



Class Agents Letter

Class of 1980

Class Agent
Ken Williams

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Dear Classmates,

I hope that all of you had a great summer, and that your autumn is well underway. I encourage you to visit Wabash sometime soon.

On September 13, I attended the Class Agent Forum and received the latest news on all that is going on at Wabash. We began with remarks from President Scott Feller. President Feller noted that the Sparks Center has now been completely demolished (it is hard to miss the big hole in the ground) and construction on the new Campus Center has begun. (Independent students are taking their meals at Grub Hollow.) We set a record for the Annual Fund, nearly \$4 Million (more on that below) and we had over 40 percent alumni participation for the twelfth straight year. (Well done!) Wabash has a total enrollment of 908 students, with more living on campus than ever before. Our endowment is exceptionally strong at just under \$450 Million, which allows the College to take moderate investment risks. Although State scholarship funds are shrinking, Wabash is able to make much of that up from its resources. The Day of Giving in April continues to work very well in helping Wabash meet the dollar and participation goals.

President Feller also addressed that challenges that Wabash is facing. The biggest one is recruitment. Like many institutions, Wabash is facing troubling demographic phenomena: not only are there fewer young men choosing to attend college, but in the future there will be a decline in the overall college-age population. Currently, Wabash is making the most of its summer study and athletic programs for high-school students as springboards for recruitment. Wabash is also recruiting heavily in areas where there are fewer liberal-arts education opportunities available, such as Texas and Arizona. President Feller also pointed out that high-school parents and students are looking at colleges differently today, and Wabash is taking advantage of this. While other colleges and universities rely on low admissions rates or high cost to promote themselves as elite institutions, Wabash is concentrating on its high graduation rate and the exceptional outcomes that Wabash offers. As President Feller said, the value proposition has to be more than financial; we stress our students' high quality of life.



We then heard from Nolan Eller '11, the College archivist, and his student assistant, Duc Phan '26. They told us that there are wonderful resources in the archives, including back issues of the *Bachelor* going back to 1908, fraternity collections, and photographs. Nolan said that they are constantly looking for new material, so if you have any items you would like to share, they would love to receive them (preferably in digital form). You can check out what is available at <https://library.wabash.edu/archives>. If you would like to send Nolan some materials, you may contact him at ellern@wabash.edu.

The new Dean of Students, Scott Brown, gave us an introductory look at what he has done so far since arriving at Wabash. After Dean Brown, we received an update on fundraising. We raised \$3,983,898 last year, \$230,000 over our goal. As I said earlier, we had 40 percent participation. (Compare that with the Dannies, who were content with 16.5 percent participation.) Donations through the purchase of license plates from the State of Indiana were way up. The goal for this year is \$3.8 million and 4,901 alumni donors. In an effort to connect Wabash's founding and giving, Wabash has moved the Founder's Day celebration to the week before the Monon Bell game.

I trust you found this informative. I would love to hear from you and learn what you have been doing since my last letter. I am also happy to address any questions you may have regarding the content of this letter. Feel free to email me at wabashagent80@gmail.com, or call me at the number below. Hope to hear from you soon.

Yours in Wabash,

Ken Williams, Agent

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