

Class of 1974

Class Agents

Paul Tipps

Mark Dewart

Alumni & Affinity Group Engagement Office
301 W. Wabash Ave.

Crawfordsville, IN 47933

765-361-6360

alumni@wabash.edu

wabash.edu

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Men of 1974:

Mark and I recently attended the J. B. Bachman '61 Class Agent Forum at the College. We took in the football and futbol games from the W. Club in the afternoon and watched the Little Giants decisively defeat Wittenberg, 31 - 0, on the gridiron and continue an undefeated start on the pitch by beating Alma, 2 - 1.



As usual, the highlight of the morning session for me was the “College Update and Q&A” from President Scott Feller. I will try to give you the CliffNotes version of his talk along with some news from the Advancement Office. President Feller always has some good news partially offset by things that “keep him up at nights.”

There are 880 – 890 students on campus this year. The number is not exact because some students are still arriving while others are leaving. President Feller and our Admissions staff remain highly vigilant about the “Demographic Cliff.” We will never see this many high school graduates as were seen this year; at least not for the next 18 years due to a decline in the birthrate. In addition, fewer high school graduates, particularly men, are going to

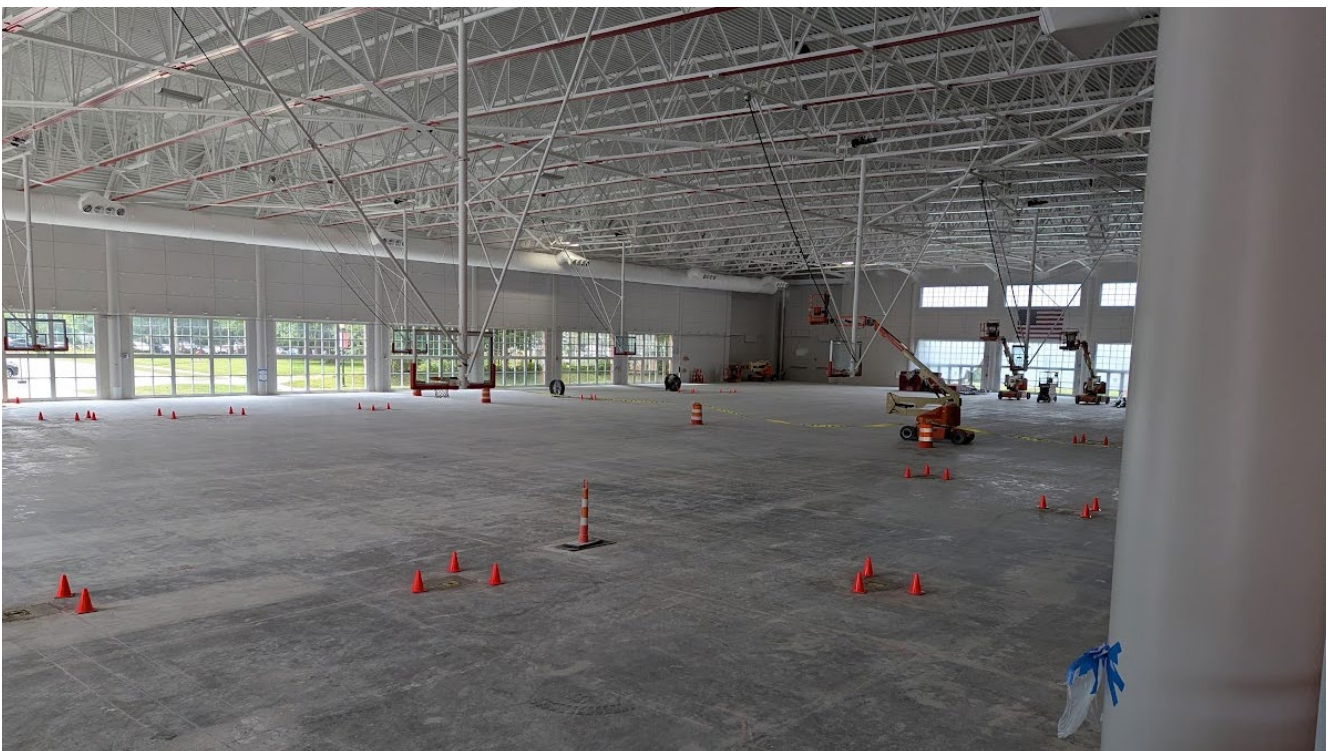
college. The latest statistics show only 53% of Indiana high school graduates enrolled in college; thus we are faced with a smaller pie and fewer men going to college. We encourage all of you to send your referrals to the Admissions Office at wabash.edu/refer. They will take it from there!

Major capital improvements are visible across campus. President Feller expects to expend about \$100 million over the next 18 – 24 months:

- Concrete is poured and steel is rising for the new Community Center. Two of our tennis courts are still being used as temporary dining facilities.



- The Knowling Fieldhouse is closed for a major renovation including new flooring, new curtains, and a new sound system.



- The steel for a new central cooling plant has been erected near the Martindale Hall parking lot. This facility will serve the campus for the next 50 years.
- A new parking lot has been added east of Mud Hollow.
- \$5 million has been spent on electrical infrastructure in the last 8 – 10 months.

The College endowment sits at about \$530 million today; however, we took a big “hit” in 2008 when investment in the College lagged. Today's \$530 million is less than our endowment in 2008 when adjusted for inflation. Student revenue is dropping. Twenty-five years ago our endowment per student was two times that of DePauw; today it is 5% less than DPU.

In fiscal 2026, we added \$25 million to the endowment and earned over a 19% ROI. We added more funds than we withdrew. We also closed a major debt consolidating loan with the USDA in July, 2026 at a below-market interest rate.

President Feller said \$30 million of deferred maintenance has been identified right now. He closed by saying, “I need \$200 million and I need it tomorrow.”

With that sobering request, we had a banner fundraising year in fiscal 2026 with total donations exceeding \$57 million. The Annual Fund also set a record garnering \$4,370,291 and exceeding \$4 million for the first time. This was the thirteenth consecutive year we had more than 40% alumni participation in the fund. Finally, the Annual Day of Giving surpassed its previous high receiving \$2,160,915 from 3,848 discreet donors. As defined by the College, 46% of our 14,749 alumni base was actively engaged with the College over the last five years.

Regarding another performance metric, our four-year graduation rate exceeds that of all our peer institutions. The College is actively seeking more alumni to assist students with career paths and professional development. Step up if you are interested.

The College currently has 143 Class Agents, but is seeking more especially from fraternities and other organizations like MXI. Twenty-three new Class Agents were added last year. Recent graduation classes have multiple Class Agents.

Please keep in touch.

Yours in Wabash,

Paul Tipps and Mark Dewart
Co-Class Agents 1974