Wabash.

Class Agents Letter

Class of 1966

Class Agent
Cal Black

Alumni & Affinity Group Engagement Office
301 W. Wabash Ave.
Crawfordsville, IN 47933
765-361-6360
alumni@wabash.edu
wabash.edu

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Dear Men of '66,

The Statler Brothers in their song The Class of '57 sing the words "And the class of all of us is just part of history." Well, the Class of '66 while being a very important part of Wabash history, is not finished writing its chapters for the College archives. We will see the rebuild of the Senior Arch, we will dedicate a memorial garden in memory of the four Wabash men who lost their lives in Viet Nam, and we will award the Class of 1966 Scholarship. All of these events will become a very significant part of Wabash history. Nolan Eller is the College Archivist and he has written about his background and the services that he offers to the entire Wabash community. Nolan can be contacted at 765-361-6226 or email at ellern@wabash.edu.

An Archivist's Tale



My name is Nolan Eller [W2011], and I currently have the pleasure of serving as the Wabash College Archivist. Cal Black recently reached out to me to share a bit about my background and my journey to Wabash and the archival profession. Below is a brief overview of my journey through Wabash as a student and my return as the Wabash College Archivist.

I came to Wabash, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, in the summer of 2007 as a member of the class of 2011. Coming to Wabash was an easy decision for me because, having attended a large high school in Lafayette, Indiana, I wanted to focus my college search on small liberal arts institutions. A lover of history my whole life, I came to Wabash with the intention of majoring in history. During my sophomore year, I started working at the Carnegie Museum of Montgomery County through a position funded by the "Know Indiana Grant." This position opened my eyes to the possibilities in the history field, and it was there that I first learned about the wonders of the archival profession. Processing the Bill [W1937] and Ginny [H1937] Hays collection was a turning point. Something clicked, and I knew what I wanted to do professionally after Wabash.



After Wabash, I attended Indiana University's School of Library and Information Science and earned a master's degree in Library Science with a specialization in Archives and Records Management. While at IU, I had the pleasure of working with Will Hays' [W1900] collection at the IU Lilly Library, which included materials from his tenure as chairman of the Republican National Committee, postmaster general, and chairman of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America. It was a continuation of my work with his son's papers at the Carnegie Museum and allowed me to complete a family story rich in Wabash and Indiana connections. I graduated with my MLS in 2013 and knew I wanted to stretch my wings and see other parts of the country. Having lived in Indiana my whole life, I wanted to get out and explore. If you had told me as a student that I would be an archivist living in Louisiana, I would have said you were crazy. But that was where I found myself in 2014, and I would not have changed it for the world.



Will Hays [W1900] and Bill Hays [W1937] outside their Sullivan, Indiana home, circa 1925

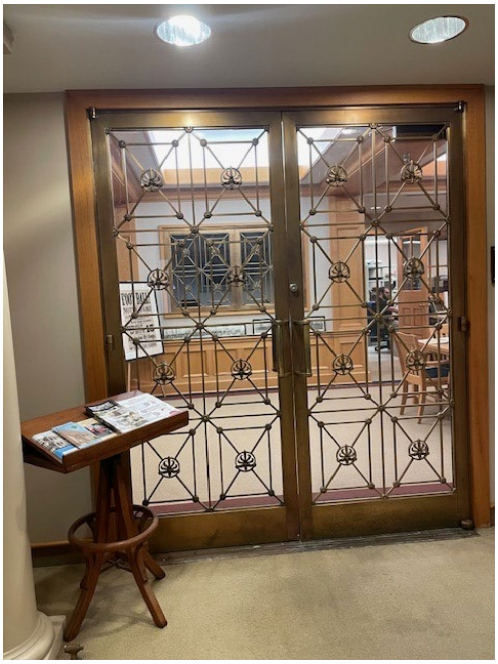
I cut my teeth in the archival profession as the Assistant Archivist at Northwestern State University (NSU) in Natchitoches, Louisiana. Pronounced "Nak-a-Tish," Natchitoches is the oldest settlement in Louisiana, established in 1714, and a cultural melting pot where French, Spanish, Creole, Cajun, African American, and Indigenous cultures come together in one community. If you are ever in Central Louisiana, I would suggest visiting, especially during their Christmas Festival between Thanksgiving and Christmas. I worked at NSU for roughly 3 years. Knowing I wanted to advance my career, I moved a little north to Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Louisiana, where I served as University Archivist and Head of Special Collections and Records Management. While NSU provided me with the opportunity to work primarily with cultural collections, Louisiana Tech allowed me to work with University Records. It was here that I learned more about the operations of a research center and about working with students to unlock the mysteries that live in the archives.

After 4 years at Louisiana Tech, I wanted to return to my Indiana roots. I returned to Wabash in the fall of 2021 and had the pleasure of serving as Digital Archivist alongside Beth Swift. Following the announcement of Beth's retirement, I transitioned to the College Archivist role in 2022. Beth has been an amazing mentor and friend since I returned to Wabash. She is always one of the first people I turn to with questions and has shown me how to be successful as Archivist at Wabash. She is a wealth of Wabash historical knowledge, and I am lucky to call her a colleague and friend. Being Archivist at Wabash is unlike any other position I have held. At no other institution I have worked at has there been such appreciation for and curiosity about an institution's history and traditions. Wabash's alums, students, faculty, and staff all share an interest in the historical



nuances that make Wabash so special. This curiosity makes it a joy to come to work every day and learn something new about the institution I love. From helping students and faculty with archival research or integrating archival resources into coursework to helping family members or classmates reconnect with loved ones they have lost, every day I have the opportunity to demonstrate my passion for my work and the power of archival collections.

While at Wabash, we at the Ramsay Archival Center have worked to make our collections more accessible and more representative. https://library.wabash.edu/archives/wabashcollegearchives. I



am working to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to see themselves in our collections and to research the treasured or untold stories still hiding in plain sight. From digitization projects that expand digital access to recordings of commencements and baccalaureate services, yearbook collections, *The Bachelor*, and other historic newspapers, to crowdsourcing from alums and students to add their memories to the archives through our history harvests, we are working to ensure that 100 years from now the collections of the Ramsay Archival Center are thriving and adequately represent all entities that make Wabash Wabash. The Ramsay Archival Center is here for you, whether you want to learn more about the history and traditions of Wabash or explore our rich collections, which document not only the history of Wabash but also the stories of an entire Wabash community. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve as the archivist at Wabash College and to help the institution I love and the patrons I care about.

Thy loyal sons,

Cal