



FOUNDATION &  
ALUMNI ASSN.

## UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION & ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

September 15, 2017

### Executive Board

President:

Amy Hartmann-Gordon '89

Treasurer: Darin Guthrie '95

VP: Kevin Gebert '06

Secretary:

Mae Smith (Alumni Parent)

### Board Members

Chris Baker '89

Sandeep Deshmukh '92

Bill DuPont (Alumni Parent)

David Herring (Faculty)

Emma Mendenhall '10

Mohannad Merheb '93

Carol Ravitz '83

Kris Tully (Retired faculty)

Laurnyn (Linsell) Valladarez '05

Doraliz Vega '98

### Staff

Sierra Yamanaka '12

Debbie (Pinnas) Friedman '86

### Ex-Officio Board Members

Amy Cislak (Principal)

Joel Bacalia (Assistant Principal)

Meg Tully (School Council)

President Hicks, Members of the TUSD Governing Board and Superintendent Trujillo:

The University High School Foundation and Alumni Association (UHSFAA) have advocated for and strongly supported University High School in its quest to provide a college preparatory education for children of all backgrounds and economic levels. In the past UHSFAA Board members have served on the Recruiting and Retention of Minorities Students Committee among other TUSD committees. Additionally, since 2013, the UHSFAA has awarded over \$82,000 to the school in the form of technology in order to provide an even-playing field for our students vs. those from other private schools. This past summer UHSFAA instituted a professional development internship program directed especially toward first-generation college bound UHS students. This program is providing real world corporate experience - helping kids cross that bridge to future professional opportunities.

As TUSD faces increased competition in student enrollment, it is more imperative than ever that UHS provides a top-tier college-preparatory experience to serve children across Tucson. More than 56% of UHS students qualify for free and reduced lunch and more than 51% are African-American, Latino or mixed race. With nearly 1200 hard-working kids enrolled, UHS is also the most economically and racially diverse college exam school in the country.

The members of the UHSFAA Board endorse the desire of the TUSD Board to address these concerns and serve the public's interest in providing the best possible University High School for our community. We support your consideration to move forward with an independent high school campus. Along with an independent campus, we also support the development of The Gabrielle Giffords Academy Middle School on that same campus. It is clear that a middle school built on the same UHS model is imperative to prepare 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders for the option to enter UHS. This new school will also establish Gabby's legacy as an alumnus.

We are committed to the continued support of UHS and hope to work collaboratively with TUSD to move UHS to a dedicated campus, securing its continued standing in the U.S. as a top 25 high school.

Sincerely,

The Members of the Board of the University High School