

Homeowner's Representative Board Candidate Statements 2026

Gregory Dachner

Hello neighbors! Last July, our family moved from New York City to Coltrane Court. What a move! Yes, we're new here, but it has been a joy to join this community and I am excited to help cultivate us into a stronger neighborhood. In the short time I've been here, I joined UHills Thrive, where I sit on the committee to revamp our website, and I am the lead organizer for the UHills Community Coffee Pop-up, coming in March.

My wife joined the faculty at UCI in Psychology, we have a three old daughter who loves to swim and climb in the bushes, and a dog who is the best at playing fetch. I myself left academia after earning my PhD, and I am now a technical project manager for mission-lead nonprofits and a volunteer at the Lakeview Senior Center here in Irvine. I love camping (let's do community trips!), tabletop roleplaying games, and live music (anyone else going to the Jazz shows in Great Park?). I grew up in Oakland and think like a New Yorker - which makes me a laidback Californian who gets things done; best of both worlds!

I want to join the HRB to bring my unique perspective as a new resident, a renter, a parent, a project manager, and a community organizer, to cultivate UHills as a community through neighbor buy-in and transparency. We can achieve this through building Connections (if elected, I wanted to hear your voice on how to improve our neighborhood), more Collaborations (like the Coffee Pop-up), and by defining our Commitments (what is the core identity of UHills and how can that motivate us?).

It would be an honor serving you on the HRB to help UHills thrive. Thank you!

Michele Guindani

I have been a member of this community for over nine years. I first joined as a faculty member in the Department of Statistics at UCI. In 2022, for personal reasons, I moved to UCLA, where I am currently a full professor in the Department of Biostatistics. Along the way, I have also become very familiar with commuting on the 405!

I previously served on the HRB from 2018 to 2020. During that consequential term, before and during the pandemic, the Board worked on several important initiatives. One of my main priorities at the time was addressing the mailbox situation in the community. As many residents may recall, older housing units were restricted to a specific mailbox design that was easy to open, thereby making them vulnerable to mail theft. After a lengthy and

sometimes challenging process involving both the Post Office and ICHA, we secured approval for updated mailbox configurations. This allowed homeowners, within agreed-upon architectural guidelines, to install closed and more secure mailboxes if they desired.

During that same period, Susan Pearlman and I were also involved in what was then called the "Welcome and Wellness Committee." We organized a series of meetings at the community center focused on wellness, inclusivity, and fostering a welcoming environment. Under Susan's guidance, we also organized well-attended webinars during the pandemic. In addition, the HRB began exploring the development of an emergency response system to improve preparedness for major events such as fires or earthquakes. Although my term ended before this work reached a concrete conclusion, I remain convinced of its importance and am glad of the work done so far.

At the end of my previous term, I chose not to run again due to significant institutional responsibilities, including serving at the time as the Chair of the Council on Research, Computing, and Libraries at UCI and advancing my own research.

More recently, I rejoined the HRB for the past four months following the departure of a Board member amid challenges in the relationship between the HRB and ICHA, particularly around trust and communication. After raising some of my personal concerns directly with the ICHA Board, I was asked by the current HRB leadership if I could step in on the HRB on an interim basis (sort of, "put your money where your mouth is!"). Since then, my role has primarily been advisory, contributing to establishing constructive and continuous communication between the HRB and ICHA.

One important development during this period is that the HRB now has the opportunity to regularly present issues of community interest directly to the ICHA Board at its monthly meetings. While there is still substantial work to be done, this represents a meaningful step toward transparency and collaboration.

As I consider running again for the HRB, I am aware of the challenges ahead. These include managing concerns around noise and shared spaces, addressing lingering trust issues between residents, the HRB, and ICHA, and continuing to strengthen the Board's role beyond architectural review, that is, supporting community initiatives, engagement, and overall quality of life.

Although I now commute to UCLA and am affiliated with a different UC campus, over the past four months of service on the HRB, I have come to see this not as a limitation but as a

potential strength. Perhaps being somewhat removed from local campus perspectives may allow me to offer a broader, more neutral perspective while remaining fully committed to this community. This could be a way for me to give back to a community that has given so much to my husband, my dog (!), and me.

If elected, my goal would be to continue fostering a welcoming, respectful, and well-functioning environment; to strengthen the relationship between the community, the HRB, and ICHA; and to support the HRB's evolving role in serving the needs and interests of residents.

Mack McCoy

I've lived in University Hills (UHills) since 2008. In that time, I've volunteered repeatedly on subcommittees (like transportation or entertainment) and helped many different events. I believe in being a good neighbor and trying to foster community by advocating for all residents.

Over the past four years, as Co-Chair of the HRB (Homeowner Representative Board), I've supported residents in creating public art, a broad range of activities and events, and tried to strengthen transparency to help residents know what's going on in UHills.

In some ways, the HRB is running smoothly, but in others, we have much work to do. If I'm re-elected, I will continue to work on transparency and accountability along with real representation for renters and better communication from ICHA about decisions that materially impact residents. Whether we're talking about activities like pickleball or home maintenance standards, I'll need your help though! Please vote! Please get involved. And please talk to your HRB and ICHA Board members. We can't help if we don't know what's going on.

Susan Pearlman

I have lived in University Hills for over ten years and have served on the HRB since the early days of COVID in 2020. During that time, I have focused on how neighbors experience daily life here, especially as circumstances change.

University Hills is a distinctive community, shaped by long tenures, shared institutional ties, and a mix of life stages that make connection and care especially important. In 2019, ICHA encouraged the HRB to focus more intentionally on building community from within, which helped create space for resident-led efforts to take shape.

Early work through the Community Safety and Diversity Working Committee surfaced growing concerns about isolation among residents. Those concerns did not feel abstract. They felt immediate. Building on that groundwork, I later helped convene an HRB-supported focus group to better understand the needs of residents aging in place in University Hills. Those conversations clarified the need for stronger resident-led leadership and more intentional community support.

From that work, Thrive UHills was initiated as a resident-led effort focused on connection, inclusion, and intergenerational community building. The aim has been practical and long-term. Create ways for residents to lead, participate, and stay connected without relying on any single person to hold everything together.

Today, my focus is on follow-through. Work is underway with a subcommittee to complete a UHills.org Refresh so the website is clear, reliable, and genuinely useful to residents. I am also focused on reinforcing the structures, relationships, and shared responsibility that allow community life to function well over time.

My approach is rooted in stewardship. I care about clear communication, follow-through, and building durable structures that improve resident experience in everyday, practical ways. I would be grateful for your vote of confidence.

Swantje Willms

My husband and I came to University Hills one and a half years ago when he started working at UCI.

After renting in the Alturas apartments, we are now fresh homeowners on Zola Ct.

I'm involved in several of the Neighbourhood groups, such as the community choir, the knitting group, the Friday night socials, both book clubs, and the CERT group.

I've also become part of the sustainability committee. I'm especially excited about encouraging the use of more native plants in community as well as private landscaping and the zero waste efforts.

I enjoy participating in various events on campus whether just attending or volunteering. Since many of the friends I've made here in University Hills as well as ICHA have encouraged me to be a candidate, I think I could help improve communication between the HRB and ICHA.