October 17, 2017** – Arizona State University hosted approximately 180 guests to celebrate the grand opening of the university's newest living and learning community, Tooker House, on October 17, 2017.

The seven-story, 1,600-person co-ed residential community was named in honor of Diane and Gary Tooker, ASU alumni who have worked tirelessly to increase science, technology engineering and math education outreach and access through generous investment in the university.

"Tooker House is more than a dorm — this is a focal point of much of our student activities that typify our emphasis on the student experience – integration of the living and learning environments," said Kyle Squires, Dean of the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering.

Squires went on to highlight the facility's many amenities, such as its classrooms, makerspaces, study areas and technology-enabled features which truly mark it as a dorm built for engineers.

"We want to celebrate and thank Diane and Gary Tooker for their support, encouragement, leadership, passion and drive that has been vital to the university in so many ways, and for whom we have the honor of naming this facility," continued Squires. "Tooker House is the embodiment of their cumulative investments in students, faculty and the technological ecosystem at ASU."

The Tookers, along with other high-profile guests including ASU President Michael Crow, Chair of the Arizona Board of Regents Bill Ridenour and James Wilhelm, executive vice president of American Campus Communities attended the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony, followed by a dinner reception afterward.

“We don’t name very many things here for people,” said Crow. “We have fancy names — Biodesign A. Interdisciplinary Science and Technology Building IV. We name things for a river, like Hassayampa, or for a tree, like Palo Verde. But this is for a family, committed to the future of our institution and all that we stand for,” he said, referring to the couple’s 20-year membership to the ASU President’s Club and the endowed scholarships and professorships they’ve supported at the university.

Ridenour congratulated those gathered on the opening of the “tremendous building,” calling it “another step forward in the evolution” of engineering at ASU.

“It’s a wonderful time to be a Regent, because I get to see the progress being made. I get to see the achievements of various schools within the universities,” said Ridenour. “By any metric, the enrollment, the graduation, the retention, the diversity, the financial aid, our Arizona universities are doing tremendous things.”

Wilhelm, representing ACC, also spoke noting what an honor it was to be selected as ASU’s private partner. He urged attendees to tour the facility, describing Tooker House as an “astonishing space, not only in the physical design, but the little touches that made us think ‘what does an engineering student want?’”

After thanking the contractors and designers that worked to complete Tooker House, Wilhelm praised the residential hall for its innovative nature and cutting-edge conception, including how much of the building’s infrastructure has been purposefully exposed so students can draw insight and creativity from how it works and fits together.

“This is really a community that has become a living laboratory,” he said. “The objective was to have a student living here to not just think of it as their home, but as a place to be inspired.”

Finally, prior to the ribbon cutting, Gary Tooker took the stage to express his gratitude to the ASU community and the assembled guests, noting that he and Diane were “humbled and overcome” when ASU suggested the name of the building.

“But,” he continued, “what you call something is the least important. What you have done to create it is the most important,” he said, launching into an anecdote about touring the building with ASU’s Board of Trustees.

“We had seen it under construction, but hadn’t yet been inside, certainly not while students were here,” said Tooker. “We got to talk to the young lady managing it. We got to talk to community advisors. We got to stroll in and out of the places where students were studying with equations on the wall. We spoke to some students in the gym, who had the opportunity to study until midnight, get some exercise in and then treat themselves to a snack at midnight,” he said with a smile.

“And let me tell you, there wasn’t anyone on the trustees board that wasn’t ready to go back to school — and it wasn’t because of the name. It was because of all of the thinking that went into capturing the imaginations of young engineering students and allow them to call this home.”

***About the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering***

The Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, with more than 20,000 enrolled students, is the largest engineering school in the country, offering 39 graduate and 24 undergraduate degree programs.

***About the Fulton Schools Residential Community at Tooker House***

Tooker House is a newly constructed, 1,600-person co-ed living, learning and working community for undergraduate students in ASU’s Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, named for ASU alumni and longtime supporters Diane and Gary Tooker.

***About ASU Foundation***

This program is made possible by the ASU Foundation, a private, nonprofit organization that raises, creates and invests resources for the benefit of Arizona State University while advocating for and advancing ASU’s mission and brand ([giveto.asu.edu](http://giveto.asu.edu)).

***About Arizona State University***

Arizona State University has developed a new model for the American Research University, creating an institution that is committed to access, excellence and impact. ASU measures itself by those it includes, not by those it excludes. As the prototype for a New American University, ASU pursues research that contributes to the public good, and ASU assumes major responsibility for the economic, social and cultural vitality of the communities that surround it.

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