

W Michigan medical school receives \$100M donation

KALAMAZOO, MICH.

Unidentified benefactors have given Western Michigan University a \$100 million donation to launch a private medical school, the Kalamazoo institution announced Tuesday.

University President John Dunn said it's the one of the 10 largest cash donations given to a U.S. university and among the largest to any Michigan school. Dunn said the money will serve as "foundation funding" for the medical school that the university is developing with the city's two major hospitals.

"We've known for some time that this is the right time and place to launch a medical school for the 21st century, and this gift signals the kind of donor confidence in this university and community that will make this initiative a reality," Dunn said in a statement.

The donors wish to remain anonymous for now but "we hope one day to be able to acknowledge them by name and thank them again for their generosity," Dunn said.

Dunn cited the philanthropic precedent set locally in 2005 by the privately and anonymously funded Kalamazoo Promise program. The public school district's 11,600 students are guaranteed scholarships covering 65 percent to 100 percent of a student's college tuition at any of the state's 15 public universities or 28 community colleges for four years.

An unidentified donor in 2009 pledged \$1.8 million, which has served as seed money for Western Michigan's medical school. The school is expected to open in the fall of 2013 or 2014.

In 2004, University of Michigan received \$100 million -- the largest donation in the school's history -- from New York real estate magnate Stephen Ross for the business school that bears his name. In 2001, Intel Corp. co-founder Gordon Moore and his wife, Betty, announced a \$600 million cash and stock gift to the California Institute of Technology, while Stanford University received \$400 million from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.