



Class Agents Letter

Class of 1980

Class Agent

Ken Williams

Alumni and Parent Relations Office

301 W. Wabash Ave.

Crawfordsville, IN 47933

765-361-6360

alumni@wabash.edu

wabash.edu

September 21, 2022

Dear Classmate,

I hope that this letter finds you and all those you love well.

Another academic year at Wabash has begun, and once again, Wabash continues to rate as one of the best liberal-arts colleges in the country. Both the Princeton Review and U.S. News and World Report rate Wabash as one of the best colleges in the country. I add the links to those articles as a postscript.

I attended the Class Agent meeting on September 10, and got to see some old friends and make a couple of new ones. Additionally, I received an update of what is going on at Wabash.

First, enrollment is strong. Among the 265 incoming freshmen are 25 international students, the most ever. We also have 25 students each from Chicago and Texas. One-third of the freshman class is from outside Indiana.

Our annual fund set a record: We raised \$3.9 million, \$300,000 over our goal! This was done with 40 percent of all alumni participating, which is the benchmark for top-notch alumni involvement. Our overall endowment is down ten percent (due largely to the economic situation), but we are still in good shape.

Our four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2022 was 83 percent, which is eight percent over projections according to U.S. News. That is a better number than either Oberlin College or Denison University. According to Forbes, the return on investment for Wabash ranks us ninth in the U.S.

Fifty-eight percent of the incoming freshman class pledged fraternities.

The Wabash Liberal Arts Immersion Program (WLAIP) is paying dividends. Minority and first-generation students are seeing increased retention rates. We have two more years for Lilly Endowment to fund the program.

As to physical changes, capital improvements were made to both the Lambda Chi Alpha and Theta Delta Chi houses. The College also enhanced its electrical distribution system.



Plans for a new student campus center to replace the Sparks Center are well underway. As President Scott Feller explained, the goal is to create a campus living room with additional food options for all students and additional meeting space. Naturally, the center needs to fit in with other buildings on the mall. (Professor Tobey Herzog's son is the principal architect on the project, so he should have a good idea in mind!)

The College's most critical need right now is endowment for financial aid. Additionally, President Feller spoke of what he called a "crisis of confidence" in higher education in general. He suggested that when you talk to young men about attending Wabash, show them our records and talk about the value of a Wabash education. Also point out that Wabash sets its own path in defining excellence.

Donor numbers are down from last year. We barely squeaked by making the benchmark of 40 percent giving. **It does not matter how much you give as much as how many of us participate.** That being said, our Day of Giving numbers were impressive: We donated \$1,744 per student. The average of all colleges is about \$300 per student, so Wabash once again proves itself exceptional.

OUR FUNDRAISING GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR: \$3.65M to raise, and 40 percent participation.

News from Classmates:

Jim Miller's widow Laura has been working tirelessly in raising money for projects in Jim's name. Her team "Millers on a Mission" is participating in the annual Light the Night for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society at Military Park in Indianapolis on October 15. Additionally, the Jim Miller Student Scholarship Fund offers scholarships to full-time health profession students through the Indiana Rural Health Association, where Jim worked for several years. If you would like to contribute to either, please let me know.

Emmett McAuliffe and Ron Rychlak have been active in re-establishing a Newman Center for Catholic students at Wabash. Sunday Masses are currently being held at the Chapel, and we are working with the Lafayette Diocese to find a location for the Center. Again, if you are interested, please contact me.

Links mentioned above:

<https://www.wabash.edu/news/story/12967>

<https://www.wabash.edu/news/story/12975>

Hope to see you (or hear from any of you) soon!

Yours in Wabash,

Ken Williams
Class Agent
Wabashagent80@gmail.com
(219) 510-3087