



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

Alumni and Parent Relations

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Class of 1959

Class Agents

Roger Billings

Bob Wedgeworth

Craig Green

April 2013

Dear 59ers,

The news is personal! Here are a couple of items:

Robert Wedgeworth, PhD---A lot of Wabash men have earned PhD's but not at age 75. Bob earned his in January from Rutgers after a 40-year interruption. Seems he was "ABD" (all but dissertation) when he got the call to become director of the American Library Association. Rutgers welcomed him back to complete the deal and he produced. Nice going, Bob. He will be marching in the graduation ceremony.

Gregory Hess, President elect of Wabash, assumes office July 1. Meanwhile all over the country alumni organizations are honoring Pat White as he retires. Few presidents have been more accessible to alumni, or more well-liked for that matter. Now comes Hess and he is fired up. He spent a week in Indianapolis last month meeting just about everyone there with a concern for Wabash. Pat White is already helping him with the transition. There were over 60 applicants for the job and the final three were from the University of Virginia, Connecticut College and Clermont McKenna College (Hess's college). Ironically, a key person on Wabash's admissions staff, Clint Gasaway, financial aid director, just resigned and went to Clermont McKenna College to take a senior finance position there.

That brings up the crisis brewing in higher education. Listen to this: Although I am still teaching at a viable law school (Chase College of Law, Northern Kentucky University), because of the bad publicity about the lack of jobs, applications to law schools have dropped a whopping 50% in about five years. Undergraduate students are flocking to cheaper junior colleges which are bursting at the seams. The Phoenix-type distance learning programs, although under attack because of their low graduation rates, seem to be proliferating (and the government loan program keeps them going).

There is pressure on liberal arts colleges---caused by the high tuition and the mistaken idea that they are just not practical enough. How is Wabash doing? Not badly, considering. Applications are down 10% but the number of students at this time of year who have committed to coming to Wabash by making deposits is up (88 deposits and counting, for a class of 250). Financial pressures on Wabash, however, are going to grow as they are on all colleges. We do not want to be among the endangered, and certainly are not now.

OK that is as close as I will come to any hint about giving. Our donor count is holding at the same number as this time last year: 44. That is cause for (premature) congratulations.

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Hoping to hear from you, I remain,

Your obedient servant,

Rog '59