BREAKING NEW GROUND

Cultivating Ground for the Next Generation to Flourish

As students engage God's creation in the new Graham Family Center for the Sciences, Johnson's partners are writing the next chapter of a shared mission.



The new Graham Family Center for the Sciences, opened in 2026.

Walk across campus this fall and you can see the mission taking shape. The new Graham Family Center for the Sciences—the centerpiece of the Breaking New Ground Campaign—was completed this summer, on time and below budget, and its laboratories and classrooms welcomed students this fall. What began as a vision on paper is now brick, glass, and possibility: a place where future healthcare workers, researchers, and teachers will be formed in an environment that takes both faith and science seriously.

And not only those students. Because the sciences belong to the core of a Johnson education, students in every major—ministry and business, education and counseling—will pass through these classrooms for the general-education courses that shape how they understand God's creation. A pre-nursing student prepares for a vocation of healing, a biology major weighs a future in research or the mission field, and a business or ministry student encounters the wonder of the created world in a required science course. The Center was built to serve the whole student body, and the reason its walls matter far less than what happens within them.

None of it would stand without you. Thousands of gifts from alumni, friends, churches, and JU personnel have carried this campaign to this moment, faster than we planned. We are especially grateful to the Graham family, whose leadership gift gave the new science center its name and stands as one of the defining acts of generosity in this campaign. In gifts large and small, we have watched a familiar truth unfold again: God provides for His work through the generosity of His people. That is the kind of response that says something about this community—people who give not because they are tracking a campaign, but because they believe in what Johnson students are called to do.

That momentum has opened a door. This year the Board of Trustees chose to continue the Breaking New Ground Campaign an additional year, through February 2028, to expand the campaign goal from $11 million to $16 million. They moved forward from a position of strength—not to make up ground, but to build on it. With the Center for the Sciences completed, the campaign now turns its fullest attention to the students those spaces are meant to serve. Giving to student scholarships and to the Royal Fund, which keeps a Johnson education affordable for every student, is already running ahead of schedule.

"We invite people to invest themselves in the mission; financial generosity is one expression of that investment."

The founder of this institution, Ashley S. Johnson, once described the Christian's obligation as the call to use "his body, his time, his talent, his influence, his money" so that the gospel would be preached. That sequence still guides us. Generosity toward Johnson has never been merely a transaction; it is participation in work that outlasts the giver—partnership in the gospel, as Paul wrote to the Philippians.

Being ahead of schedule is not the same as being finished—and here the mission's ongoing needs come into focus. A building is completed once; students arrive every year. Each incoming class brings capable young people who cannot attend Johnson without help, which is why scholarship support is never truly "met"—the need renews with every fall. In the same way, the Royal Fund does quiet, essential work all year long, bridging the real gap between what students pay and what their education actually costs. Careful stewardship allows Johnson to balance its budget and hold tuition within reach of the families we serve, and it is the faithfulness of donors that makes that balance possible. Strong financial footing is not a reason to give less; it is the very thing your gifts sustain.

That partnership is exactly what the expanded goal makes possible. Johnson University educates and develops students who advance the worldwide mission of Christ through their lives, ministries, and careers. Every scholarship helps a called student walk through the door, and every gift to the Royal Fund keeps that door open for the students who follow. Together, these gifts form the kingdom workers and Christian leaders the church and the world need.

There is still ground to cultivate together. However you are led to give—toward scholarships, the Royal Fund, or the Center for the Sciences - you are helping prepare students to carry Christ's mission into a world that needs them. Thank you for your partnership, and for the joy of building something that will outlast us all.