

ABOUT CU ANSCHUTZ

Who We Are

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is the largest academic health center in the Rocky Mountain region at the forefront of transformative education, science, medicine and healthcare.

The campus includes the University of Colorado health professional schools, 60+ centers and institutes and two nationally ranked hospitals, UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital and Children's Hospital Colorado, which see more than 2.6 million patient visits each year.

All interconnected, these organizations collaboratively improve the quality of patient care they deliver, research they conduct and health professionals they train.

Academically, the CU Anschutz Medical Campus serves **4,500 students** in more than 40 highly rated degree programs across **six schools and colleges**, supported by **\$910 million in research awards** in fiscal year 2024 – creating an overall economic impact to the state of Colorado of **\$13 billion**.

Part of the four-campus University of Colorado system, CU Anschutz and CU Denver together constitute a consolidated Higher Learning Commission-accredited entity (<https://www.cuanschutz.edu/university-accreditation/>) and have direct connections with CU Boulder and the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. The University of Colorado has been a leader in education, research and service for the state and beyond since 1876.

Powered by state-of-the-art facilities on a growing campus with a dynamic vision for the future, the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is uniquely equipped to lead health discoveries and treatment. To learn more about our mission and vision, please visit our website (<https://www.cuanschutz.edu/about/mission-and-vision/>).

Long History of Academic, Research, and Treatment Excellence (1883-1990s)

The roots of CU Anschutz' health science programs stretch back to the School of Medicine opening in Old Main at the University of Colorado in Boulder in 1883, with the College of Nursing following 15 years later in 1898, and the Skaggs School of Pharmacy in 1913.

In the 1920s the university's School of Medicine continued to grow, requiring a move from Boulder into a quadrangle of four brick buildings at Ninth Avenue and Colorado Boulevard in Denver to better serve both students and the community. The new Denver campus location eventually became known as the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, and home to the University's health sciences programs. The construction and move were joined by the creation of Colorado General Hospital, the forerunner to today's UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital.

Meanwhile, the current site of the CU Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora was known as General Hospital 21, founded as a military hospital by the U.S. Army during the First World War to treat soldiers suffering from tuberculosis and other lung diseases. It was renamed to honor Lieutenant William Thomas Fitzsimons, the first US Army officer killed in World War I.

To continue providing help in treating tuberculosis and other medical conditions on a larger scale, a new main hospital building was constructed. The hospital was dedicated on December 3, 1941, and

following the outbreak of the Second World War, as one of the largest and most modern military hospitals in the country, the Fitzsimons campus played a key role in caring for sick and wounded soldiers during the war.

The Fitzsimons campus has even provided care to the Commander in Chief. In 1955, President Dwight D. Eisenhower recovered from a heart attack at Fitzsimons. As his health improved, he often went to the large eighth-floor sundeck of where he used binoculars to observe the mountains.

As the Fitzsimons hospital continued to care for members of the armed services through the second half of the 20th century, CU health programs broke new ground, with the School of Nursing launching the first nurse practitioner program in the country in 1965, and the School of Dentistry opening in 1973, joining the University's other health science programs at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver.

These new programs built upon a decades-rich history of health sciences breakthroughs and discoveries at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, which included innovative research done to improve child welfare, pioneering work on open heart surgeries, critical advancements in public health policy, and the first ever liver transplant.

Growth, Base Closure, and a New Vision (1990s-Present)

By the late 1990s, however, the sustained success and growth at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center ran into space limitations as the city of Denver had grown around the campus. A new home would be needed to continue to provide new transformative health discoveries for Colorado and the world.

At the same time, the Fitzsimons army campus was slated for closure by the military, as many of its functions had moved to Fort Sam Houston in Texas.

Noting the historical importance of a major health center in Colorado and envisioning the promise and potential of centralizing and connecting health education, care, and research on a single campus, local, state, and university leaders worked together with the goal of transforming the historic military medical center in Aurora into an innovative health sciences community by moving the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and its schools and colleges to the land.

In 2006, the Fitzsimons campus, the eventual new home for the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, was renamed the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus in recognition of more than \$90 million in donations from The Anschutz Foundation to help in the construction of brand new education, research, and patient care facilities on the grounds.

Two years later, the academic and research operations of all CU health sciences schools and colleges relocated to the new campus on the former army base grounds. This move also included the founding of a brand new School of Public Health for the state; founded as a collaborative venture between the University of Colorado, Colorado State University and the University of Northern Colorado. UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital also joined in the move to the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, along with Children's Hospital Colorado, to realize the vision of a fully integrated health sciences campus.

As the CU Anschutz Medical Campus has evolved and grown, so has the city and region we call home. Colorado's third largest city, Aurora is home to a budding arts scene, hundreds of ethnically diverse restaurants, and recreational opportunities ranging from boating to hiking. And with

the Rocky Mountains a short drive away, there is no better location to be inspired by your surroundings than Colorado.

Other Campus History

Interested in learning more about our campus history? Our schools, college and programs have more of their stories to tell at our website (<https://cuanschutz.edu/about/our-history/>) – alongside a map for a self-guided history walking tour of CU Anschutz.