



LA Real Estate Challenge

UCLA Takes the Silver Shovel at NAIOP SoCal's UCLA vs. USC
25th Anniversary Real Estate Challenge



Team UCLA: Paul Habibi, Sam Baughman, Nick Fong, Franco Mellone, Brad Schierhorn, Eli Wilson

Southern California (November 30, 2022) – On the 25th anniversary of the NAIOP SoCal UCLA vs. USC Real Estate Challenge, it was UCLA's five-member graduate student team that took home the win and the Silver Shovel. With this win, UCLA now leads the competition with 13 victories vs. USC's 12.

The event, held November 17 on the UCLA campus, pits five-member graduate student teams from the Ziman Center of Real Estate at UCLA's Anderson School of Business and the Lusk Center at USC's Marshall School of Business and Price School of Public Policy in a competitive battle to determine the highest and best use for a unique parcel of land in Southern California.

At the event each of the student teams was introduced by honorary coaches - real estate industry icons with significant connections to each university. Robert Hart, founder, chief executive, and president of Los Angeles-based TruAmerica Multifamily, provided motivating remarks for the UCLA team and Watt Capital Partners' CEO Nadine Watt shared an inspirational speech for the USC team.

The 2022 challenge was a 20.87-acre site in Carson. Prologis, project site sponsor, acquired the site for a redevelopment opportunity. The student teams provided creative proposals during the competition to maximize the value of this unique blank slate opportunity.

“Both teams did an incredible job assembling and presenting truly professional case studies showcasing their talent and market knowledge. I have no doubt that these young professionals will build on this experience to achieve success in their commercial real estate careers,” said Emily Mandrup, UCLA vs USC Real Estate Challenge judge and founder, ECM management. Mandrup was one of seven industry-leading judges who reviewed the student’s written and oral presentations before determining the winning proposal.

The UCLA team’s winning concept, entitled Toro Gardens, was a mixed-use development, consisting of 205,000 square feet of life science and 268 units of student housing, bringing 600+ high quality jobs to Carson residents and much needed off-campus housing to California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). The name Toro Gardens pays homage to the CSUDH mascot, emphasizing the importance of a strong relationship between the University and the City of Carson.

“NAIOP SoCal congratulates both student teams on outstanding presentations. Their work demonstrates the strength of these university programs that are increasing the talent pipeline for our industry. The chapter is thrilled to support this unique competition as we value our long-term partnership with these exceptional universities and look forward to another 25 years,” said Greg Brown, chair, UCLA vs. USC Real Estate Challenge and senior managing director and co-head of the Orange County office of JLL Capital Markets, Americas.

About NAIOP SoCal -- NAIOP SoCal comprises more than 1,100 members serving the counties of Los Angeles and Orange. NAIOP SoCal is the leading organization in Southern California for developers, owners and related professionals in office, industrial, retail, and mixed-use real estate. NAIOP SoCal advances responsible commercial real estate development and advocates for effective public policy. For more information, visit www.naiopsocal.org.

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