



Class Agents Letter

Alumni and Parent Relations

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Class of 1980

Class Agent

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December 15, 2018

Season's Greetings Classmate!

On behalf of Wabash College, I want to wish you and your family and friends the Happiest of Holidays and Best Wishes for a wonderful year in 2019!

For Wabash College, 2018 was another stellar year with many notable achievements including:

- ❖ **President Greg Hess** rung in 283 new students in August, 50 of who are Wabash legacies. Twenty states and nine different counties from three continents are represented in the new class. A total of 207 (73.1%) new students are from Indiana, while recruits from Texas numbered a remarkable 17.
- ❖ **In November, Wabash kicked off its largest comprehensive campaign in school history – “Giant Steps: A Campaign for Wabash College.”** The goal is to raise \$225 million by 2023 to grow the endowment to fund scholarships, faculty, academic programs, and immersive experiences for students. Already, \$150.9 million has been raised through gifts and pledges, headlined by a \$40 million gift commitment from College trustee Paul ('75) and Betty Woolls – the largest gift commitment ever made to Wabash.
- ❖ **Members of the Class of 1980 have already helped the 2019 Annual Fund.** A tip of the Holiday beanie goes to classmates *Tom Brandes, Terry Fox, Brent Fulton, Bill Goebel, Herbie Highsmith, Larry Klee, Alex Klefeker, Chris Lanane, Mark Merkle, Tom Minogue, Mark Oetting, Joel Page, Jim Renshaw, John Reuter, Lance Richardson, Eric Rogers and Charles Routh* for their gifts in the current fiscal year, which runs through June 30, 2019. In Fiscal Year 2018, 44.24% of alumni (a record 5,124 donors) made a gift to the College. You can still make a tax-deductible donation to the College for 2018 at www.wabash.edu/give or by phone at 877.743.4545.
- ❖ **The College is working on a master plan to study its future needs, especially in the areas of campus life, dining and infrastructure. Renovations and upgrades to the fitness center, the exterior of the Pioneer**

Chapel and Trippet Hall for ADA access, as well as creation of a new restaurant/pub – “Wally’s” – in the Sparks Center have been recently completed.

- ❖ The College added computer science as a new liberal arts-based major to better reflect the technology needs of today’s society.
- ❖ And, of course, the Monon Bell still resides in its rightful place – above the entrance to the College’s athletic complex after the Little Giants bested DPU 24-17 in the 125th renewal of the Monon Bell Classic. It was Wabash’s ninth victory in the series’ last 10 games.

For me, 2018 presented a tremendous personal challenge, but the support I received from the Wabash community helped sustain me through difficult times as I continue to do battle against an insidious disease. Over the course of the past 12 months, I’ve heard well wishes from classmates Mark Kafader, Kevin McAree, MD, Jim McCleneghen, Mark Merkle, Greg Rose, John Reuter, Jud Scott, and Ken Williams. I am eternally grateful for those greetings.

More recently, I heard from Mario Obejas who shared the following:

“After graduation, I hired in as a software developer at Hughes Aircraft in California. Through various company buyouts, I managed to complete a career in aerospace. I went overseas for a year on my first radar project, and like the six other singles that went with me, we all married someone we met while abroad. Shockingly, that radar system I deployed in 1985 was still working 28 years later when I got a phone call about it in 2013. I finished my career as an Information Security Fellow at Raytheon, retiring in 2014. . . My wife still works, but I *love* my Southern California retirement. I cook more, and read a lot more. I stay active by riding my bike about 7000 miles/year, going to hear live music, getting together with friends, and some involvement in politics (it’s the home of the Resistance here, after all). The really nice thing about retiring at 55 is you get time to do more of the things you like, less of the things you don’t like, while avoiding being in a hurry.”

Thanks, Mario, for reaching out. As always, I’d love to hear from more of you. Feel free to contact me anytime at jmiller44@indy.rr.com or 317.332.3305 (cell) to share your news with your classmates.

As a final note, the Class of 1980’s next reunion – our 40th -- will be at the 2020 Big Bash in Crawfordsville. It’s never too early to begin planning for that event. If you are interested in helping out, please let me know at jmiller44@indy.rr.com or 317.332.3305 (cell).

Once again, Happy Holidays to all of you and GODSPEED!

Yours in Wabash,

JIM

James E. Miller, Class Agent
Wabash College Class of 1980