

Gail Moll Pebworth
Honorary Class of 1991

Gail Moll Pebworth, graduate of Indiana University and near life-long resident of Crawfordsville, it seems fitting on this Homecoming that we finally welcome you into the ranks of alumni of this great College. After all, you were the first woman to serve as a head coach at Wabash and the first woman inducted in the Wabash Athletics Hall of Fame. In 1999, you were named one of Indiana's "Trailblazing Women," and we're grateful that you chose to blaze your trail here at Wabash. You coached Wabash swimmers and divers for 18 years and no coach in Wabash athletics history was as successful as you were. Your teams won 131 of 151 dual meets over 18 years and had a combined record of 775-112 against all competition. Your Little Giants posted eight undefeated seasons, scored five top-20 finishes at the NCAA Championships, won 13 Liberal Arts Invitational titles, and captured six conference championships. You were tabbed as Coach of the Year at Wabash — in good company, we might add — a record seven times, and twice you were named Indiana's Swimming Coach of the Year. What is particularly remarkable about your record as our swimming and diving coach is that you placed equal emphasis on academic excellence. While you coached 48 All-Americans, you also coached 23 All-Academic standouts, four NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship Winners, two of your men were Rhodes Scholarship finalists, and your teams were on the All-Academic list for 23 straight semesters. But those records are merely numbers to hang on banners or tuck away in trophy cases. Your true meaning to Wabash lies in the way you mentored and inspired hundreds of men who competed under your leadership. You taught them to win or lose with dignity and class. You treated novice, even first-time swimmers with the same respect as your elite All-Americans. You modeled for your men a constant pursuit of excellence and you demanded nothing less than each man's best effort. While some in collegiate athletics might dub your methods as "old school," we at Wabash are proud that you did not tolerate swearing, jeering, or boastful behavior on your deck. So classy were you as a coach, that you routinely celebrated the successes of our opponents, including DePauw, with as much excitement as you did your own swimmers and divers. For you have long believed in the potential greatness of good people — at Wabash and beyond. You have given of yourself to improve the lives of your swimmers and divers, your fellow members of the League of Women Voters, and all of those served by the many boards and agencies you have led. Our mission at Wabash calls our students to think critically, act responsibly, lead effectively, and live humanely. In you, Gail Moll Pebworth, we have a living example of how that mission is manifest and all the good that can come from a single person in pursuit of excellence. Therefore, it is my honor on behalf of the National Association of Wabash Men, to name you an honorary alumna in the Class of 1991. Gail Moll Pebworth — Some Little Giant!