



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

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Class of 1957

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September, 2016

Dear Men and Women of 1957:

It is with deep sadness I report the death of ROBERT E. ALLEN on September 10, 2016. The following obituary was written by Jim Amidon:

Wabash Celebrates Bob Allen's Legacy

by Jim Amidon • September 11, 2016

Wabash College celebrates the life and legacy of one of its greatest, most generous alumni. Robert E. Allen '57 died Saturday in New Jersey surrounded by his loving family.

Visitation is scheduled for Thursday, September 15 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Paul Ippolito Summit Memorial, 7 Summit Ave, Summit, N.J. A memorial service will be held on Friday, September 16 at 10:30 a.m. at the Central Presbyterian Church, 70 Maple St. Summit, NJ. A reception will follow. For additional information please visit www.ippolitofuneralhomes.com.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Wabash College in memory of Bob's lifetime devotion and dedication to his alma mater.

"We will always remember Bob's warmth, charm, and razor sharp humor, as well as his exceptional dedication to his family, those he served, and Wabash College," said Wabash President Gregory Hess.



Robert Allen '57

Born in Joplin, Missouri in 1935, Bob Allen grew up in New Castle, Indiana, and attended Wabash College with the assistance of a small scholarship from Perfect Circle Corporation. "It wasn't much money at all, \$600, but it made all the difference. It changed my life," Allen said.

At Wabash, he was a starter for the Little Giants' football team, was a leader in Phi Delta Theta fraternity, and studied Political Science and Economics. He relished his Wabash education, saying, "A liberal arts education gives you a broader view of the world and makes you capable of dealing with the tremendous change in the world today."

He and his wife, Betty, were married after her graduation from DePauw University in 1956, and the new couple lived in an area on the Wabash campus known as “Mud Hollow” during Bob’s senior year. The houses in Mud Hollow were leftover Quonset hut-style structures that were built during World War II. The Allens’ first son, Jay (Wabash Class of 1979) was born in Mud Hollow, and the residential community forged there left a lasting impression on the Allens. Betty, a DePauw University alumna, was named an Honorary Alumna of Wabash in 2015.



Bob and Betty Allen share a laugh about living in Mud Hollow

While he originally imagined going to law school, Mr. Allen joined Indiana Bell immediately after graduation and quickly rose up through the ranks. By 1972, he was elected Vice President and Secretary of Indiana Bell. He, Betty, and their five children moved around a great deal as he assumed various leadership roles — Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Illinois Bell, Vice President of Business Services at AT&T in 1978, and five years later as Chairman of the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Companies.

In that same year, Mr. Allen became Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at AT&T. Three years later, in 1986, he was named President of AT&T. He was elected Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of AT&T in 1988 and held that post until his retirement in 1998. During his tenure, he grew AT&T into a corporation with annual revenue exceeding \$75 billion.

Throughout his career, Mr. Allen remained thoughtfully engaged in the life of Wabash College. He was elected a member of the Board of Trustees in 1976 and served actively until 2003, and served as an Emeritus Trustee since that time. He chaired the Board’s Budget and Finance Committee and the Committee on Trusteeship.

Bob and Betty’s generosity to Wabash — their investment in liberal arts education — has been legendary and unrivaled. They made a \$10 million gift to the College’s Campaign for Leadership, for which the Allen Athletics and Recreation Center was named. Just over a year ago, Bob and Betty created the “From Generation to Generation Challenge” matching gift, and their \$4 million gift propelled the Fund for Student Housing and allowed the College to design and build the Residential Life District on the west side of campus.

“We believe that our gift will provide a symbolic connection between our generation of Mud Hollow residents to future generations of Wabash students who will live in this new housing,” Mr. Allen said.

Mr. Allen learned much about business, employees, and communities while growing up in New Castle, which was a factory town and home to a Chrysler manufacturing plant. He delivered newspapers at age eight, and also worked as a corn detasseler, mechanic, surveyor, lifeguard, railroad track worker, and carpenter’s assistant before attending Wabash.

His father, Walter, owned a children’s clothing store, his mother, Louise, taught school, and all of the family’s friends worked at Chrysler. When new models rolled off the line, employees were happy and his father’s store made money. When Chrysler had a bad year, there were layoffs at the factory and the store was quiet.

Those lessons taught Mr. Allen valuable business skills that helped him ride the wave of the breakup of the Baby Bell phone companies, and a decade later sweeping global technology changes — the rise of the Internet, competition from other long distance carriers, and the emergence of mobile devices.



Betty and Bob Allen

Market forces required him to breakup AT&T's three primary business functions in 1995 and downsize to become more agile. "A competitive company can serve the interests of its employees and society; a non-competitive company can't," he wrote in *Newsweek* in 1996. During that period and the years that followed, Mr. Allen focused his efforts on training employees, providing generous severance packages, and helping them seek new jobs.

His 1995 move was described by *USA Today* as "a bold move that's become his trademark... His updated vision is global and comprehensive." The strategic shift positioned AT&T to take a leading role in the global cellular communications industry.

His business acumen led Mr. Allen to be a high sought-after board member. In addition to his role as Chairman of AT&T, he served on the board of directors for Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Pepsico, New American Schools Corporation, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and the United Way of America.

Wabash College has honored Mr. Allen with the Alumni Award of Merit, Honorary Degree, and he was only the third person to receive the President's Award for his service and dedication to his alma mater. A standout football player while at Wabash, he is also a member of the Wabash Athletics Hall of Fame.

Mr. Allen received scores of awards and accolades, including honorary doctorates from the University of Notre Dame, Ball State University, and Pace University's Leader in Management Award, among many others.

Our Condolences to BETTY ALLEN and their families and friends.

Wabash College lost a great liberal arts supporter and significant financial contributor. Keep the Allen family in your thoughts and prayers.

Thank you BETTY and BOB,

John B Yanko

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