

UCLA Alumni Band

2024-2025
The Year in Review



established 1976
uclaalumniband.org

Year in Review

2024-2025

After nearly 100 years as a cornerstone of the Pac-8/10/12 Conference, UCLA and Bruin Nation became a part of the Big Ten Conference.

And after nearly fifty years as the premier Alumni Band in the Pac-8/10/12, the UCLA Alumni Band set out to earn that same reputation in the Big Ten.

Our literal band of Bruin Alumni enjoyed an outstanding season and school year.

A year chock full of memorable events, performances and highlights, starting with a longtime tradition... our Annual Rehearsal & BBQ.

Dates and Performances

August 24, 2024	Annual Rehearsal & BBQ
September 14, 2024	UCLA Football vs. Indiana
September 28, 2024	UCLA Football vs. Oregon
October 6, 2024	Dribble for Victory Over Cancer
October 12, 2024	UCLA Football vs. Minnesota
October 26, 2024	UCLA Women’s Volleyball vs Michigan State
November 8, 2024	UCLA Football vs. Iowa
November 16, 2024	UCLA Men’s Water Polo vs. USC
November 23, 2024	UCLA Football vs. USC
November 30, 2024	UCLA Football vs. Fresno State
December 14, 2024	UCLA Gymnastics – “Meet the Bruins”
December 29, 2024	UCLA Women’s Basketball vs. Nebraska pregame concert
January 25, 2025	UCLA Gymnastics vs. Illinois
February 14, 2025	UCLA Gymnastics vs. Penn State
March 9, 2025	UCLA Gymnastics vs. Stanford
March 15, 2025	UCLA Men’s Volleyball vs. Vanguard
April 13, 2025	UCLA Softball vs. Washington
April 27, 2025	UCLA Women’s Water Polo MPSF Championship Game
May 17, 2025	UCLA Baseball vs. Northwestern

Annual Rehearsal & BBQ

August 24, 2024

The Annual Rehearsal & BBQ at Ed Hirsch’s house in Chatsworth on August 24th, which serves as the Alumni Band’s annual kick-off event, was a good time had by all.

Much fun was had among the band members during what was essentially a three-hour band camp with the band going over some familiar tunes and practicing new songs. The post-rehearsal BBQ was likewise a good time as always.

The big highlight of the day was when the UCLA Gymnastics team arrived as special honored guests, led by coach Janelle McDonald, and took over on percussion for a couple of songs near the end of the rehearsal. And they did a very good job!

It was a fun way to kick off the year!



UCLA Football

2024 Season

Three weeks after the Annual Rehearsal & BBQ, UCLA officially began its membership in the Big Ten Conference with the football team's home opener at the Rose Bowl. The Bruins faced an Indiana team that clearly showed that basketball is not the only sport they excel in, with the Hoosiers beating the Bruins on their way to an eventual berth in the College Football Playoff.

Playing at our usual spot in Lot H along with doing our "Port-A-Sons" for the tailgaters, and playing at the Rose Bowl's Court of Champions just before kickoff, the Alumni Band was both outstanding and a big hit among the Bruin faithful. The band and the fans enjoyed wins over Iowa and Fresno State, showing their support for first-year coach DeShaun Foster, particularly since he brought back the "Bruin Walk", where the team walks among the fans through Lot H on their way to the Rose Bowl before games.

Which the Alumni Band enthusiastically played at and enjoyed.



UCLA Football

2024 Season



UCLA Football

2024 Season



Dribble for Victory Over Cancer

October 6, 2024

On October 6th, the Alumni Band took some time off from their football duties to play for the UCLA Men's and Women's Basketball teams' annual fundraiser at Drake Stadium on the UCLA campus.

It was great supporting this worthy cause and event, which was led by former Bruin hoops standout John Vallely.

Another highlight of the day was beforehand when we stopped by the Gymnastics team's practice at the John Wooden Center to kick off the Bruins' first intrasquad meet of the year. The team enjoyed it immensely and it was a real treat for the band as well.



Dribble for Victory Over Cancer

October 6, 2024



Women's Gymnastics Intr Squad

October 6, 2024



Women's Volleyball vs. Michigan State

October 26, 2024

The day after Freddie Freeman hit the World Series walk-off grand slam that Dodger fans will always remember, the Alumni Band was at Pauley Pavilion playing for and supporting the UCLA Women's Volleyball team in their match vs Michigan State on October 26th. The team clearly drew inspiration from the Alumni Band as they swept the Spartans.

A great time was had by all!



Men's Water Polo vs. USC

November 16, 2024

The Alumni Band had a big part in kicking off Crosstown Rivalry Week as we were at the Spieker Aquatics Center on campus, playing at the Men's Water Polo team's annual clash with USC on November 16th.

The Alumni Band's presence evidently motivated the Bruins as they smashed the Trojans 16-9 on their way to eventually winning the NCAA National Championship (UCLA's 124th overall). And the Alumni Band, who played after every goal scored by UCLA, was exhausted!



From Adam Wright, Head Coach, UCLA Men's Water Polo

“ Dear UCLA Alumni Band,

[We] are grateful to you and the Alumni Band, that is for sure.

Joel, You and your bandmates were incredible. We would love to have you out for more games when possible. Women's season is around the corner as well. That would be awesome as we love your music.



Women's Gymnastics

2024-2025 Season



As has been the case for over twenty years, playing for the UCLA Gymnastics team at their home meets was a tremendous highlight of the year for the Alumni Band. The season started off with the annual "Meet The Bruins" preseason event on December 14th, which featured the gymnasts previewing their routines for the upcoming year.

The Alumni Band played at three meets against Illinois, Penn State and Stanford. Prior to the Stanford meet on March 9th, we performed a pre-meet concert outside Pauley Pavilion at the John Wooden statue, which both the Alumni Band and the fans waiting to get inside Pauley for the meet enjoyed immensely.

Another highlight for the Alumni Band during the season was our annual cookie contest, where votes were cast to decide which band member baked the best cookies. It has become a highly-anticipated annual Alumni Band tradition.

Of course, some outstanding gymnastics was performed by the Bruins, led by standouts such as Emma Malabuyo, Brooklyn Moors, Chae Campbell, and Olympic Gold Medalist Jordan Chiles as the team exceeded expectations, starting the season ranked 10th in the country and finishing in second place at Nationals.

The Bruin gymnasts loved and appreciated the Alumni Band supporting them, and the Alumni Band loved playing for and supporting them as well.



From Janelle McDonald,
The R.C. Rothman UCLA Head
Gymnastics Coach

“UCLA Gymnastics is grateful to have the Alumni Band at our gymnastics home meets. Their energy and Bruin spirit helps create an electric atmosphere in Pauley Pavilion for our athletes and fans to enjoy!



Women's Basketball vs. Nebraska

December 29, 2024

On December 29th, a few days before New Year's, we performed at the John Wooden statue in front of Pauley Pavilion before the top-ranked and eventual Final Four participant UCLA Women's Basketball team's contest vs Nebraska, which was very well received by the fans.

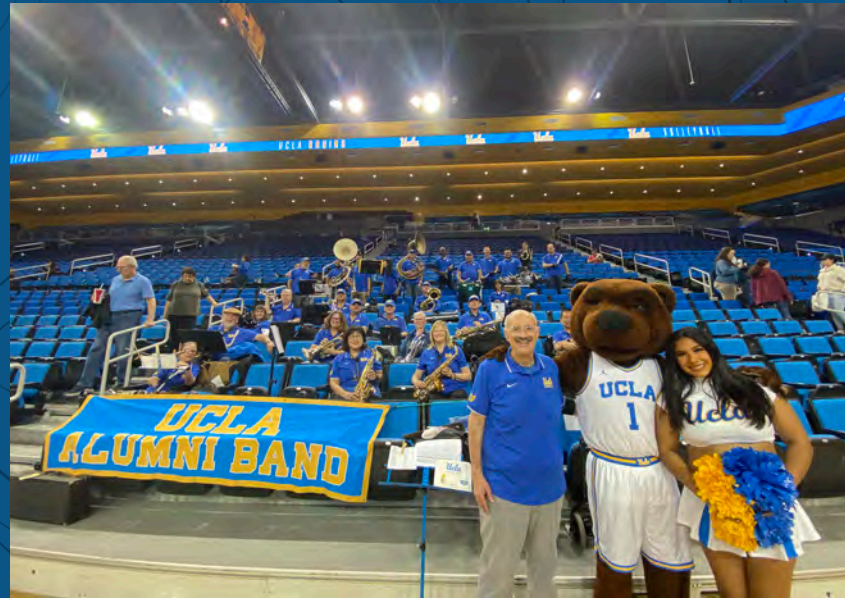
The Alumni Band, who was honored and recognized during the game, received both free admission to and choice seats for the game. Watching the Bruins crush the Cornhuskers was very fun and an outstanding way to close out 2024.



Men's Volleyball vs Vanguard

March 15, 2025

On March 15th the Alumni Band returned to Pauley to play for the two-time defending NCAA National Champion UCLA Men's Volleyball team at their match vs Vanguard. Much like for their Gymnastics and Women's Volleyball counterparts, the Alumni Band apparently served as motivation for the Bruins as they won going away, with the Alumni Band being the usual hit among the fans.



From John Hawks,
UCLA Head Coach, Men's Volleyball

“I'd like to extend our gratitude to the Alumni Band for coming out to Pauley this season. We are excited to welcome them back next year!

Thank you again!



Softball vs Washington

April 13, 2025

The UCLA Softball team, who would eventually end up in the Women's College World Series, welcomed the Alumni Band on April 13th for their showdown vs a familiar opponent, a good Washington Huskies team that took the Bruins to the wire before UCLA scored a 6-5 triumph.

As it was Jackie Robinson Weekend, the Alumni Band (along with the fans) received visors with the number 42 on the front. The Alumni Band's performance enhanced the atmosphere at Easton Stadium on campus, with the Bruins showing their appreciation by giving the Alumni Band a celebratory eight-clap at game's end.



From Kelly Inouye-Perez, The Shelly Carlin UCLA Head Softball Coach

“Thank you to the Alumni Band for their support this season and helping us create a great atmosphere at Easton Stadium.

We appreciate their Bruin Spirit and look forward to seeing them back at Easton next season.

Go Bruins!



Women's Water Polo vs. Stanford

MPSF Championship Game | April 27, 2025

After being such a hit at the Men's Water Polo game vs USC, the Women's Water Polo team decided to get in on the fun and invite the Alumni Band to their MPSF Conference Tournament Finals match against Stanford at Spieker Aquatics Center on April 27th.

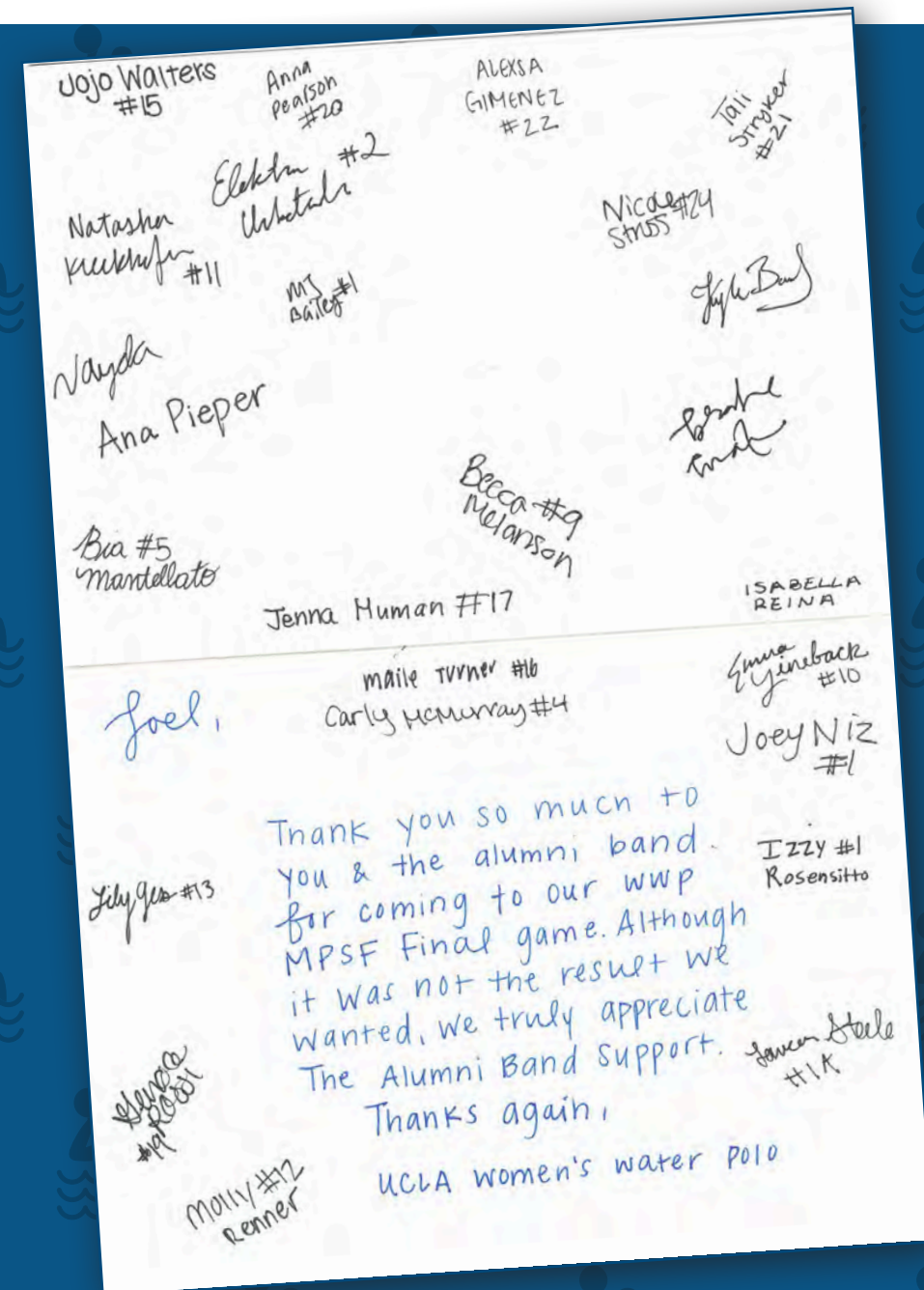
The game turned out to be quite exciting as it went into overtime, with the Alumni Band providing inspiration for UCLA before Stanford ended up winning the game to claim the MPSF title.

The team was very appreciative, and they sent a signed card thanking the Alumni Band for our support.



Women's Water Polo vs. Stanford

MPSF Championship Game | April 27, 2025



From Adam Wright, Head Coach, UCLA Women's Water Polo

“

Thank you...we are beyond grateful for all of you.



Baseball vs. Northwestern

May 17, 2025

The Alumni Band closed the year at Jackie Robinson Stadium on the VA Grounds on May 17th in what turned out to be a regular season finale with much at stake for UCLA's Baseball team, with the Bruins needing to win to secure a share of the Big Ten championship.

As the Alumni Band played their tunes, pleasing the fans in the process, the team did not disappoint in walloping Northwestern 11-1 and collecting the trophy and championship t-shirts afterward.

It was a great way to finish the 2024-25 school year for the Alumni Band, with the fans showing their appreciation as the Bruins - who likewise very much appreciated the Alumni Band's presence and performance - would eventually make it to the Men's College World Series in Omaha!



From John Savage,
Head Coach, UCLA Baseball

“Our program really appreciates the Alumni Band for coming out to Jackie Robinson and performing, especially on Senior Day!

Thank you to all of you who contributed in making the day special for those in attendance!
Thank you again!



Scholarship Recipients

2024-2025

We are so pleased to congratulate Alexandria and Paola as our True Bruin Distinguished Senior scholarship recipients for 2024-2025.



Alexandria Hamilton

Alexandria is a Theater Arts major who graduated in June. She was a founding member of the Bruinettes (our new HBCU-style dance group) and completed her second year on the team. She says that her favorite band memory was the recent Senior Day football game: “It was extremely special. I enjoyed being able to dance with my fellow seniors and celebrate our final football game!” After graduation, Alexandria plans “to stay in Los Angeles and work for a production company in the area. I also plan to still help out with the Bruinettes and support the Band in any way!”



Paola Rodriguez

“I am a senior Psychology major with a minor in Musicology. I am a proud Latina and member of UCLA’s Solid Gold Sound! I play the clarinet and mellophone, and love fostering enthusiastic connections in the audience. I pride myself in coming from a hard-working family and being compassionate. I am currently working to bridge my passions in music and helping others to pursue graduate school and eventually implement music therapy as a clinical psychologist. Thank you so much for your generous contributions! This scholarship has allowed me to alleviate some of the financial burden from my family who are supporting me in my educational endeavors. I am wholeheartedly grateful and will work hard to eventually do the same for a student like myself and Alexandria in the future!”

Credits

2024-2025

UCLA Alumni Band 2024-2025 Year-End Newsletter Staff



Derek Hart,
Writer / Tenor Sax



Sheila Lefor,
Designer / Alto Sax



Shirley McCombs-Swayne,
Photographer / Piccolo



Rebecca Panman,
Social Media Maven / Alto Sax



Darlene Sanger,
Photographer / Alto Sax

It takes a team of devoted Bruin alums to make a volunteer group like the UCLA Alumni Band happen. During the 2024-2025 season, we were led by President and Music Director Joel Fierberg, Vice President Derek Hart, Secretary Rebecca Panman, Treasurer Charlie Yacoobian, Librarian Ed Hirsch, Membership Coordinator Chris Torres, Coordinator of Communications and Properties Bill Adler, Coordinators of Festivities Carmen Rexach and Joan Wiener, and Webmaster Sheila Lefor.

The year was replete with various activities as you have seen as you viewed the photos taken by our photographers, Shirley McCombs-Swayne and Darlene Sanger.

The UCLA Alumni Band is honored and delighted to work with the UCLA Alumni Association, the UCLA Athletics Department, the UCLA Spirit Squad, and the UCLA community at large. We are grateful to be able to contribute to the century-long tradition of Bruin Spirit.