



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

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Class of 2003

Class Agents

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September 2009

Dear Class of 2003:

Hard to believe that another summer has passed by, yet here we are, with the Class of 2013 starting classes. Even more difficult yet to believe that it was 10 years ago this fall that we first set foot on The Mall, in the Chapel, in our new homes. We think back to Freshman Saturday, sitting in the Chapel listening to Steve Klein and Jon Pactor speak. While we can't remember what was said, we do remember the anxiety of starting College, leaving friends and family, and testing the unknown. Knowing what you know now about your Wabash years, imagine the anxiety the men of the Class of 2013 feel, as we did, and the great experience that they have chosen. Over 200 lives are about to change forever and for the better and it's because of a College and a history of which we are lucky to be a small part.

For us, and for many other Wabash alums, this is one of the best parts of the year – a kind of rededication where we can share in the first time experiences of Wabash through a new class. It has been a decade since we were in their shoes, but we ask ourselves what made it “not easy, but worth it.” What made our experience, for some, life changing. It is the time for self-reflection on the College and our role in it.

The Role of Young Alumni in Today's Wabash

One of the most frustrating parts of a Class Agent's job is calling class members to help the College and receiving a response that they do not have enough time, enough money, or enough experience to share.

Regarding our time, we are all busy. We are new employees, new students, new husbands and fathers, and still-new alumni. But you have to believe that your time will only become more scarce, rather than more abundant. By taking just a few moments a month to reach out to a Wabash student that you know, to check in on your living unit, or to stay in contact with a favorite professor, you make the decision to be an engaged alumnus who knows about and remains a part of the life of the College. And particularly if you can dedicate a moment of that time to a current student, you make an impact on that student that will not be forgotten and that will, in years time, encourage him to become a better alumnus himself.

On the financial front, and more on this below, it is not the *amount* that you give but the *fact* that you give. And, oddly, of recent graduate classes (i.e., classes who have graduated in the last 10 years), we consistently give the most money from the fewest individuals from one of Wabash's largest classes. Wabash today needs every dollar. But more importantly, it needs your habit of giving. It needs your gift to increase the all-important “percentage of alumni donating” for rankings and for grant funding so that we can keep making Wabash “worth it.”

Finally, it is unfortunate to hear, consistently, that “I don’t have enough clout in my job to recommend a student,” or “I’m only just out of medical school, so I don’t know what advise to give.” The point is just the opposite. Who better to advise and mentor a new Lilly employee, or a new law student, or a new graduate searching for a job than someone who has just recently lived that experience? Years from now we can tell a current student how to craft the perfect career, balance work and life, “make something of himself.” But by the time we are there, our current experiences will be stale and the world will have changed, just enough to make our experiences outdated. So open yourself up as a mentor and advisor to just one student. You can’t imagine the impact you can have.

The Role of Wabash In Today’s Economy

Now, more than ever, our society and our economy need the liberal arts and need Wabash Men: people who can problem solve, “think outside of the box” as Andy Ford was fond of saying, and step up to contribute. We see businesses who—all of a sudden—don’t want a specialist but want someone who can take on multiple tasks and add value in multiple areas for one salary. We see a public debate—whether on healthcare, immigration reform, or the propriety of letting Michael Vick play—that is less about discourse, listening, and discussion than it is yelling and blaming. And all of a sudden, we need people who learned to sit in a small room and listen, think, and then speak.

But, of course, while we’ve consistently won awards for school that “runs like butter,” the school doesn’t run *on* butter. It runs on cash and, specifically, a market-dependent endowment.

We will not bore you with repetition of the details of the financial situation or what the College is doing to address it. We hope you have read the letters from the Trustees – if you have not, please do. We can only impress upon you that the situation is important. Two examples are worth noting.

A recent graduate, not from our class, was recently in downtown Indianapolis and ran into a professor from Wabash that the graduate had not seen in years. Asking “How are things at Wabash?” the answer was quick and blunt: “The financial situation is a real problem.” No sugar coating and no hesitation. The problem is real.

Likewise, the College has been forced to make decisions, some seemingly obvious (“Do we really need to provide a binder at every [fill-in-the-blank] meeting?”) while some are tough. On the tough ones, the College has decided that fewer students will be able to take study-abroad semesters—a very important part of our career at Wabash, for some—so that more can take shorter immersion trips. A hard, but necessary, decision.

We raise these examples to make this point: while Wabash has survived worse economic situations, Wabash does find itself in an economic situation and at a time when the product and service Wabash provides is in high demand. To the extent that you can dig deep and start to pay back for the experiences we received, it is an important time to do so. A simple recurring monthly gift of \$8.35 a month comes out to an annual \$100 donation; \$42 a month is a very substantial \$500 gift. But whatever your gift, it is a great time to be able to help the College that shaped us.

The Role of Class Agent Post-Facebook

Here, we need your help and feedback. In every letter for the past year, and multiple times in private conversations, we have asked “What can we be doing to better serve you as Class Agents?” We have never received a single response.

It is an interesting time to be a Class Agent. Letters are being less frequently written (though this one is turning into quite the missive – our apologies). The way we communicate changes as we rely less on letters, phone calls, and even e-mails and more on text messages, Facebook, and Twitter. How does a Class Agent best use all of these mediums to reach everyone?

Not long ago, the Class Agent was the equivalent of a Class town crier, responsible for spreading the news about the Class and the College. But now, by the time we can craft a letter about a football score, birth announcement, or graduation, most of you have seen it on the web or commented on it by social networking.

Moving beyond mere news-spreader, we try to offer our own insight as to what is going on at the College (as we’ve tried to do in this letter), and administer the social organizations through which the Class can communicate. But, as the methods of communication develop, we have not kept up in our functions.

So we ask, and we hope for responses:

- ✓ How would you define a Class Agent?
- ✓ What is the best thing a Class Agent can do for you as a Class Member?
- ✓ How can we best use Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn, etc., to communicate?
- ✓ What other suggestions do you have?

Please, let us know how we’re doing and what we can improve.

Going Forward

We’ve all been fortunate to have experienced Wabash as it was when we were there, which is far different from how it was in 1989 or is in 2009. And we can only keep it “worth it” if we continue to think critically about the College and our continuing role. We encourage you to keep this letter and take time to think about what your role is in the College today.

On to the fun stuff.....

College News

David Hadley Tells Freshmen To Jump In A Creek

Professor Hadley always had interesting Freshman Tutorials (most recently, a class on political cartoons), but he has outdone himself this time. This month, he and other faculty will take 12 freshmen to Bozeman, Montana, where they will be joined by alumni for a week of fly fishing. The group will also visit Yellowstone National Park. Not surprisingly, the class filled in 96 seconds.

Upon their return to Crawfordsville, the class will spend the semester discussing fly fishing in literature (*A River Runs Through It* and *The River Why*) as well as the politics, economics, science, ethics, and maybe even religious aspects of fly fishing, according to Hadley.

Somehow, we all might feel shortchanged to have spent a semester in Lilly Library in *The Life and Times of Young Winston Churchill*.

After Years Of Deliberation, Coffee Shop Opened

It's always been said that the best ideas are those that require careful, slow consideration. So after years of requests, Wabash students will find a new campus spot: Good To Go Xpresso. From the College's website, by Jim Amidon:

Wabash students, faculty, staff, and alumni have frequently suggested to the school's administration that opening a coffee shop on campus was a good idea.

Thanks to a collaborative effort by the staff at the Lilly Library, Wabash's administration, and a local business, the much talked about coffee shop will open at the start of the coming school year.

Good To Go Xpresso has announced the opening of a brand new location on the Wabash College campus. The shop will be located on the main floor of the Lilly Library on the west side of the College Mall.

The new "walk thru" espresso stand will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. beginning August 17 to serve hot drinks like coffee and espresso, as well as a range of cold drinks like iced coffees and the decadent mochaccino — a slushy drink buried under whipped cream and drizzled chocolate.

The menu will include a wide range of espresso-based drinks, brewed coffees and specialty drinks including fruit smoothies and chai teas.

"We're thrilled to be a part of the Wabash community," said Kurt Conklin, co-owner of Good To Go, along with his wife Sharon.

Kurt and Sharon Conklin surveyed Wabash students, faculty, and staff in the early spring, and results indicated that Lilly Library was the most appropriate location for the new store. Students, especially, flock to the library during evening study hours.

"The administrative staff at Wabash has been extremely supportive and we look forward to bringing to campus the same great products, staff and customer service offered at our other store."

Good to Go opened its drive thru location on Highway 231 South across from Applebee's in April 2008.

Good to Go has partnered with Wabash since it opened its first store when it issued the Wally Wabash card. Customers get a punch in their cards with every purchase, and a discount when the card is fully punched. A portion of proceeds from Wabash purchases are donated to a scholarship fund at the College.

Wabash Scores High On Rankings; Finds Major Division I Company

Per usual, Wabash scored very high in both the Princeton Review and Forbes rankings. Stories on both can be found on the Wabash homepage under the News Archives.

But it was a new ranking that generated most discussion. Princeton Review's category for "Students Pack the Stadium" produced this ranking:

1. Pennsylvania State University – University Park
2. University of Florida (Gainesville, FL)
3. University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
4. University of Notre Dame (Notre Dame, IN)
5. University of Maryland – College Park
6. The University of Texas at Austin
7. Duke University (Durham, N.C.)
8. West Virginia University (Morgantown, W.Va.)
9. Boston College (Chestnut Hill, Mass.)
10. Wabash College (Crawfordsville, Ind.)

The accompanying write up explained: There's only one rule at Wabash College, a small Indiana all men's school: "A Wabash man is to conduct himself as a gentleman both on and off campus." The administration typically takes a hands-off approach to enforcing this "Gentleman's Rule," meaning that "students are forced to take ownership over their experiences here and be involved on campus." The young men here "have the freedom to make their own life choices and the freedom to face the real-life implications of those choices." While some feel this system fosters "an atmosphere that is hyper-masculine, overly conservative, sports-centric, sexist and generally intolerant of diversity," the vast majority wouldn't have it any other way, telling us that it "molds average boys into successful men." Life is "very fraternity-oriented" with "some big fraternity parties after the football games" on weekends, and "if nothing is going on, you just relax and hang out with your brothers." The typical Wabash student "is a loud, ruddy-cheeked Midwestern kid who in high school was a bit too brainy to fit in with the jocks and a bit too rowdy to fit in with the nerds" and "is smarter than other people think he is, but probably not quite as smart as he thinks he is." All agree that a Wabash education is top-notch, with a strong liberal arts focus that "educates men to think critically, act responsibly, lead effectively and live humanely."

Wabash Sports

Class of 2003's Martin Hired As DePauw Baseball Coach

You know what they say: you've gotta eat. So we'll forgive Coach Martin for accepting a promotion to interim head of the DePauw Tigers baseball team. From Wabash's website, by Brent Harris:

Jake Martin, a 2003 Wabash College graduate, has been named the interim head baseball coach at DePauw University. Martin takes over for former Tiger head coach Matt Walker, who resigned on August 7. A four-year starter and letter winner as an outfielder and pitcher for the Little Giants, Martin hit .305 for his career. He hit .356 as a sophomore for his highest single-season batting average, and drove in a single-season best 25 RBI his senior season. Martin posted a 4.43 career ERA with 13 wins as a pitcher. He appeared in 43 career games with 32 starts and 14 complete games. Martin was 5-1 as a senior with a 3.67 ERA over 61-1/3 inning pitched. He ranks seventh on the Wabash all-time strikeout list with 149.

Martin earned Wabash team Most Valuable Player honors in 2001 and 2003. He was a Second Team All-North Coast Athletic Conference selection in 2003 and an Honorable Mention All-NCAC pick in 2001.

A psychology major and member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity at Wabash, Martin went on to earn a master's degree from Indiana State University in 2005. He has served as an assistant baseball coach at DePauw for the past six seasons, working as the team's hitting instructor and recruiting.

Congratulations, Jake!

Wabash Football Ranks High in Pre-Season Polls

Having won four consecutive NCAC titles heading into the 2009 season, it was no surprise that the Little Giants received six first place votes and 93 total points in the NCAC football coaches annual preseason poll. The Little Giants are the only NCAC team ranked nationally in preseason polls, having ranked 10th in the *Sporting News* Division III rankings, 18th in the *D3football.com* poll, and 19th in *Lindy's College Football Annual*. Thanks to Brent Harris for stats.

Wabash opens up the season at home on Saturday, September 12, against Denison University.

Class News

Class of 2003 Is Well Represented in 39 Under 39

Congratulations to 2003 Class Members Nate Clark, Scott Medsker, Ryan Smith, and Jake Knott for their inclusion in the College's *39 Under 39*. You can see their profiles at www.wabash.edu/magazine/39/

Update from Matt Mercer

Matt and Marcy Schuler were married Oct. 10 in Vail, CO. Sigma Chi Brothers Jake Maynard and Reed Hoyer as well as Fiji Marc Rowe stood up for him. Matt is currently working for Surgical Principals where he sells surgical instrumentation to a range of surgical specialities including General, GYN, Nuero and Cardio-Vascular surgeons. He currently resides in Denver, CO.

Congratulations!!

- ✓ Back in June, Caleb Ishman announced that he was getting married on July 11. Rumor has it that Ishman share the marquee at The Murat with Jerry Seinfeld. Your class agent had a picture of the marquee, but has misplaced it.

Adam Moser

We heard from Adam Moser that he has recently completed his Ph.D in chemistry at the University of Minnesota. Our congrats to him on his Ph.D and his acceptance of a post graduate position at Boston College, where he will both teach undergrads and continue his research.

Nathan Boulais

And finally, Nathan Boulais wrote to tell us that he and his wife, Tricia, recently celebrated their first anniversary. Tricia is a 7th grade science teacher at Brownsburg West Middle School while Nathan sells surgical implants for CryoLife in both Indiana and Illinois. The two reside in Carmel and look forward to seeing everyone at Little Giant football games this fall.

Stay in Touch

Always trying to do more to keep us in touch, we now have a Class group on both LinkedIn and Facebook. If you can't find us, e-mail scottmedsker@gmail.com

We hope that you've had a rewarding, relaxing summer and are eager for the fall. These are exciting times for the College, its newest family members, and for us. We look forward to hearing from you all.

Yours in Wabash,

Scott, Kip, & Karl