



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

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Class of 2009

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Dear Friends,

Having just returned from watching our guys give a sound Homecoming thumping to the University of Chicago Maroons I was finally inspired to write you all. It was so great to be back on campus and see so many familiar faces. I was amazed at how much has changed. The new turf field looks great and progress seems to be taking off on the new baseball field (where the practice football field used to be). The field isn't the only institution that's drastically changed its appearance. One Dr. Blix, fresh off a double knee replacement, is not only getting around sans walking stick, but is suddenly darn near trim enough to join the squad. Not to worry however, plenty of the staples of Wabash still remain, as I suspect they will for some time. The Sphinx Club burgers still taste way better than any of them or their chefs ever look, and bookstore still seems somewhat overly affected by inflation.

What I enjoyed most of all running into so many old friends and catching up. I was simply amazed to hear just how much so many of our classmates have accomplished in the short time since our graduation. Regardless of whom I spoke with, whether it came up explicitly or not, I'm sure just about everybody owes significant portions of what they've been able to do thus far to our alma mater. In the interest of keeping up with friends more than many of our schedules will allow I thought I'd recruit a few of our classmates to share what it is they've been up to since graduation. As you'll see there's only three contributors, but we would like to get many more. I hope you'll enjoy reading their stories and if you think others might enjoy reading about what you're doing I hope you'll me moved to drop one of us a line and share your ideas.

Richard Hogue:

Hello everyone, I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirits. A year-and-a-half ago we could not have told each other about some of the amazing experiences and changes we've come across in our lives. I know for myself that it's been one heck of a journey so far. Two months before graduation, I had no idea what I would do or go, fortunately, I got an opportunity to head to South Africa as a member of the Episcopal Church's Young Adult Service Corps.

What I got to do was work in a medical clinic located in a shanty-town on a former municipal dump in Mthatha, in the Eastern Cape. Four thousand people live there, and the medical clinic there is a project coordinated by the Episcopal Church and a non-profit called African Medical Mission. My job title was "Assistant Project Coordinator." The specifics would not lend themselves to the image that sets up. I worked with TB patients to get there regular medication, HIV/AIDS patients keeping track of their white-blood cell counts, driving some people from the Itipini (Xhosa[local tribal language] for "at the dump") to one of the local hospitals, keeping track of patients' medical records and keeping a steady supply of all necessary medication.

Being in the midst of that poverty and really getting to work one-on-one with those people brought me to the realization that I have truly been blessed in life, between where I grew up in northern Wisconsin and my Wabash education. Even more so, that I was able to take ten months of my life and live it out in such a way that really allowed me to experience being well outside my

comfort zone, much like during Senior Comps, or any direct conversation with Dr. Webb.

In all seriousness, I have nothing but fond memories of our collective days at Wabash, from being rung in to being rung out. Wabash set me on a course towards attempting to be a true gentleman, one who actively seeks to make a better world. We all have and will continue to do what we can.

WAF.

Richard now works as an intern at the Hoboken Shelter for the Homeless in Hoboken, New Jersey, and is beginning the discernment process for ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church.

Mike Wartman:

Life has been eventful since I last crossed through the chapel doors at dear old Wabash. Upon graduating, I accepted a position as an English teacher and JV baseball coach at Kenwood Academy in the Hyde Park community on Chicago's southside; I was also fortunate enough to live a block from the school where I taught. While Hyde Park is quite different from Crawfordsville, I got the opportunity to work at Kenwood with fellow Wally Jason Roberts '05, support undergraduate students in the education program on their annual trip to the city to learn about urban education, and work with admissions to recruit students from the city; needless to say, Wabash has remained close to my heart. Teaching in the city was difficult, but for every frustration, there were the small victories that erased the stress of the job such as seeing a student cry over a successful ACT score that she thought was never possible or hugging your team after an underdog win like you just won the seventh game of the World Series. If you ever want to hear the juicier city stories, I'll gladly tell you over a beer.

Living in the intellectual and diverse community of Hyde Park proved to be an educational experience in itself. I lived down the street from the University of Chicago's main campus with a German graduate student in economics nearby the house of our 44th president. Watching the spectacle of President Obama coming home for the first time from my front yard with the secret service, police escort, and helicopters flying by was just plain cool in a little kid kind of way. Late nights spent in the backrooms of bars and on quintessential Chicago back porches arguing about politics, philosophy, religion, and literature reminded me of sleepless Wabash nights at the Beta house and Lew Lounge and made Hyde Park the perfect community for me to call home.

Despite the fact that I had a rewarding job in a place that I loved, I recently became a generational stereotype and rebounded back to my parent's house in the Region to take an English position at Lake Central High School. The uncertainty of my position as an untenured teacher in Chicago Public Schools due to the economic downturn, and the opportunity to coach football with my former high school coach and my uncle was reason enough for me to leave the city for the burbs. I am currently teaching freshmen English and coaching running backs and the offensive line for the varsity football team at Lake Central in St. John, Indiana. My new position is focused on teaching students who have traditionally been unsuccessful in the classroom, so although my former colleagues in Chicago accuse me of selling out and taking the easy road, my new job provides a whole new set of professional challenges. Football has proven to be equally challenging as our staff attempts to turnaround a team that has been unsuccessful for nearly a decade. The school year and season have been flying by, and the job change has proven itself to be a good one as my new position is both difficult and rewarding.

The world may be crumbling around us with global warming, oil spills, earthquakes, and health care debates, but in my small corner of the world, life is not too bad. I hope to hear similar sentiments from all of you about your own post-Wabash experiences. Hopefully, many of us will get the opportunity to catch up at the upcoming Bell game. Feel free to e-mail me if you ever need anything, whether it is a chat, place to crash, or someone to go grab a beer with to watch the game.

In Wabash,

Michael Wartman

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Rob Arnett:

Since Wabash, I've been pursuing two separate paths. I took my LSAT earlier this summer and am hoping to start law school at IU Indy in the fall of 2011. This obviously could end up becoming a solid career path and be quite rewarding, but I don't find it nearly as interesting as what I do with the rest of my time. Since leaving Wabash, I have become a professional mixed martial artist. I took Wabash Always Fights quite literally. I started fighting during the summer following my sophomore year at Wabash. I would travel around the state by myself to various venues and fight for free in front of small crowds just to gain the experience. A lot of my friends and classmates made it out to my first fight, but at the following fights I usually had little to no fanfare. It was fine with me, I only had a rough idea of what I was doing and was often attempting and practicing things for the first time within the competitions. I remember attempting an ankle lock that I had seen on an instructional youtube video and getting blasted in the temple about a dozen times for it. Good times

Wabash helped develop both my way of approaching problems and my technical wrestling ability. Wrestling is the most effective martial art in my opinion, so having a high level of skill at it shouldn't be undervalued. I took the skills I had developed and made a game plan for what I needed to improve at to be effective. Being away from Wabash has allowed me to pursue what I needed on a full time basis. I now train six days a week at the Indiana Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Academy. I give a little bit of my time to wrestling to make sure I stay fresh on it, while the majority of my times goes towards developing my jiu jitsu and kickboxing. I finished out my amateur career with five consecutive wins and had my pro debut on Sept. 3rd. I was able to knock out my opponent 1:52 into the match. Since then, things have definitely been happening fast. I've been having access to training with a pretty large selection of guys currently fighting in the UFC. I also got my first major sponsorship through fleyesgear.com. They produced a pair of "No Leftovers" sunglasses that pay me 25% for every pair sold. I will most likely be fighting next Nov. 27th in Indianapolis. If you've never come out to live fights, it is generally a really fun and affordable evening. Hope to see some of you guys at the upcoming local shows. If I can maintain my performance level, a jump to the big shows could be happening a lot sooner than I expected.

I hope that everyone enjoyed reading just a handful of our classmate's stories as much as I did. Just a few housekeeping things that came to mind and I wanted to be sure to include. Many of us would not have found ourselves at Wabash had it not been for an alumni who either directly recommended the school to us, or who anonymously suggested the school contact us. If you have the opportunity to do so I hope you'll take the time to suggest anyone you think might be a great candidate for Wabash on the school's alumni webpage. Also, don't forget to look up your local Wabash Association. They're a great way to meet other Wabash guys in your area. Lastly, don't forget about the Bell Game November, 13th at home. Hope to see you there.

On behalf of the class agents of '09,
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