The Inauguration of Patrick White

White’s Human Touch Impacts Wabash College

Inauguration Festivities begin Tonight

Dr. Patrick White remembers the many challenges and rewards from his life in academia. He fondly recalls his part in the creation of a café Dalloway’s, after Virginia Woolf’s novel Mrs. Dalloway, at St. Mary’s College. The challenges and rewards for him in the future, however, will prove to be more demanding as the fifteenth President of Wabash College.

Patrick White grew up in Dixon, Illinois, a town about the size of Crawfordsville. Dixon was also the hometown of former US President Ronald Reagan. In the year White received his Ph.D., Reagan also gained the U.S. presidency. “My high school English teacher sent me a letter that year congratulating me,” White said. “She explained how great a year it was for her former students. I always wondered if Reagan got a letter about me and wondered who Patrick White was.”

“My father worked in a metal shop welding, fixing radiators, and all sorts of other things. It was a small one to two person shop. My mother stayed at home and helped raise the children,” White said. “Although neither of my parents went to college, they always encouraged me to read, which I treasured greatly in my later years.”

In grade school White wanted to be a lawyer, simply for the fact that, “it was what smart people did.”

In high school, however, White was enthralled by an incredibly enthusiastic English teacher (Mr. Willard) and wanted to become a high school English teacher himself. “I was sort of wandering in high school. I knew I loved to read, but I also was caught up in a world of sports. I played a little basketball at the beginning of my high school career. I later joined the cross country and track teams. Most of my friends were sports guys, and we had a great time, but we didn’t think much about our future.”

White was accepted to the University of Chicago in 1967 for his undergraduate studies. While at the University of Chicago, White had now Wabash English professor Don Herring as an English instructor. “Herring and his colleagues every year would run a William McGonagle festival. The festival was essentially a parody of an academic conference. McGonagle was a local poet known for his bad poetry, and professors and students would get together and present pseudo-scholarship on his poetry. The work was all legitimate, like a paper proving McGonagle’s deep connection with Chekov, but the mood was very light-hearted and fun, which made my undergraduate experience so fulfilling.” White still maintains a close connection with Herring. “Dr. Herring

President White speaks about his personal journey through three careers: professor, academic dean and president.

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White

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showed me the incredible joy in teaching and the joys of studying literature. I have carried these lessons with me throughout my life.”

White attended the University of Iowa for graduate study. He wrote a dissertation on American and British modernist literature, from 1800-1940. While at the University of Iowa, White studied with John Bryant, a Melville scholar, who will be speaking at the inauguration ceremony.

White took a job after graduate school at St. Mary’s College, an all-women’s school in Notre Dame, Indiana, first as an English professor and then as Associate Dean of the faculty. His experiences there have left him well prepared for his transition to the Wabash presidency.

White has much to say about coeducation, given his perspective coming from an all-female school to an all-male school.

“After eighteen years of women’s college, I’m convinced single-sex education works. What we need to do is find a way to articulate it so we understand what happens at a men’s college that is different from a co-ed liberal arts college,” he said. “There is a real sense of ownership in single sex liberal arts colleges. The students feel, being in a special environment, a real choice to come to Wabash; it’s not just an accident. I’ve found that single sex education breeds a real sense of camaraderie and commitment, a sense of focus on their work that is special. At the center of the discussion at Wabash is, ‘what does it mean to be a man?’ This question is huge, and it is thrilling and exciting.”

President White had a few thoughts about what this all-male school would be like. “My assumption was that Wabash was going to be less Indiana than it is. I thought there were going to be richer kids, I thought they might even be snobby and less diverse than they are. I love the diversity of men here at Wabash. There’s an extraordinary difference among Wabash students that is exciting, a difference in styles. Nevertheless, it is quite evident that Wabash students share a fundamental respect for one another, a judicious appreciation for each other.”

White didn’t always aspire to become a college president. In fact, he remarks that he misses his days in the classroom, engaging students one on one with heavy material. However, the course of events that have led him to his current career leave him deeply satisfied. “It wasn’t like I thought my life wouldn’t be complete if I didn’t become a college president. I do, however, think wondering about colleges is really cool. [Wabash] is the only place I could imagine being other places are too complete, too big. Here the President can get to know the students, he can talk to the faculty, and it matters when the President talks to these people. I felt honored to attend the inauguration of student body president Jesse James last week. These men were so articulate and mature, they lay claim to this college at this place and at this time.”

White’s life isn’t solely focused on academia. He maintains a firm and moral commitment to his wonderful family and the wonderful memories they’ve built together.

“In the summer of 2003 I had been Dean a little while at St. Mary’s, my son graduated from college and my daughters graduated from high school. We realized we had never taken a family vacation where we traveled very far, so we decided to go hike the Grand Canyon, from rim to rim. When we got to the Canyon, we hiked down in one day and took two days to hike back up north. It was the fourth of July, about 115 degrees at the bottom of the canyon, yet I still remember it as an amazing experience. My family is funny and interesting, they are awake to the world, and sometimes I find myself thinking, ‘where did these amazing and smart people come from, sitting in my living room?’ That vacation at the canyon solidified my love for, and commitment to, my family.”

White’s love and commitment also extends to great literature and its effects on individuals he admires. “I’d have to say my two fictional heroes are Nick Carraway from The Great Gatsby and Huck Finn from Sawyer’s The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. I love Carraway for his naivety and his hope for the bright promise of America. He understands the possibility and the sorrow in a figure like Gatsby. He loves all the flawed characters. I love Huck Finn for that famous line, ‘alright then, I’ll go to hell,’ when he decides to help a slave, Jim, escape to the North. Possibility and moral conviction, these are the kinds of literary themes that have fueled my passion for life.”

From professor to administrator, Dr. Patrick White has always approached life with an enthusiasm for possibilities. Like his literary and real heroes (i.e.: Don Herring), White looks to his future at Wabash with a profound faith in the ceaseless toil and commitment to, my family.”
Chris White Jumps Into Community

Wade Coggleshall
Journal Review

For Chris White, her introduction to the Crawfordsville community began almost immediately.

The first week she and her husband, Pat, who’s set to be inaugurated Saturday as Wabash College’s 15th president, were in Crawfordsville, they attended the Montgomery County 4-H Fair. She remembers citizens introducing themselves.

It’s only snowballed from there. “It’s amazing how many people I guess I do know already,” she says. A lot of that is her fault.

Not content to merely be the wife of a college president or spend days padding around the big, antebellum Elston Homestead mansion they call home, White has joined a number of local civic organizations to provide her input.

She’s a member of Crawfordsville Main Street and accepted an invitation to serve on the board of the Christian Nursing Service. She’s also now affiliated with the county chapter of the League of Women Voters, an organization she was a member of while living in Iowa.

“We’re pretty much ensconced in the community,” White said. “The only thing we lack is kids in the school corporations.” That’s only because their three children have moved on to college.

But it’s the health-care realm where White offers the most expertise.

As a registered nurse she worked as a staff member at University of Iowa hospitals. After seven years White decided to go to grad school, citing a desire to be on the front end of health care. She earned a masters in community health nursing and shifted her focus to preventing health problems rather than treating them.

While Pat spent the past 18 years serving as vice president and dean of faculty at St. Mary’s College, Notre Dame, Chris was teaching at Indiana University South Bend’s School of Nursing. During the same time she also got certified to be a family nurse practitioner from Valparaiso University, a position she hopes to resume once she’s settled here.

“I really enjoyed that part of being a nurse,” White said. “It allowed me not only to work in a community, but work individually with patients, to see what their life experiences are and try to put them on a path to wellness and thinking more about how to take care of themselves.”

Even with a full-time teaching job, part-time nurse gig and a family, White still found the energy to entrench herself in local issues.

When the Whites moved to St. Joseph County, there were only two sites there where children could be immunized using public health dollars. Research suggests children should be vaccinated by age 2. At that time in St. Joseph County, only 32 percent of children were being vaccinated by then. White banded with other nurses to form a branch of the national organization Every Child By Two. When she left South Bend, there were 14 locations for vaccinations in the county, and rates were up in the 90 percentile.

White also has written grants, one of which was a federal grant for a comprehensive sexuality education program for South Bend schools. It was approved by the Department of Health and Human Services, one of only 20 from more than 700. Officials started the program in middle schools, and brought in high school students to teach some of its components. The students responded well, resulting in a drop in teen pregnancy rates, sexual activity and sexually transmitted diseases there. “It’s good to see the results of those efforts,” White said.

She’s continuing such endeavors in Crawfordsville.

White’s already serving on Crawfordsville schools’ AIDS/communicable disease task force. She’s working with other citizens on a curriculum for AIDS education in schools.

“It’s good to have community members there offering input, work with teachers and parents and students,” White said. “That’s healthy. It shows everybody has a stake, and everybody should be invested in the process.”

That’s been her philosophy all along. “I’m a community health nurse, which means I think the community is absolutely vital,” White said. “As a community health nurse and as a citizen, I feel it’s my responsibility to contribute to the overall health of the community. So I’m very engaged, and I will be.”

She extends that axiom to the town/gown relationship between Wabash and the surrounding community.

“The health of Wabash is dependent on the health of Crawfordsville, and the health of Crawfordsville is dependent on the health of Wabash,” White said. “Maybe it’s not a symbiotic relationship, but certainly synergistic because they contribute more to one another’s environments.”
The Bachelor

Wabash College’s Presidents

The Rev. Elihu W. Baldwin, 1834-1840

The Reverend Elihu Whittlesey Baldwin was first nominated as the President of Wabash College on December 31, 1834. A member of the Yale class of 1812, he had been previously serving as a member of a missionary society in New York when then professor and founder Edmund Otis Hovey offered him the Presidency. Baldwin accepted on February 19, 1835. He was officially inaugurated on July 13, 1836 and served as the first president of Wabash until his passing on October 15, 1840. Though Baldwin’s administration was short, he is credited with giving Wabash lasting foundations. On entering his new position, he was faced with the challenge of collecting funds and books, as well as any and all apparatuses necessary for his new institution. His devotion to the College was reflected in one of his personal mottos: “What can I give to Wabash?” Those who knew him understood that he brought a stable mindset of religious views and principles that he expected his students to abide by. Aside from this, Baldwin was also the one credited with pondering the true value of a liberal arts education.

-- Victor Nava ’10

The Rev. Charles White, 1841-1861

Dr. Charles White was the second President of Wabash College, serving from 1841 to 1861. Descended from a signer of the Mayflower Compact, he graduated from Dartmouth College with first honors before coming to Crawfordsville. After the untimely death of the beloved President Baldwin, White felt the great magnitude of his undertaking. In his inauguration speech he stated, “I am not unconscious, I trust, of the high responsibilities which I have now assumed, in undertaking the duty of a literary teacher and moral guide in this institution. Whoever exerts an influence here exerts an influence upon many individuals and upon great interests elsewhere.” He fulfilled his duty of instruction by graduating 131 students, of which 47 became ministers, 41 became lawyers, 12 became physicians, and 9 became teachers. He fulfilled his duty to morality when necessary as evidenced by one incident.

Upon hearing a student was entertaining guests with card playing, Professor Hovey was dispatched to intervene. When the students heard him coming, they locked themselves in the room. Hovey attempted to break down the door but was unsuccessful, injuring himself in the process. Caleb Mills was called in for backup, and he came wielding an axe. The party was broken up and all but the host repented. In the face of such intransigence, President White was given no choice but to expel the delinquent card player.

One year after the death of his wife in 1860, President White passed away suddenly. He left behind a proud legacy of having personal relations with students and the full support of the College.

-- Andrew Hoffman ’10

The Rev. Joseph Tuttle, 1862-1892

Dr. Joseph Tuttle became the third president of Wabash College in 1862 and remained so until 1892. He was a farmer in Ohio for four years before attending Marietta College and graduating with first honors. He came to Wabash with a reputation as an eloquent speaker, as seen in this excerpt from his inauguration address: “Friends of learning … come and gather yourselves about this young college which has such a luminous past and such a hopeful future, cherish her as your child and resolve to make her the worthy equal of the greatest, East or West; give her buildings, books, all the implements of scholarship and research, endow her, pray for her, till she becomes the glory of your State, the pride of the West. Then she shall dwell like a queen in the midst of this vast Empire at the West, sending forth the sons who have acquired thoroughness, manliness, and faith at her knee.”

Those listening took his commands to heart as the college experienced growth by the end of his presidency. The library grew from 6,000 volumes to 30,000. The number of professors more than doubled, from six to fourteen. The laboratory equipment went from a few hundred dollars’ to the best in the state.

While the College itself was evolving, there were attempts at changing the population as well. After the Civil War were the first rumblings of coeducation in the form of a petition by young ladies of Crawfordsville. It was decided that women may attend chemistry lectures, but that was not enough. In 1880 a lobby was made, but the board explained that there were insufficient funds to support such a change.

-- Andrew Hoffman ’10
Wabash College’s Presidents

The Rev. G.S. Burroughs, 1892-1899

Dr. George Stockton Burroughs was the fourth president of Wabash serving from 1892 to 1899. There was high expectation and excitement for the 37 year old Princeton graduate. When he arrived at the train station, students unharnessed the horses and used a rope to pull his carriage into town themselves. Burroughs saw much potential in Wabash saying at his inauguration “Wabash is in the making, this state is in the making, our country is in the making. It is grand to live and do today.” Sadly his dreams were dampened by challenges unlike those faced by prior presidents.

The first challenge was the rise of public schools. Historically, students attended a preparatory school on campus to prepare for the difficult entrance exam. The College was slow to adapt which hurt enrollment. Secondly, there was the rise of public universities. Purdue’s and Indiana University’s enrollments doubled while the University of Illinois’s grew 700 percent. Lastly there were the continuing calls for coeducation. The failure to modernize hindered the growth of the endowment.

Just as now, DePauw could be counted on to unite the campus. There was to be a new fence to be constructed around the athletic field for an upcoming game versus DePauw. Unfortunately the boards had been delayed in arriving. Not to be disheartened, students, faculty, and even President Burroughs worked feverishly Saturday morning to finish it in time for the game. Times turned sour though during the last four years for many reasons including the lack of a football team. After seven years, President Burroughs submitted a letter of resignation.

--Andrew Hoffman ’10

The Rev. William Kane, 1899-1906

The Reverend William Patterson Kane served Wabash College as her fifth President from 1899 until his death on November 28, 1906. He was a member of the class of 1887, as well as a Phi Beta Kappa. Kane’s inauguration ceremony took place on February 22, 1900. Upon his inauguration, he stated that one of his biggest goals would be to know every student in the college personally and to gain their confidence though time. However, Kane’s presidential term didn’t have an easy start, due to the term of the previous president ending with the departments of Wabash being too independent of each other and greatly lacking in “solidarity.” Despite this obvious drawback, Kane worked to unite the college and establish a foundation of community and togetherness that still exists today.

Before serving as President of the College, Kane was appointed as president of the Board of Trustees, of which he had been a member since 1890. Two of the biggest contributions to Wabash history that occurred during Kane’s presidency were the building and dedication of the Kane House, which later served as a fraternity, residence hall, and is currently used as the home for fundraising at Wabash, as well as the first official singing of “Old Wabash,” which was sung during Kane’s inauguration ceremony.

--Victor Nava ’10

The Rev. George Mackintosh, 1907-1926

Wabash saw in the Reverend George Lewes Mackintosh her sixth President, following the death of former President Kane. Mackintosh, a native of Argyle, Nova Scotia, first traveled to the United States in 1880 in order to become a member of Wabash’s class of 1884. A Sigma Chi, Mackintosh assumed the Presidency, and was inaugurated, in 1907 until his unexpected resignation in 1925. Mackintosh, or “Doc Mack” as he was sometimes called, was a former pastor of the 4th Presbyterian Church of Indianapolis as well as a former professor at the College. His time as President was marked by changing ideals in education, his guidance of the college through the First World War, as well as his handling of financial problems left behind by the previous President. During his presidency, Mackintosh saw the student population of Wabash nearly double from 250 to 500 students, as well as a boom in the number of faculty members to educate these young men. He resigned as President of the College in 1925, citing “failing health” and the College’s need for “younger talent and energy” as reasons for doing so. Mackintosh can best be remembered in the words of Daniel R. MacGregor, also a native of Argyle as well as a member of the class of 1883, as someone who was “always generous and looking for the good in men.”

--Victor Nava ’10
Wabash College’s Presidents

Dr. Louis Hopkins, 1926-1940

Louis Hopkins was the seventh president of Wabash College and served from 1926 to 1940. During his tenure at Wabash, Hopkins introduced a number of profound changes to Wabash that continue to guide the operation of the College today. The divisional system across academic disciplines and senior comprehensive exams are a couple of the major changes in academic life introduced by Hopkins. This president also was at the cutting edge of personnel management, and began to institute student surveys (for incoming freshmen) and other forms of scientific testing in efforts to improve the College’s atmosphere. Hopkins was also the first Wabash president who was not a Presbyterian minister prior to his Presidency. President Hopkins also was profoundly concerned with building strong morals in the midst of serious academic inquiry. In his inauguration speech he says, “May we in turn keep the faith and assist those whom we admit to our institution in their intellectual development … may we encourage them to search for the truth and reveal to them the significance of the message … that the truth shall make them free.”

-- Adam Hawkins ’07

Dr. Frank Hugh Sparks, 1941-1956

Wabash College got a multidimensional and audacious president in 1941. Frank Hugh Sparks became the eighth president of Wabash College, taking the College through a difficult time in its history. Sparks was born on January 11, 1891, in Grant County, Indiana. He spent his childhood in a small farm near Lake Maxinkuckee in southwestern Marshall County. His life changed after he met Carl Fisher, founder of Indy Motor Speedway. In 1910, while working at Fisher, he met Quentin Noblitt and then they started an auto-tire and equipment company. In 1916 they established a training school for automobile mechanics. Moreover, after World War I they started Indianapolis Air Pump Company which grew to Noblitt-Sparks industries and later to Arvia Industries. He went to Butler in 1935 to get his B.A. He then went to University of Southern California to get M.A. and Ph.D. in Business. Less than ten years after deciding to attend College of his realization he became the eighth President of the College. During his inauguration on October 25, 1941, he described an ideal college and how Wabash could be an ideal place. He said, “A college is a living, vital thing. Into it are poured the creative thoughts and energies of a great many persons.”

“In its [college’s] student body is the life of any school. For students it was founded, for students it should live.”

His administration spanned a time of great difficulty. Due to World War II, enrollment of students at the college depleted by enlistment in the armed forces. He was called to Washington to head the War Manpower Commissioner’s Bureau of Labor Utilization. It was through his effort that the Navy Department awarded Wabash College a contract to train 700 students and keep the enrollment fairly constant.

During his time, the student to faculty ratio dropped to 11:1, faculty salaries improved to the highest levels of Midwestern colleges, student enrollment doubled, four new buildings were erected, and the endowment doubled.

-- Rabin Paudel ’10

Dr. Byron K. Trippet, 1956-1965

Byron Kightly Trippet ’30, Beta Theta Pi, was the ninth President of Wabash College. He was born in Princeton, Indiana on September 21, 1908, and graduated from Princeton High School in 1926. In the fall of that year, he began his first year at Wabash, where he graduated in 1930 as a junior Phi Beta Kappa and Summa Cum Laude in history. In 1931 he was chosen as a Rhodes Scholar and attended Oxford College to further his study of history. At Oxford, he was recognized as a distinguished member of the rowing crew and concluded his studies in 1934 with a Master of Arts Degree in Modern History. He returned to Wabash in 1934 as Assistant Professor of History and Assistant Dean, and on June 21, 1936 he married Dorothy Clark O’Neal. He took a four year absence from Wabash, from 1942 to 1946, to serve his country as a Lieutenant-Commander for the United States Navel Reserve during World War II. After his military service, he returned to academia and served as Dean of Wabash College and Professor of History until October 13, 1956, when he was inaugurated as the Ninth President of Wabash. Hallmarks of Trippet’s administration include the construction of the Lilly Library, Martindale Hall, and Arthur R. Baxter Hall, an increase in faculty, and a doubling of the college’s endowment. Trippet resigned as President in 1965, but continued his commitments to Wabash and Academia. He spent the last years of his life with his second wife Lorenza Galeano in Madrid, Spain, where he died in August 1982.

On June 3, 1950, then-Dean Trippet addressed the graduating seniors and summed up, in part, the philosophy of Wabash, “How well we have done together with our purpose…will be demonstrated by how well you perform as individuals in the next ten, twenty, or thirty years – not as captains of industry or brilliant doctors or lawyers or teachers, but as men of sound character and sound intellect in the communities of which you become a part.”

-- Gary James ’10
Wabash College’s Presidents

Dr. Paul Cook, 1966-1968

Dr. Paul West Cook, Jr. became the tenth President of Wabash College on July 1, 1966. He grew up in Evanston, Ill. and earned his Bachelors Degree in economics, with honors, from Brown University in 1948, and his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1952.

His teaching career began as an instructor at Northwestern. He was an analyst for Standard Oil Company of Indiana in 1952 and returned to the University of Chicago in 1953 as an assistant professor of business economics and senior staff economist for Joel Dean Associates. In the early sixties he worked abroad, teaching seminars at Keio University, Tokyo, in Cairo, and in the United Arab Republic. Prior to becoming Wabash’s tenth President, Cook was a member of the faculty of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration.

Cook took over at an interesting time in the Academy. Increased government investment in higher education led the College to make decisive choices about how it would operate. Cook was a fierce advocate of Wabash tradition and independence. He supported the Board of Trustees’ decision not to accept aid from the federal government. He also wanted to maintain competition between public and independent colleges and universities. Of competition he said, “We will have to guard it, to develop it, to encourage it and use it, getting rid of its worst parts while strengthening its best, if we are to keep our total education system dynamic.”

-- Gary James ’10

Dr. Thaddeus Seymour, 1969-1978

Thaddeus Seymour, the eleventh president of Wabash College was inaugurated on Friday, October 10 1969. Seymour’s inauguration ceremonies coincided with that year’s homecoming celebrations and the 100th Anniversary of Little Giant football. Seymour wanted his Inauguration to be a “family affair” and thus invited only faculty, staff, students and the board of trustees. As a part of the inauguration ceremonies, current Wabash Professor David Blix ’70 was the Student Senate representative on the Inauguration Committee.

Born in New Hampshire, Seymour attended Princeton University before transferring to the University of California Berkley where he earned his AB. After earning his masters and doctorate at the University of North Carolina, Seymour served as a professor of English at Dartmouth, later becoming Dean of Students before he was selected as Wabash’s president. “I think we should stop apologizing, stop worrying and start again to advance our tradition of education “for men only.” Seymour resigned the presidency in the 1977-1978 school year and later became president of Rollins College.

-- Patrick McAlister ’10

Dr. Lewis Salter, 1978-1988

Lewis Salter became the twelfth president of Wabash College in 1978. Born in 1926, Salter graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a bachelor’s degree. He was awarded the prestigious Rhodes scholarship and received his master’s and doctorate from Oxford University studying theoretical physics. In 1953 he became a professor at Wabash College teaching physics until 1967, when he left the college to become Dean of Students at Knox College. After the resignation of President Seymour, Salter came back to become President of Wabash College.

In the late 1980s, Salter was diagnosed with cancer. In 1988 the Board of Trustees appointed longtime Speech Professor and Dean Victor Powell as Executive Vice President, in the possibility that Salter could no longer perform his duties. Salter resigned soon after and was immediately appointed Chancellor of the college. He resigned that position after a year and went back to what he began doing at Wabash College in 1953, teaching physics. Salter taught physics up until a week before he died.

Aside from his involvement with academia and the administration of the college, Salter played snare drums for the pep band. His addresses to incoming freshman were usually peppered with humor. For the incoming freshman in 1986, for example, Salter said “Crawfordsville was a crude pioneer village built on the banks of Sugar Creek. For some of you, four years here will convince you that little has changed in that regard.”

-- Patrick McAlister ’10
Dr. Frank Wettack, 1989-1993

Frank Sheldon Wettack was the thirteenth president of Wabash College and served from 1989 to 1993. Wettack earned an AB and MA from San Jose State College and a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Texas at Austin. Prior to his doctoral degree, Wettack worked as a high school chemistry teacher. Wettack began his work in higher education, supported by several research grants, as a mentor for undergraduate chemistry majors in 1967. Before coming to Wabash, Wettack served as Arts and Sciences dean at the University of Richmond until 1989. Wettack’s Wabash tenure was most marked by the fractious co-education debate during the early 1990s. He is currently retired, although he still does part-time work for Hope College in Michigan. In his inauguration speech Wettack stressed the strong foundations of Wabash through the work of strong individuals, “Thus a tradition for exceptional teaching in the liberal arts was begun. Names from the past like Mills, Thomas, Gronert, Brigance, Rogge, Haenisch, and Dean have carried this tradition forward, helping to create richness for which a Wabash education is so well known.”

-- Adam Hawkins ’07

Dr. Andrew T. Ford, 1994-2006

Andrew T. Ford became the 15th President of Wabash College in 1993. Ford was born on May 22, 1944 in Waterloo, Massachusetts. He graduated from Seton Hall University and went to University of Wisconsin at Madison to get Master’s in history.

Before coming to Wabash he taught at several schools. He started teaching at Richard Stockton College in Pomona, New Jersey and also served as Provost, Dean of the College, and Professor of History at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania.

In his inauguration speech, he said, “We shall simply have to take our lead from those founders kneeling in the snow and their equally audacious successors who took command of their own futures and play harder and smarter.”

He also honored the liberal arts education of the College, saying, “We play smarter by keeping undergraduate teaching at the center of everything we do.”

“I see an institution where the casual passerby would notice instantly that it is not simply a four-year college, but a life long experience.

Ford helped spearhead the College’s Campaign for Leadership which raised more than $130 million.

Not only President Ford, but also Mrs. Anne Ford was also involved in the life of Wabash. The National Association of Wabash Men recognized her “enthusiasm, grace, and hospitality” and named her an honorary Alumna in the Class of 2006.

He retired from Wabash in early 2006 and was awarded the Doctor of Humane Letters by the Board of Trustees on May 14, 2006.

-- Rabin Paudel ’10

Meeting the Community

President Patrick White and wife Chris have become involved in the community, here greeting patrons of a Montgomery County Art Show.
Cheering Little Giants

President Pat White greeted like a rockstar late in the 2006 Monon Bell victory while leading students in a cheer.

Serving the President

President White looks on as the Wabash Cooking Club makes a delicious meal at Elston Homestead. Robert Van Kirk and Josh Owens cook dinner for President White, his wife and Gary Phillips.
White gets down to “Old Wabash” like no way we have ever seen it. This is when a group of 100 Wallies went down to the president’s house near the end of the year to “sing him in,” an old Wabash tradition.

WABASH COLLEGE
Movies

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White discussed his unexpected reaction to Resnais’ Last Year at Marienbad. A classic he didn’t care for.

iconic character and in this film, I’m not sure that the fight scene is well directed, but before that he takes Rocky back to the mean streets of Philadelphia and it works as a really terrific character study and I liked the film a lot.

Fenoglio: From what the critics have said and the people I know who have seen it have said they thought it was better than they thought it would be. I mean, it has done really well. It only costs $24 million to make and it has made $65 million so far. In any event, when you taught your film classes at St. Mary’s, what exactly did they consist of?

White: When I taught at St. Mary’s there was a student in my advanced writing class who said, “We need a film course on this campus. I think we need one about women in film.” So, I decided to do it. Since it was our only film course at the time, I had to teach it as kind of an introduction to how to look at a movie and an introduction to gender. Every Wednesday night we would meet and watch the movie, then talk about it. I start off that class about talking about the choices that go into film, the choices that the director and actors make on a movie and what effect those choices have. I would start off the course by having the students imagine little stories in their mind. I would tell them to think of a movie in their mind and I would give them a title, like, “Teacher Enters A Room,” and see how they would film it. I would have them make little thirty second movies about a woman who goes to work. They would have choices of how to film something. Then I would show the opening of Working Girl with the shot of the Statue of Liberty. BAM! The very fact that it is going to cost you thousands of dollars for a helicopter shot of the Statue of Liberty that you wouldn’t have to do if you did it another way. So what is that buying? And of course, first image is of the Statue of Liberty and this film is about freedom and liberty, and her growing out of her roots and dumping Alec Baldwin. I love that movie and have probably looked at that opening shot about fifty times. It was a lot of fun teaching that class.

Fenoglio: If you could spend the day with any actor, alive or deceased, who would it be and why?

White: That’s a great question. My first choice would be Katharine Hepburn, but I have read so much about her that I do not think I would find her that interesting. I would love to talk to Jimmy Stewart because he is one of the greatest underrated actors in American film. Everybody knows It’s A Wonderful Life and it is such a terrific film and you can see it in It’s A Wonderful Life. When I first saw Vertigo by Hitchcock, which I didn’t see until I was in my thirties, but when I first saw it I thought “what a big deal?” But the more I watch it, I realize how it is such a terrific film. One of the ways we think about film is because it is so intimate; so face-to-face. Jimmy Stewart is fifteen feet tall and you are face-to-face. The intimacy is spooky. If I went up to someone and talked so close, it would be unnerving for both of us, but in a film it is like the character is talking to us.

As you prepare for the inauguration of your fifteenth President, the women of Saint Mary’s College take time to congratulate an old friend. In light of this monumental event, I was asked to write an article for the Bachelor about Dr. Patrick White. What makes me qualified to write on behalf of so many friends from South Bend, you ask? It is certainly not because I have known him longest, not because I am the most eloquent and well versed of his many colleagues, but perhaps because he is not just my mentor, but also my friend.

In ways that he most likely does not know, this man, your new President, motivated me to do and be more. I will not bore you with an article filled with quips and inside jokes about Pat White’s time at Saint Mary’s College. Instead, I will attempt to tell you what you have to look forward to with Dr. White at the helm of Wabash College.

Students of Wabash, look forward to working with your greatest advocate. Pat will show his support for you with every new opportunity. He will be there to work with you on any project, large or small. He will write countless recommendations and befriend as many of you as humanly possible. He will share his secrets and be honored to learn yours. He will speak in metaphors and broaden your mind. Please, take this weekend to welcome your new friend, mentor, and advocate.

As a community, you are gaining a new family. The Whites will become your own. They will welcome you into their home and treat you like good neighbors. Chris, Paddy, Molly, and Katie will not only get behind their husband and father, they will get behind the Little Giants. They are the true salt of the earth. Be kind to them, and enjoy their good company.

Pat, thank you for all that you have done for me and for us at Saint Mary’s. You will be dearly missed. I tip my hat to you, Dr. Smoothie. Congratulations for reaching this place. You truly deserve everything for which you have worked so hard.

Men of Wabash, relish in this moment and take good care of my friend.

Abby Van Vlerah
Saint Mary’s College ’04
Pat White Talks Movies

President Patrick White is already known on campus and in the community as a film buff. While at St. Mary’s College, White taught a class on women in film. Recently, he presented a film as part of the Downtown Movie Night program.

Fenoglio: What was it like hosting the Downtown Movie Night last Saturday?

White: Oh, that was fun. A really good time because it was a movie, Bringing Up Baby, that I had taught for ten years in a course called “Women in Film” and I knew it really well. I love Katharine Hepburn and I think Cary Grant is an interesting character. What was exciting was that it was a much larger crowd than I had expected. But what was more exciting was that about seventy percent of the audience hadn’t seen the film before and to watch the film and hear them laughing behind me and that was just fun.

Fenoglio: What are your favorite movies…like your top five?

White: It sounds so corny and conventional, but Citizen Kane is one of my favorites. Every time, I think I am not going to fall for the Orson Welles is the best director ever, but every time I watch that movie again, it’s quirky, it’s strange, but it’s one of the most compelling films about America, success in America, and it would be really interesting to teach a “Men in Film” course and use that film. Every single shot is beautiful and interesting to watch and it is wonderfully acted by everybody in the cast. I love Lawrence of Arabia, which I saw when it first came out and I saw it in a drive-in. I think that is one of the great films because it is both huge and epic events on a widescreen but it is also an in-depth study of one guy. I am a fan of westerns and I like the Howard Hawks westerns Rio Bravo and El Dorado. They’re almost the exact same story but slightly different characters. John Wayne plays the same character in both films but then there is a different young kid in one played by Ricky Nelson and the other is James Caan. In one there is a drunken partner, in one movie it’s Dean Martin and the other movie it’s Robert Mitchum, but it’s essentially the same story. I love François Truffaut’s 400 Blows and I have written a little about that. I love Ingmar Bergman’s Wild Strawberries. Those are the top six for me.

Fenoglio: What is the worst movie you have ever seen?

White: You know there are films that are so bad they are funny. I sat through a lot of bad movies that then get parodied on…um…what’s that science fiction film?

Fenoglio: Mystery Science Theater 3000.

White: [Laughs] I saw some of those movies when I was a kid. One film that is really legendary that I think is really terrible is Last Year At Marienbad by Alain Resnais. I remember seeing that film when I was in college and it’s like it was yesterday. Everyone said this film is so intellectual and it’s so cool, this so about nature, life, and meaning and experience and time, and I was bored to tears. I remember looking at the clock in the auditorium and thinking, “When is this thing gonna be over?” I sat through a lot of ponderous movies, but I thought that was a terrible movie. There are only a few films that I have ever walked out on and there’s been a couple I attempted to.

Fenoglio: Yeah, I couldn’t walk out on a movie because I feel like I have already spent $8.50 to see this movie, but I almost walked out on one this summer.

White: What movie was it?

Fenoglio: Pulse. It was a remake of a Japanese film and it was just not a good movie at all and the acting was bad and it was not scary. It was just not delivered in a very good way.

White: I haven’t seen it but I do know what movie you’re talking about.

Fenoglio: What’s the most recent movie you have seen in theaters?

White: Oh, boy. Over Christmas we saw a lot because my kids were home and they are huge movie fans. We saw The Queen. I thought that was tremendous. It was amazing how compelling it was.

Fenoglio: Helen Mirren just won the Golden Globe for Best Actress for her role in that film.

White: Yes. I saw that. I liked that immensely. I also saw The Pursuit of Happiness on New Year’s Eve. It’s like a lot of films that I think is a problem these days where the previews try to make it look sappier and more lighthearted and you just have the scenes of Will Smith running in the streets, but that’s a very grim film. Have you seen it?

Fenoglio: No. I saw the episode when he was on Oprah and talked about how he went from rags to riches. It was really emotional and heart-wrenching, so I figured since I know his whole story that it would be redundant to see the film.

White: A film I saw earlier this fall played with the previews, Stranger Than Fiction. You think it’s going to be pretty funny because Will Ferrell is screaming on the corners and he has someone in his head.

Fenoglio: But it is really depressing!

White: It is! But I think that is one of the best movies I have seen this year. The real surprise of my Christmas season was Rocky Balboa. Here is this guy who is an