

Dedicating the Carolyn & Kem Gardner Learning and Leadership Building

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Brandon Sorensen, David Jenkins, David Huntsman, Karen Huntsman,
Kem Gardner, Carolyn Gardner, Kathy Anderson, Dough Anderson, Al Smith, Frank Caliendo

Utah State University celebrated the opening of the Carolyn and Kem Gardner Learning and Leadership Building with a ceremony that brought together students, faculty, donors, and community leaders to honor a project years in the making.

Dean Douglas Anderson of the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business welcomed guests, describing the new space as a catalyst for student success. He emphasized that the building was designed to complete the George S. Eccles Business Building and Jon M. Huntsman Hall, and to serve a different purpose: to inspire students, foster leadership, and accelerate careers. The event highlighted the Gardner family, whose name now graces the facility, and the Huntsman family, whose vision and generosity established the Huntsman School of Business and continue to shape its growth. Karen Huntsman spoke of her late husband Jon's vision for providing students with worldclass opportunities, while David Huntsman reflected on the family's legacy of philanthropy and community impact. Carolyn and Kem Gardner emphasized that their hope is for the building to spark connection, inspire students to take ownership of their education, and create lasting memories of their time at Utah State.

Student voices reinforced that vision. Representatives from the Huntsman Scholar Program, the Analytics Solutions Center, the Covey Leadership Center, the Center for Entrepreneurship, and the Huntsman Hive, shared how experiential learning at the Huntsman School has shaped their education. From global study trips to hands-on projects for corporate partners, students testified to the opportunities that gave them the confidence, leadership skills, and networks to launch successful careers.

University Interim President Alan L. Smith praised the building as an investment not only in the Huntsman School, but in the broader university community. He noted that its centers and programs will serve students across disciplines while strengthening USU's commitment to experiential learning. The day concluded with an open house, tours of the new building, and the quintessential Aggie tradition celebrating with ice-cream.