



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

Alumni and Parent Relations

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Class of 1963

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Dear Members of the Class of '63,

A letter from this particular class agent has been a long time coming, so in case anyone was wondering, I will assure you that I am still alive and kicking and writing to you about that pivotal place of our youth which played such an important part in our lives. I do sincerely hope that this letter finds you and yours in reasonably good health---age adjusted, of course!

As the College's fiscal year end approaches on June 30th, I want to open with an appeal to your pocket books before I get to other news. In case you haven't already made your fiscal year end donation, I invite you to join your classmates on the list enclosed who have already made their donations. If you are like me, a friendly reminder is usually all it takes when giving to an institution or cause in which you passionately believe and which has meant so much to you and your families' wellbeing over the many years since Wabash. **Please join us now before the June 30th fiscal year end!!**

Moving on to some Wabash and personal news, I had the unique pleasure this May to attend the Wabash Trustee meeting in my emeritus status and to walk with the faculty and trustees in the Academic Procession at the Commencement ceremony where I was able to see my nephew, Dugan, son of brother, Scott '60, receive his diploma with *cum laude* honors. Dugan is the fourth member of the Polizotto family to graduate from Wabash College, a fact which we all cherish. Dugan graduated with 188 other seniors as the first four year class of the Greg Hess presidency era.

National recognition continues to flow to Wabash, especially in the area of student/faculty engagement. Of course, that healthy engagement is, at least in part, a function of a 10 to 1 student to faculty ratio and the fact that 95% of our professors are true teachers who have a PhD. or equivalent degree.

The Wabash Career Services office is now headed by Jacob Pactor '04. It has been meeting with such great success in finding internships and mentors for our students (most often with Wabash men and their business and professional companies) that Wabash is now recognized as having one of the best Career Placement offices in the country---a damn far cry than in our day!

The Wabash 2016 graduating class was 70% employed or headed to graduate school by the time of Commencement and at six months out, 90% to 95% were "settled," and I don't think settled means living in their parents' basement, but frankly I am not sure exactly what that means!

The tuition this year was \$40,000, and room and board can be as high as \$9,200 if living in the new independent living units---a far cry from our time when, as I recall, tuition ran about \$600 to \$700 and room and board was about \$500.00. Please take into account my age if you find the 1960 era numbers to be all wrong!

Notwithstanding the breathtaking increases since our time, the Wabash numbers are at or below most of our peer institutions. The real issue for Wabash is that a majority of our students receive varying levels of aid which puts a real strain on our budget and endowment draw. This is exactly why the second paragraph of this letter is so critical to the health and well being of the College. We are trying mightily to reduce the 6% of the trailing 12 quarter average endowment draw, but it is a difficult balancing act between frugality and maintaining a quality college experience. Some progress has been made, but not enough yet. I guess you will have to take my word for it, but as a long standing member and attendee at budget committee meetings of the Board of Trustees, the administration runs an extremely tight ship and does amazingly well in managing a budget which is within our means while allowing us to maintain quality, but it is a wrenching process in which tough decisions are made every year.

A sad sign of the times is the fact that there have been several college closings recently, including St. Joseph College in Rensselaer, IN, and St. Mary's of the Woods in Terre Haute, IN, may not be far behind. Some of you may recall that the Chicago Bears used to have their pre-season football camp at the St. Joe campus---clearly before the NFL was awash in television

money! As I understand it, several Indiana colleges and universities, including Wabash, offered such assistance as they could to St. Joseph, but it was too little too late.

We definitely have many blessing as an institution, so as we see so many other institutions struggling to just stay afloat, I would ask you again to do all that you can to give timely support to your dear old alma mater.

Sincerely,

Bruce Polizotto '63

Class of 1963 Honor Roll of Donors *(as of June 26, 2017)*

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