

Approved by the UCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors (September 27, 2025)

**UCLA Alumni Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
June 28, 2025**

Present

Board of Directors: Paco Retana, Cathy Choi, Sonia Das, Devon Dickau, Samantha D’Souza, Stephanie Ellis-Smith, Cinthia Flores, Dean Florez, Coretta Harris, Ed Lew, Chris MacLaughlin, Manaf Mansure, Lea Rasmusson, Monica Sanchez, Matthew Saucedo, Julie Sina, Joe Vardner

Staff: George Brown, Julia Brown, Megan Friedlander, Denise Pacheco, Andrea Sork, Katie Ward

Absent (Board of Directors): Yolanda Gorman, Corey Matthews, Joe Pham, Natalie Samarjian, Rhea Turteltaub, Diana Zschaschel

Welcome & Land Acknowledgement

- President Paco Retana called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. welcoming directors and staff partners to the final Board meeting of the fiscal year. The hybrid meeting was recorded to assist with capturing minutes. All presentations would be made available for review on the Alumni Board Box post-meeting. Time was taken at the beginning of the meeting to acknowledge and reflect on the significant events unfolding in Los Angeles and around the country, recognizing their impact on our board and the broader Bruin community.

ACTION Items

- Retana asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 15, 2025 board meeting. Motion made, seconded, and approved unanimously. Retana also asked for a motion to approve the recognition of network compliance and non-compliance. One additional network completed the compliance requirements since the last board meeting. Motion made, seconded and approved unanimously.

Governance and Nominations Committee

- Cinthia Flores, Vice President and Governance and Nominations Committee Chair, shared her reflections on the recruitment process and key considerations in selecting new board members. This year’s slate included the recommendation to re-elect five incumbent Directors and two new Directors. The incumbent and new directors were elected for a three-year term (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028). Flores asked for a motion to approve the Alumni Board Directors election slate. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Audit Committee

- Coretta Harris, Audit Chair, presented the 2025-2026 Audit Committee appointments for approval. Motion made, seconded and approved unanimously.

Alumni Association Endorsement

- The topic of alumni board endorsement of advocacy efforts was introduced by Natalie Samarjian, Civic Engagement Task Force Chair, following increased requests for alumni involvement in local and regional policy issues. Board members were asked to consider whether the Alumni Board should take a position on campus issues—such as issuing letters of support—and began discussing initial ideas around the need to develop guidelines to help determine when and how the Board should engage on complex or potentially divisive issues. Board leadership asked to pause the

recording for further discussion to ensure a safe and comfortable space given the sensitive topics involved. The Board and taskforce will continue these conversations.

Alumni Affairs Update

- Julie Sina, Chief Executive Officer/Associate Vice Chancellor Alumni Affairs, started by providing a recap of the *We All Want To Change the World* Book Launch and UCLA Fireside Chat With Kareem Abdul-Jabbar '69. Sina also shared how the Alumni Association celebrated and welcomed the Class of 2025 graduates.

Strategic Path Update

- Matt Saucedo, Strategic Path Workgroup Chair, Katie Ward, Chief Strategy Officer, Alumni Engagement Innovation, and Julie Sina, Chief Executive Officer/Associate Vice Chancellor Alumni Affairs, provided an update on phases one and two of the strategic path. Saucedo and Ward discussed how the Association's strategic path is aligned with Chancellor Frenk's vision. Phase one (2022-2025) and phase two (2025-2027) were reviewed along with key accomplishments.
- They highlighted the launch of a refreshed brand identity and narrative that opened new avenues to drive engagement. "Alum" language has been embraced across campus, and our efforts continue to be prominently featured on the UCLA homepage and app. Since February 2, unique website visits have increased 4.5%. A digital pivot and relatable stories are helping to drive engagement. Next steps for phase one include deepening engagement pathways, leveraging storytelling to showcase our impact, and evolving our approach to meet the needs of alumni. The lasting impact of phase one was emphasized, framed around three circles of impact: What can UCLA do to support alums? What can alums do to support UCLA and each other? What can UCLA and alums do, working together, to support change in the world.
- Saucedo and Ward then gave an overview of phase two, which will focus on a personalized and seamless experience for alumni and improved efficiency and collaboration for Team Alumni. They discussed the project priorities guiding the website redesign. The website redesign project goals include shifting from event-focused to content-driven engagement, simplifying navigation and improving accessibility, weaving storytelling throughout, and aligning with the brand refresh. Insights into the feedback methods that informed these goals, along with preferences related to functionality, were discussed. A preview of the website redesign was shared. The priorities for the data enhancement project were also discussed. Enhancements for alums will focus on a seamless event experience, targeted outreach that feels personal and relevant, a single place to update info and preferences, and access to an alum directory. Enhancements for staff will focus on an improved event experience and data collection, holistic alum data and search-ability, the ability to personalize and target outreach, and integrated systems that improve reporting. Next steps of phase two include releasing the new web experience, launching a fully integrated modern event registration and check-in tool, and developing a dedicated data system to serve the needs of our organization. Saucedo discussed timeline objectives for the next 12 months. Lastly, Saucedo provided an update on the strategic path budget; the 2024-2025 actual expenditures came in under budget. Board members discussed the impact of rising costs and inflation, which were considered and addressed through budgetary contingencies. Ward also shared there were cost savings by signing a 5-year contract with Salesforce with this year's rate.

Strategic Partnerships Committee

- Samantha D'Souza and Devon Dickau, Strategic Partnership Co-chairs, presented key updates including the JMI contract. Sina provided background on the limitations of the partnership with JMI, which ultimately led to the termination of the Association's contract with them. Committee objectives for the coming year were shared. These objectives will involve stimulating strong multi-directional relationships that provide deep, ongoing value for the Alumni Association, its partners and alumni. An updated approach to planning for Alumni Weekend 2026 was discussed. The

committee will first envision what an ideal Alumni Weekend means to them and our Bruin community. From there, they will identify compelling commercial opportunities across three key pillars: sports, education and corporate, and entertainment. Having a strong vision to present to potential sponsors increases the likelihood of securing sponsorships, which could help expand Alumni Weekend beyond what is currently possible with existing resources. The goal is to present these opportunities to external partners through scaled partnership packages that emphasize mutual benefit. Examples of possible internal, educational, sports, and entertainment partnerships were discussed. Board members discussed examples of preferred partnerships and the importance of brand alignment between potential partners/sponsors and our mission and values. Board members were asked to participate in brainstorming commercial asks for external investments and to support the committee with their connections and opening doors.

Diversity Advisory Committee

- Devon Dickau, Diversity Advisory Committee Chair, provided a refresher of the committee's mission, the role of network representatives, and its committee members. Dickau highlighted the committee's accomplishments from this year which included a day-long retreat, three DAC meetings and a special meeting to discuss campus climate issues. Outcomes from these meetings resulted in a more cohesive DAC culture, the identification of opportunities to align DAC and networks with campus and Alumni Association strategic priorities, enhanced engagement of network leaders with the Board and one another, a strengthened culture of accountability, and deepened partnerships across the UCLA ecosystem. Dickau's reflections of the year centered on advocacy, community and the importance of UCLA alum stories. He addressed the critical role of the Diversity Advisory Committee amidst varied viewpoints or differences among the administration, students, and alumni. Lastly, next steps were discussed, which include working with staff to recommend changes to the committee for the coming year, facilitating cross-network collaboration and momentum, and continuing to navigate the current moment.

Finance Committee

- Ed Lew, Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair, reported that the committee met recently to review the Q3 financial statements and the projections for the remainder of the fiscal year. Lew shared a few financial highlights, including that the travel program is on track to have a record-breaking year and that External Affairs expenses were lower than anticipated due to the decision not to hold Alumni Weekend. There is a projected revenue shortfall due in part to the JMI partnership, however, it will be made up for by savings in other areas. Lea Rasmusson, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Administrative Officer, UCLA External Affairs, discussed Alumni Association expenses, noting that 65% are covered by External Affairs, with the remaining 35% funded by the Alumni Association. Lew also shared that there have been preliminary discussions about the Alumni Association's separate 501c3 status. Many other large universities are merging their foundations and their alumni associations into one tax entity that has benefits in terms of compliance, filings and audits. Sina added that such a merger would not affect staffing, the board, or the Association's brand identity (overall minimal impact to the outward public). Discussion at this point is to explore potential changes to funding.

Meeting adjourned by Retana

- The board meeting adjourned at noon.