

# Campus Center Planning Moves Forward



COURTESY OF SHEPLEY BULFINCH

Shepley Bulfinch have assisted in campus planning with several campuses, including the E. Craig Wall Jr. Academic Center at Davidson College.

JAKE VERMEULEN '21 | MANAGING EDITOR • If we're really honest with ourselves, probably no one on campus would call the Sparks Center their favorite building on campus. The Frank Hugh Sparks Center was built in 1954 as the college's campus center. While it may have served that role admirably in the past, the College's needs have changed over time and the building has become something of a relic. While it has served as the independent dining hall, the mailroom, the bookstore, and the site of Wally's and the Scarlet Inn, the College understands that Sparks does not fill the role a campus center should moving forward. In recognition of that, the process of replacing it with a new campus center is underway.

Originally, plans were to build a new campus center in a similar mold to Sparks Center, but President's Chief of Staff Jim Amidon '87 says that was driven by a misguided conception of what the new student center should be. He said, "What I've heard the President say repeatedly was that

the pandemic has taught us that we don't need to replace Sparks with a dining hall. We need a genuine campus center. We need a place that will bring all of our students together."

The planning process for the new campus center has accelerated over the past few months, including a survey in November which received more than 300 responses from members of the Wabash community. The College is working alongside Shepley Bulfinch, the architectural firm which designed the Ott Residential Life District, and Heapy Engineering to design and build the new Campus Center, the renovation of Lilly Library, and a large scale infrastructure improvement.

Of those three major projects, the infrastructure improvement will have to come first. Amidon said, "This is absolutely critical if we want to continue to build out the campus life district on the west side of campus." The project is likely to include hooking campus up with Crawfordsville Electric Light and Power and modernizing the

heating and air conditioning systems on campus.

For the new campus center, some familiar aspects will likely be retained from Sparks – independent dining, a bookstore, Wally's, and the Scarlet Inn, for example. It will likely include much more, however, as the College looks to make it more of a true campus hub. Features like a lounge, a physical connection to the library, event and meeting spaces, and a grab and go dining option are part of the plans moving forward. Amidon said, "The earlier thinking was that the library could be the social hub and the academic hub, and I think the recent thinking over the last six months is that they are two very different things but they are completely connected. They are the core of the campus life district and MXI speaks directly to it right there, and Allen Center next to [the Campus Center]."

This project is unlikely to be completed while current students are on campus due to the necessary

infrastructure improvements, the time needed to raise money, and the build time of such a large project. However, that does not mean student opinions will not be important through the process. Shepley Bullfinch will be (virtually) returning to campus later this semester to gather more input from students on the design of the Campus Center. This process will have a significant impact on the ultimate outcome of the project. Amidon says, "They're going to be looking for input from students, and this is critical. This is kind of paying it forward. You are sharing thoughts, feedback, criticism, and creativity to a project you won't benefit from as students. This is a project several years in the making."

This project will be important in shaping the look and feel of campus for several generations of Wabash men. It has been more than 60 years since the College built a new campus center, and this process will be an important one to follow and participate in for generations of Wabash men to come.

# Thomas Receives Tenure



COURTESY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Professor Thomas is earning her tenure in her sixth year at Wabash.

LIAM GRENNON '24 | STAFF WRITER • In her sixth year teaching in Crawfordsville, history Professor Sabrina Thomas earned the title of associate professor here at Wabash College. The announcement of her tenure came last December and just this week Thomas was named the inaugural recipient of the David A. Moore Chair in American History. In her time at Wabash, Thomas has earned the respect of both colleagues and students alike.

Acting Dean of the College Todd McDorman, who plays an integral role in the tenure process, jumped at the opportunity to speak to Thomas's recent achievements.

"Dr. Thomas effectively challenges Wabash students while introducing them to new ideas and different perspectives," says Dean McDorman. "She has high standards and works with students to get them to that standard. Students see her courses as difficult and rewarding, and during her tenure review, students were effusive in their praise of her open-minded and fair approach."

Thomas's road towards teaching

at Wabash was unique for several reasons. Originally employed in college athletics, Thomas describes teaching as a second life career. Earning her Bachelor of Arts in History from Colorado State University, Thomas pursued her Masters in counseling from Butler University while working as an assistant Volleyball Coach at the school. After working as an academic advisor at IU then as an Academic coordinator at Arizona State University then Colorado College, Thomas decided to pursue a doctorate in philosophy from Arizona State. Her dissertation, "The Value of Dust: Policy, Citizenship, and Vietnam's Amerasian Children" investigates how American policymakers dealt with the offspring of American soldiers after the conclusion of the Vietnamese war.

While finishing her Ph.D. and dissertation, Thomas worked at Arizona State University and Middle Tennessee State University.

Professor Stephen Morillo of the College's History Department describes Thomas as both "a dedicated teacher," and "productive scholar,". Morillo adds, "I am particularly

happy about this (Thomas' tenure) because it guarantees that the History Department will remain in good hands for the foreseeable future."

Before coming to Wabash, Thomas remembers feeling unphased by the school's all-male student body.

"I had spent at that time a number of years working with the football and men's basketball team at big universities, so dealing with men was not an issue for me," says Thomas.

She remembers expecting Wabash to be similar to Animal House.

"When I got here for my interview I was so shocked and impressed for how refined, for lack of a better word, the campus and men were," says Thomas. "Every Wabash man I ran into was kind and respectful and really seemed to be engaged with their education. I still think Wabash doesn't get enough recognition nationally, because if they did people would be knocking down the doors to send their sons to a school like this."

In her time at Wabash, Thomas has taught classes ranging from "Children of War" to "Malcolm, Martin, and Mandela" and even the "History and Politics of Hip Hop."

"One of the great things about Wabash and in our history department is that we are small enough so you can kind of teach anything without worrying about overlapping with anyone else," says Thomas.

That freedom has allowed Thomas to teach courses on a variety of historical subjects.

"Initially, my classes were just things I was super comfortable with," says Thomas. "For me, that was the Vietnam War, I had taught that class quite a bit prior (to Wabash)."

Since that first year, however, Doctor Thomas has tried to cater her courses to be more relevant to students, even if that means stepping out of her comfort zone.

"I think history is a really good space to work out current tensions," says Thomas. "Over the past few years tensions in this country have really escalated in a number of ways, and all of those tensions can very easily be traced to historical roots. I think it has made people want to take history

classes to kind of figure out how we got to where we are. It's certainly created more interesting class discussions and has given me the opportunity to also learn along with my students.

Cooper Smith '23, has taken two of Thomas' courses in his two years at Wabash.

"Dr. Thomas does an excellent job of challenging her students to justify their assertions," says Smith. "Her classes often require readings from primary sources, especially from perspectives that are often left out of history classes. And the readings are memorable and divisive – they often spark great classroom debate."

To inform, to interact, and to engage students in the classroom are the pillars on which Thomas has built her philosophy as an educator.

"In history, it's really important to inform students because it's a topic in which there is a lot of misinformation and lack of information," says Thomas. "I think students learn the best when they are both interacting with one another and when they are engaging with evidence."

The engagement of evidence is an increasingly important skill to have and one Thomas tries to introduce in all of her classes.

"In my upper-division classes especially I try to hold my students accountable for using credible evidence and backing their ideas with that evidence."

Outside of the classroom, Thomas is also a topflight scholar. She has a forthcoming from a university press which has earned high praises for its original and rigorous approach.

Thomas's tenure comes as a result of both her dedication and passion for teaching. The achievement of tenure is a significant milestone for any faculty member.

"It reflects that a faculty person has shown excellence in teaching, scholarship or creative work, and service," says Dean McDorman. "Further, it is an expression of confidence by the College that the faculty member will continue to excel while exhibiting future leadership at the institution."



# Agile Existentialism: Overthrowing Hierarchies by Managing Scope



Alex Rotaru '22

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Everything around us is, to some extent, based on assumptions. Some are harmless, others are necessary, and a good chunk of them are keeping us at a standstill as a society and need to be addressed as soon as possible. Project managers use the Agile framework to deliver a product quickly by managing scope. I believe existentialists and diversity

scholars will also find a powerful ally in the Agile methodology, in their quest to overthrow power structures, toxic assumptions, and figure out how a world without any sort of guiding light or benchmark can exist and function.

The power in Agile comes from varying scope. In our everyday lives, we have a scope for all the issues that we deal with, and we need to be as narrow in said scopes as possible when addressing them. However, that requires broad assumption scopes, as getting specific requires assuming certain things are given. What I am advocating for is flipping this whole idea on its head, and narrowing the scope of assumptions.

Just like Nietzsche said in “Thus Spoke Zarathustra,” once we overthrow all gods, we will be putting ourselves in their place. Applying this thought process to the assumptions that permeate our daily lives, it becomes clear why we need to do away with the toxic ones as soon as possible, and

put ourselves at the core of things. However, how do we determine which are toxic?

Well, let’s narrow the assumption scope as far as we can. For the sake of a thought experiment, let’s assume that everything we know and feel cannot be trusted, and that we are deceiving ourselves no matter what. If we decide to go with that, we cannot function, so there are certain assumptions we need to make and actively keep in mind in order to function properly.

We can sense something - but we will never know whether or not that is reality. Even if we check with others, we might just be living a collective delirium. So, that’s why I love the German world *umwelt*, or surrounding world - it bypasses this issue by stating that the sensory world is subjective to each and every one of us, and what we call “reality” is something that all *umwelts* contain. Granted, this also results in quite a few complications when adding certain mental illnesses

into the mix, such as literal delirium.

This is the kind of work that Agile applied to existentialism can help do: by varying the scope of our assumptions, and figuring out which questions are relevant and which we can bypass, we are able to find new sets of assumptions we can live with that can mitigate the consequences of the previous ones. However, addressing these assumptions is a wicked problem, in the sense that the new assumption system will always come with trade-offs that will need to be mitigated or accepted. But, that’s the beauty of using Agile in Philosophy and Diversity Studies: we can always free ourselves from the assumptions that plague us and build new perspective systems. The only issue that remains is spreading that change, and figuring out how to fit it into the socio-political context, when many people find the status quo more advantageous for them. But that is beyond the scope of this opinion piece.

# Find a Hobby and Learn a Skill!



Alex Goodnight '22

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As of February 2021, I would say that most people at Wabash College, and the rest of the world, are pretty tired of everything that is going on. The pandemic, the stormy political climate, and the economy have put a lot of stress on people and made day to day life harder than it would be normally. These factors surely harbor feelings of frustration, discontent, and anxiety because there almost seems to be no escape from them. They are largely uncontrollable and unexpected, so it would make sense for people to feel as if that were the case. Meanwhile I believe that life is far too short for people to waste time being caught up in something that does not

benefit them in the short and long run. That is why I believe that people, no matter who they may be, should have a hobby that they are passionate about.

Hobbies are important to have because they give people a way to step away from the daily challenges of life so that they can focus their energy on something that they truly enjoy doing. I know a lot of people find themselves using their free time to scroll through social media or play video games, but I say that people should use that time to build a skill instead. There are so many people that I believe would be extremely talented at producing beautiful art, composing pleasing music, and crafting delicious dishes if they simply took time out of their day to learn for their own enjoyment. When people spend that time looking at a screen aimlessly, they are definitely wasting time and energy that could be spent on something constructive. This is quite disappointing because boredom from scrolling and clicking is sure to set on, and a person left with absolutely nothing to show for the time they spent.

A hobby is something that provides long term gratification because it is a work in progress. Each time a person plays a song or waters their garden, they begin to see their efforts pile on

top of each other. One day a simple cord becomes a song, or the seed becomes a garden. In my personal experience with my hobby of growing carnivorous plants, I can say there was a lot of pride that came with being able to show people that I grew vibrant, healthy plants from what seemed to be withering weeds. I took time out of my days to learn more about my plants and use that knowledge to provide for them better. Even though this hobby of mine is not as intensive as others, it still provided me with plenty of happiness and knowledge that I didn’t have before I started it. By growing a handful of strange looking greenery, I truly believe I was transformed, even if only slightly, into a better person that I had been. Even if the plants do end up dying, I was still benefited from what I had gained.

Another amazing thing about a hobby is that it is almost certain to have other enthusiasts! Since this is the case, a hobby is a great way to find other people to make friends and learn more about what you like to do. Although I do not believe people should always compare themselves to others, seeking the opportunity to meet with people makes way for the opportunity to be inspired or to encourage. If you are struggling with what you

enjoy doing you can ask for advice or take note of other techniques that will allow you to keep progressing! When you have finally made enough progress, you then have the option to help people that are in the same position that you were. Everyone has something to gain from personal interactions with their peers.

Hobbies are not a “must have” for people, but I do believe that everyone has something to gain by deciding to pursue one. A hobby allows for people to tap into talents that they may have never known they had. By actively deciding to spend time on skillless tasks, like social media, people are wasting what they have to offer to themselves and others. Among what is offered by taking up a hobby are the senses of accomplishment and happiness. Nothing feels better than using your own capacities to create something and watch it grow over time. Then, that hobby can be used as a tool to put you into contact with people that enjoy what you like to spend time on. These interactions will inspire and encourage people to continue their skill while fostering meaningful friendships with their peers. So, with that being said, does anyone want to grow some pitcher plants and sundews with me?

## Interested in writing an opinion piece?

If so email Alex Rotaru at [arotaru22@wabash.edu](mailto:arotaru22@wabash.edu) to begin your tenure as a Bachelor opinion writer.





# The Cavemen Continue Class



PHOTO BY BENJAMIN HIGH '23

**Snow blanked Wabash College and the surrounding area in the past weeks. However, the frozen tundra doesn't discourage the Wabash mentality.**

DREW BLUETHMANN '22 | CAVELIFE EDITOR• In the depths of February, West-Central Indiana has finally reached the zenith of winter. Thermostats in Crawfordsville have yet to tick over 31 degrees fahrenheit since February 5. Over the last week, grass has become but a distant memory as a foot of snow has piled from the Fine Arts Center to Sigma Chi. Despite the harsh winter conditions one constant rings true: the "Wabash Always Fight" mentality kicks in and Wallies are forced to brave the Hoosier Tundra. Well this isn't always the case. When the infamous winter of 1977 threatened to delay registration and the start of classes, Dean Moore said, "This isn't a boys' school, this is a MEN'S school!!"

However, by the end of the week, when the temperature reached -65 degrees with wind chill, the administration capitulated to our emasculating weakness finally gave students a Friday off class.

Even in the legendary Blizzard of 1978, Wabash didn't cancel classes. Apparently the Alumni were enraged because it had never happened before.

But the individualistic "pull yourself up by

your own bootstraps" philosophy of grit and toughness persisted in the following years and decades. In 1982, after a particularly tough winter storm, John Van Nuys made this cartoon (right) which shows the lengths Wabash will go to in order to stay open.

Wabash College has yet to cancel class for weather reasons for forty-four years. And Wabash may never have to cancel it again. With the evolution of online-delivery of classes, many professors have resorted to holding lectures on Zoom this week. And this is something that most professors would never have considered even a year ago. Although it is fair to say most students prefer classes in-person, Zoom classes are a welcomed approach in extreme weather.

The advance in professor's technological literacy is a by-product of the unfortunate events of the COVID pandemic. And these will be a well to future Wabash Men whose professors may save them from traversing the frozen tundra.

However, many professors still held classes this week. We will be able to tell future students the tales of how we traversed the frozen tundra with snow up to our knees.

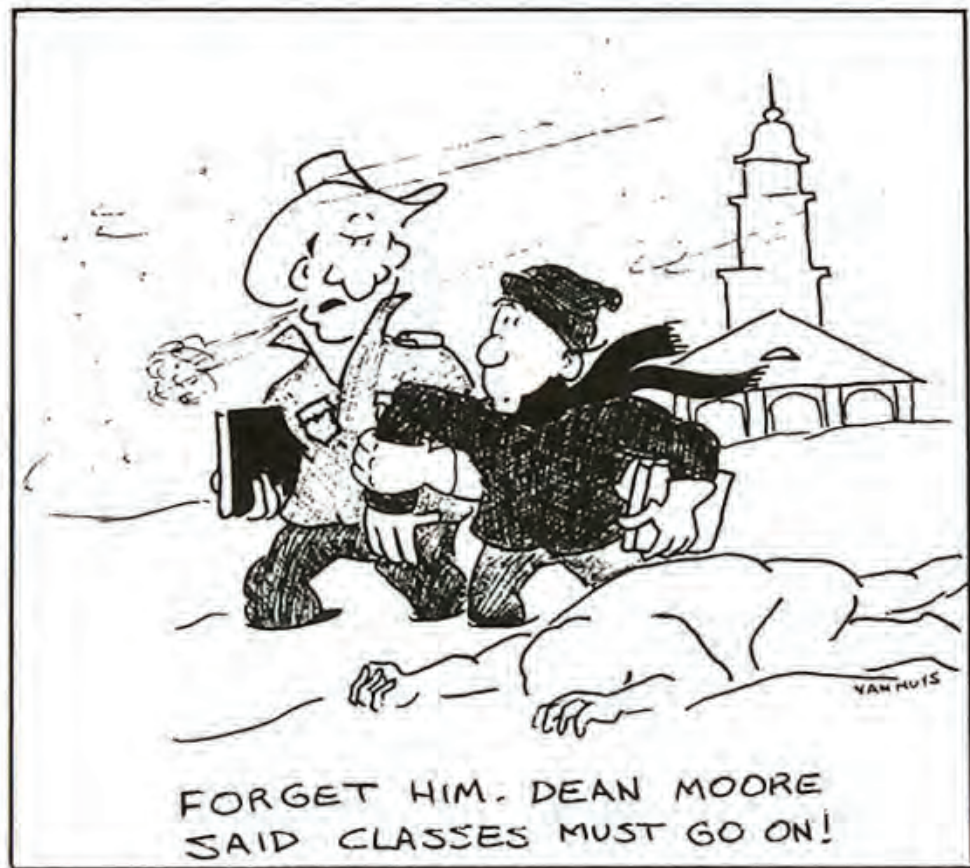


PHOTO BY BENJAMIN HIGH '23

**Center Hall, as seen through the original campus entrance, peaks through the arboretum. Many professors choose to hold classes on Zoom to avoid dangerous road conditions and the uncertain footing.**



# Nick Gray '15 Becomes New Campus Security Director

ALEX ROTARU '22 | OPINION EDITOR• Nick Gray '15, a native of Philadelphia, served in the Tippecanoe County Sheriff's Department for 6 years before deciding to pursue a new endeavor.

"During my time there, I just felt that I had learned all the things I wanted to learn, and I never planned on being in local law enforcement for my entire career," Gray said. So, when the opportunity to become Wabash's new Director of Safety and Security came around, Gray decided to apply for it. "A large reason for why I accepted [this position] is because I really love the school, and I want to help give back to it and contribute to it."

During his time as a Wabash student, Gray was a brother at Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, the Associateship Chair at the Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies, and served in various WISE positions - from tour guide to the IT department. Gray's Wabash education prepared him well for going into law enforcement.

"I think one of the most important things that I've really carried through

my career from my time here is the ability to think critically," Gray said. "When I think of thinking critically, I'm talking about the ability to separate your own biases, and to set aside your own feelings about something, really look at something and see what it's about."

Gray started his career in law enforcement with a summer internship with the Postal Inspection Service in his hometown of Philadelphia.

"Before COVID, [Wabash] had people come to campus and give talks, and one of those events was called the law enforcement lunch," Gray said. "And they had the DEA, ATF, and all these big letter agencies come out, do presentations, and answer questions at the end, and afterward, you could go up and talk to them. And, of course, at the end, everyone swarmed FBI, DEA, ATF, all those guys. But there were those two ladies from the Postal Inspection Service that no-one was talking to."

So, Gray decided to talk to them, and they put him in touch with the special agent in charge in Philadelphia, who had an opening for

a summer internship.

"The Postal Inspection Service is a little known federal agency," Gray said. "They're the law enforcement arm of the post office, and they investigate crimes done through the mail. [...] I spent the summer pulling cocaine out of the mail and kicking down doors and doing a bunch of cool stuff. [...] I helped in the investigation of a guy who'd stolen probably a million dollars out of the banks, and he ended up getting over 30 years in federal prison."

One of the things Gray appreciated in his time with the Postal Inspection Service was how well-trained his co-workers were.

"They're like a well-oiled machine," Gray said. "They work together so well, and I love the training they did every other day."

Gray found a similar atmosphere once he joined the Tippecanoe County Sheriff's Department. "They do a lot of training for their guys," Gray said. "And I think that they have the right idea when it comes to policing. They have a mindset where they're there to be a liaison to the community."



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**Nick Gray '15 is a former police officer for the Tippecanoe Sheriff Department.**

This is the kind of mindset and atmosphere Gray is hoping to bring to Wabash College's security. "One of the things I really hope to do is get the guys more training," Gray said. "And there's a lot of free training out there that we can get them enrolled in." Gray is also aiming for more staffing, particularly for shifts that currently have only one person on duty.

# Valentine's Day, Chocolates, and Music

IO MADEA '24 | STAFF WRITER• Sometimes I am impatient for certain food in particular times, although my stomach is always full of Sparks' food. This winter, I have never thought of eating ice even though white snow reminds us of it either because of Indiana's severe cold or being disillusioned as the snow gets dirty and gray.

Instead, whenever I see the calendar of February, my eyes focus on the particular date, 2/14, which is Valentine's Day. Rather than celebrating its original religious event, I always crave for eating any type of chocolates.

Although the day was approaching, I found that not so many people were talking about that day. It might be because of the pandemic's self-restraint effect, but also it might be a cultural thing. I heard that the day is important for couples privately celebrating each other, so I thought that was why the campus was quiet as usual.

In Japan, this is the day when women give chocolates to men. We are not sure when this Western celebration became a Japanese habit. Still, like celebrating Christmas by eating a cake with a family, Japanese culture have adapted other country's holidays into their own ways.

This day is very important for both men and women to learn about their relationships. It is not exaggerated to say that chocolate indicates how deep their relationships are. Therefore, it is a kind of judgment that all Japanese will be sentenced.

There are three types of chocolates that men will receive. The first one is Honmei, which is a chocolate that men receive from their girlfriends. This

type of chocolate can be seen in other countries too.

The other type is Tomochoko, which is a chocolate that men receive from their female friend. It might be confusing at first whether the chocolate is Honmei or Tomochoko, but there is one way to distinguish these differences. You need to check carefully if you got the same chocolate as other people or not. If yours is different, then it implies that she has affection toward you.

The last one is Girichoko. It is hard to explain because this chocolate is given based on a unique Japanese cultural habit. Women will still give chocolates to their boss or colleagues even though they are not so friendly to each other. It is a formality to please men and continue to have a good relationship in a group they belong to, such as a workplace.

Therefore, because of such expectation toward women to give chocolate to men, some people consider Valentine's Day chocolates a form of sexual harassment. However, it looks like that the tradition of giving chocolates on that day will not disappear since nobody dares to try to stop the custom. This is because of another Japanese' tendency; if others do, then I will do it.

One piece classical music that has a specific chocolate in its title is "Wiener Bonbon," composed by Johann Strauss II. He is known as "The Waltz King" and his most famous pieces include "The Blue Danube" and "Emperor Waltz".

"Bonbon" means "candy" in French, but it is a term widely used to refer to sugar sweets in general. According to southnfrance.com, there are three features that make bonbon; "1. They are a sweet candy or confection 2.

They are round 3. There is an outer shell (chocolate or hard candy) with contrasting filling inside."

"Wiener Bonbon (Vienna Sweets)" starts with the flutes' elegant melody accompanied by the strings' pizzicato. Their plucking sounds represent children intentionally dripping chocolate in order to secretly taste it before their mother makes a bonbon.

Soon, this is followed by a luscious melody having a wide range. Similar to the shape of a sea wave, a part of the melody climaxes amplifying emotion and then gradually settles down and descends after playing the highest note.

After the introduction, the music shifts to triple time, which is a dancing rhythm for a waltz. The moment when the mother immerses in a sweet dream by looking at a recipe is over, and she starts to cook a bonbon. She is ready, puts on an apron, and wears a bandana around her head.

The bouncing ornament notes played in short before the notes depict that she enjoys her blissful moment. She mixes the ingredients by her whipper as it gets browner every time she swings her hand. Sometimes chocolate sticks to her cheek, but instead of whipping with a tissue to clean, she scoops with one of her fingers and savors the chocolate.

The timpani's beats appear as if her children run to the kitchen and nag her to give them the bonbon soon. They just do not only want chocolate from their mother, but also, they snuggle to get her attention. However, she is not indulgent to them and urges them to be patient.

Then, the brass instruments play the main melody bravely as the mother moves towards the oven. The oven turns into orange to show that bonbons

are on the plate as they watch and feel warmth from both gas and each other's affection. The music finishes with the typical grand finale of Strauss's waltzes, and it implies that they cannot wait to eat as soon as they open the oven, just after the timer goes off.

This year I did not directly get any chocolate (indirectly, I took some chocolates when a student shared his mom's chocolate in the lobby of Williams Hall). However, I also think that other students did not get chocolates. Do you know why? It is because there are only males in Wabash College! This is the fate that we face as we live in an all-male college in the U.S.

## From The Ramsay Archives:



The Coach

## "Pete" Vaughn Succumbs At 80 Mentor Mourned

Robert Edward "Pete" Vaughan, a Wabash College sports legend, died last Monday in Culver Hospital at the age of 80.

One of Indiana's basketball pioneers, Pete Vaughan coached the sport at Wabash from 1919 until 1938. During that time his teams compiled a record of 193-173. Two teams were dubbed "Wonder Fives." One was the 1921-22 team which won 20 of 23 games; the other was the 1924-25 quintet which lost only to Wisconsin and was hailed by the press as national champions. For such achievements as these Mr. Vaughan was elected to the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 1966.

He coached Wabash football from 1938 to 1947 and served as athletic director from 1932 to 1947 and again from 1961 to 1963. His football teams compiled a record of 110-85-24 while playing such schools as Notre Dame, Purdue and Indiana.

A native of Lafayette, Mr. Vaughan attended elementary and high school in Crawfordsville. He attended Notre Dame for two years and Princeton for two years. While at Notre Dame he was a football All-American. He served as head basketball coach at Purdue from 1912 to 1915 and as coach at the University of California in 1916. He was then called to the military service and fought with Gen. Pershing in the campaign against Pancho Villa. In 1917 he served in France with the Army of Occupation. After the war he remained in France and during this time was called to explain the fundamentals of football to King Albert of Belgium.

*From The Bachelor of 02/21/1969 p.3*



COURTESY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

**Rob Shook lives in Austin, Texas and works for IBM.**

JAKOB GOODWIN '23 | STAFF WRITER• Rob Shook '83 is the Engagement Manager for IBM Client Centers, the Past President of the National Association of Wabash Men, and the Chapter Advisor for the Lambda Chi Alpha house. After graduating from Wabash in 1983, he went east to Miami of Ohio, for

grad school. There, and at UT Austin, Rob studied experimental psychology with a focus on human-computer interaction.

Over the past 33 years, IBM took Rob from the University of Miami of Ohio to Austin and has since taken him worldwide, from New York and Florida to Sydney, Australia, and London, England. In his role as Engagement Manager for IBM Client Centers, Rob solves problems. Rob works to help people solve those problems, whether that be through sales, consulting, or a myriad of strategies. His ability to ask the right questions, a skill he learned and developed at Wabash, is what makes him good at his job, whether he is in a familiar environment or not.

Rob was also a co-founding member of IBM's LGBT Executive Diversity Task Force. That task force was charged to determine and communicate how to make lesbian and gay "IBMs" feel comfortable and valued at work. That task force, and the work it did, has become an example for companies around the world, big and small, on creating inclusive non-discrimination policies that protect individuals of differing sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

As president of the NAWM, he applied the lessons he learned in fostering diversity at IBM to Wabash and its alums. As the first openly gay President of the NAWM, he worked with Wabash College President Patrick White to solve one of Wabash's problems: to clarify that

Wabash was open to gay, bisexual, and trans students and allies. This issue was not a message that he nor many Wabash men before that time heard. Thankfully, Rob is not the only member of the LGBTQ+ community to lead the NAWM. His successor, Marc Nichols '92, is a proud gay man as well.

In 2019, when Acting Dean of Students Greg Redding '88 took that position, the Lambda Chi Alpha house needed a new Chapter Advisor. When asked, Rob answered the call to serve. This position grants Rob the opportunity to do what he does best: solve problems and help people. Rob said that he considers that position to have multiple roles. First, as Chapter Advisor, he brings a sense of continuity to the house as leadership changes. He also is the "adult" in the room. He acts as a penalty-free sounding board and adviser for the associates at Lambda. His other role is one many might consider his most important. He has countless connections in the Wabash and LCA communities. He helps connect the associates of Lambda Chi Alpha to those he has met and connected with.

Throughout his whole career, Rob Shook has helped solve problems and connect people. From connecting businesses to the solutions they need at IBM to connecting Wabash Men to the NAWM, Rob shook has made a career out of thinking critically, acting responsibly, leading effectively, and living humanely.



# Preview for PDSS: Liz Plank



COURTESY OF NPR

Liz Plank will visit Wabash on February 23. The acclaimed author and journalist is known for her book *For the Love of Men: From Toxic to a More Mindful Masculinity*.

JAKOB GOODWIN '23 | STAFF WRITER

• Every year, the President of the College invites a speaker to the College as part of the President's Distinguished Speaker Series. For his first year as President, President Feller has invited Liz Plank, a journalist, author, and executive producer at Vox Media and NBC News. In 2019, she authored her first book *For the Love of Men: From Toxic to a More Mindful Masculinity*. Plank has appeared on television programs like The Today Show and The Daily Show and on many channels including MSNBC and CNN to discuss politics, gender issues, and reproductive rights. She is a graduate of McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada (where she was born and raised) and the London School of Economics with a master's degree in policy with an emphasis in global

gender politics.

As I began research for this piece, I did what many of us do when we do not know: I googled "Liz Plank". Next to her website, the next result I found was a TEDx talk she did in November 2016 entitled "How to Be a Man, A Woman's Guide". If I'm honest, I was skeptical and immediately became defensive. I thought "What could a woman possibly teach me about how to be a man?" Almost immediately, I was disarmed. She talked about how women have had a whole revolution to figure out what that means. Plank thinks men need one too. Liz and a friend went to New York City for a day and set up a table with a sign saying "Free Advice for Men From a Woman". When men came to her table, she asked them "What is hard about being a man?" Plank found that men didn't

find women to be the hardest thing about being a man, but that other men were. She says that they felt a pressure to perform their masculinity in front of other men, a finding that aligns with precarious masculinity theory. She compared masculinity to an inflatable donut with a hole in it. This forces men to continually work to "maintain the illusion that it's not flawed."

Plank then asked them if they had ever spoken to other men about their insecurities about being a man. Most said no. Taking this, she figured out the solution to this problem of toxic masculinity: men have to talk to one another. She addressed the social stigma behind men being platonically intimate and how it is problematic that we have to call those relationships "bromances". However, we need to change the way that men talk to each

other and how men be friends. She looked at the 2016 election and how we saw Donald Trump, whom she was blocked by on Twitter before he was banned from the platform, defend the idea that it is okay for men to brag about sexual assault when they are together and simply dismiss it as "locker room talk". Plank says that rather than teaching men to be boys, we must teach boys to be better men to reclaim these male spaces. Rather than being places to brag, they need to be spaces for men to ask questions and lean on each other.

Liz Plank will be speaking virtually at 7:30 on Tuesday, February 23. Go to the Wabash website to register for a Zoom link to attend the presentation. It's sure to be an interesting discussion about masculinity on a campus full of young men.

## Behind the Scenes: Twisted Tale of Poe

JOHN WITCZAK '21 | COPY EDITOR

• Wabash College is doing its best to provide students with the traditional liberal arts experience it is famous for, and the theater department is certainly pulling its weight in this effort. While there may be a global pandemic that has shut down theaters across the world, Wabash is holding true to show business's famous saying: The show must go on. Safely, of course

Twisted Tales of Poe, the theater department's upcoming production, is a multimedia experience that will be, simultaneously, performed live via radio and livestream. Featuring some of Edgar Allen Poe's most famous stories, such as "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Cask of Amontillado," as well as some more obscure works like "Hop-Frog," Twisted Tales of Poe will be continuing tradition of putting on Poe's signature works through the medium of radio.

The show's director, Associate Professor of Theater James Cherry, explained the connection between Poe and Radio. "There is a whole tradition of doing radio drama with Edgar Allen Poe. There are a ton of examples from the 1940's and 1950's, and there is something unique about Poe. He is a pretty accessible writer for being

almost two hundred years old, and he's one of the great American poets. His stuff is familiar to people, they read 'Tell-Tale Heart' in high school and college, and those stories are really fun, quirky, and gruesome. It just felt like it would be really interesting, something that the community, both Wabash and Montgomery County, could really get something out of."

The connection between Poe and radio fits perfectly into the Covid landscape, as it allows productions to be both safe and authentic. Dr. Cherry was well aware of this when he settled on Twisted Tales of Poe. Dr. Cherry said of the show's inspiration, "It came out of a desire to do theatre that is safe. Radio theatre is a kind of theatre that has been around for decades. It's one of the best things you can do if you can't have an audience in a theatre: You can broadcast. We cast some actors, and we have a writer's room that is creating all the advertisements, because we are going to do this on air on [radio station] 91.3 and via livestream, so people can watch on the college website. And the idea, basically, is that it is important to give students a swing at the ball. That just because there is a pandemic doesn't mean we stop doing stuff. We

can't just sit around and stop doing theater."

Creating a show safe during Covid means rehearsing a show limiting the threats of Covid. The process comes with its ups and downs. Asked about the rehearsal process, and the precautions that go with it, Dr. Cherry admitted, "It's just not as much fun. We are doing some Zoom, and some socially distanced rehearsals. To be honest, Zoom, with all of its glitches, is very hard to do rehearsals through. It's just the nature of the platform... So, having people in the same room is really important, but then you have to talk with a mask and stay away from everybody. But the way we're going to do it is, we're building sound booths that will allow each actor to perform on the stage, safe and separated enough to perform without a mask on. It's not the ideal way to do theater, but you work within your limitations, and when you do that, you learn all kinds of things."

Dr. Cherry, the cast, and crew have certainly gone through a lot while preparing Twisted Tales of Poe. They have learned lessons that only Covid-era theater can teach. Dr. Cherry explained, "I've already learned a ton about radio theater from doing this,

and it's something I never would have learned in any other time because I never would have thought of doing a radio show." The process has also given Dr. Cherry an experience he never anticipated, when Drew Johannes '23 auditioned live from a Humvee while on tour for the Indiana National Guard. Recalling the audition, Dr. Cherry said, "It was awesome. If you want to talk about things you never imagined doing: Doing a radio show? Never would have imagined doing that. Auditioning a student in a Humvee as he is coming back from Washington D.C. after safeguarding the Capitol following an insurrection? That is also something I wouldn't have had on my list. But Drew was awesome. If a guy can do a good read while facetimeing from a Humvee and wearing his full gear, it gives you a sense that he's going to be good."

Twisted Tales of Poe will give both Wabash and Montgomery County the chance to experience live theater through radio on 91.3 and a livestream on the college's website. The first show is scheduled for Thursday, March 4, at 8 P.M. There will be a midnight show the following Friday, as well as an 8 P.M. show on Saturday and a 2 P.M. show on Sunday, March 6.

## Forecasting Scarlet Honors

BENJAMIN HIGH '22 | PHOTO EDITOR

• Wabash College continues to see many changes since the start of the Covid-19. The admissions office has adapted to the unique circumstances of the times, modifying their recruitment strategies and events to be safe and effective. These changes range from recruitment efforts to campus efforts, and though many things are different, the outlook for the class of 2025 is still strong. Dean Timmons attributes this success to the hard work of the admissions team.

"Every member of the enrollment team, which includes admissions and financial aid, had to adjust their routines and develop new skills, but we didn't see any drop in productivity at all. In some instances, the challenges provided by the pandemic helped us see what to innovate and in the long run, we'll be better for it."

The admissions team made several changes to its recruitment efforts this year. Included in these changes was the elimination of high school visits, college fairs, receptions, and large on-campus events. While removing these tools from their arsenal does set back the admissions office by diminishing their ability to connect with students and utilize the events to predict enrollment, the team has come up with several creative ways around this. From small personalized visits across campus, to opening up campus during break to small groups, the community of college staff and faculty have been instrumental to the admissions efforts. Timmons describes it with

a rather apt metaphor.

"An enrollment VP I follow on Twitter described the current situation as trying to land a plane on an aircraft carrier. There's some precision required that's made possible with finely tuned instruments and a skilled pilots. During this pandemic, we're trying to land planes with a limited number of instruments, so you have to rely on the skill of the pilots. At Wabash, I look at the pool of admitted students each admissions counselor and coach is recruiting and feel fortunate we have plenty of skilled pilots."

Timmons also said that the coming class of 2025 is also looking strong. This is evidenced by their overall engagement, especially in areas of their specific interests. The Scarlett Honors Days event, which was done virtually, provided further details on this.

"This event brought out the best of Wabash. Faculty and staff worked diligently to deliver a virtual event unlike any other and at a time of year when folks could have passed on helping citing fatigue from a grueling semester. 318 students attended, 317 have applied, and 274 of the attendees have been admitted. Of those 274, 52 have already paid enrollment deposits."

Admissions efforts for the year have started out strong, and the outlook is good for further efforts in the coming months. Due to efforts by the Admissions Office and staff across campus, challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic have and continue to be successfully navigated and overcome.



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# UPCOMING MXIBS

## EVENTS:

February 18th: Black History

Month Kahoot

February 25th: Chapel Talk

March 10th: What About Me?

Discussion with Mr. Brooks and

Wabash Campus



COURTESY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Kenny Coleman '22 caps off the MXI-lead Chapel Talk on February 4th. Other than Chapel Talks on the 4th and 25th of February, Coleman recommends reading "Between the World and Me," by Ta-Nehisi, "Black Fatigue," by Mary Frances Winters, and "The Autobiography of Malcolm X," by Alex Haley. Also, Coleman stresses, "Do not feel like the only time to celebrate Black people is the month of February. You will have to see me every day of the year, not just in February."

# HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY  
OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

IMAGINE THEIR BOARD  
ROOM THIS WEEK

*Lo-Five to Newfileds for saying the quiet part out loud and posting a job listing that emphasized they wanted to persevere their "core, white audience." You know, tanking was a good idea for the '76ers but I don't think it works as a museum's public relations strategy.*

BOWSER BOGEYS?

*Hi-Five to Nintendo for saving our society from complete and utter collapse by announcing the upcoming release of Mario Golf: Super Rush. The dark days will soon be behind us; there is light at the end of the tunnel.*

ONLY THE STRONG  
WILL SURVIVE

*Hi-Five to the Texas state government for proving this week that the only thing that isn't bigger there is IQ. Who would have thought disconnecting your electrical grid from the rest of the country was a bad idea?*

GO CRAZY, GO STUPID!

*Lo-Five to Wabash students for not doing stupid things this week. You are making our job in this section too damn hard.*

THIS IS A GODLESS  
PLACE

*Hi-Five to the administration for looking out for our mental health and wellbeing with three (3) entire reading days this semester! Nothing says rejuvenation like liver-abuse on a Wednesday night and getting to sleep in until 11 on a Thursday. Thanks, Papa Scott.*

# SPORTS

## VOLLEYBALL



Fontbonne 3  
W. Wabash 0  
Feb. 13 (1 p.m.)



Fontbonne 3  
W. Wabash 0  
Feb. 13 (3:30 p.m.)

## SWIMMING:



Eastern Illinois 187  
W. Wabash 78  
Feb. 13

# Volleyball Shutout in Weekend Doubleheader by Fontbonne



LIAM GRENNON '24 / PHOTO

Justin Abequibel '24 returns a ball in a home match. The volleyball team suffered a doubleheader sweep at the hands of Fontbonne University over the weekend.

LIAM GRENNON '24 | STAFF WRITER • The Wabash College Volleyball Team earned the program's inaugural win at Wittenberg in their second doubleheader of the year. The match on February 6th, 2021 was the program's first-ever away match. After suffering two losses in a doubleheader against Adrian College at home the week prior, the Little Giants traveled to Wittenberg searching for their first win in program history.

Coach Ryan Bowerman '11 took over the program earlier this year.

"The Adrian match was the first time any of our guys have played in a college volleyball match, so I think we all learned a lot," says Bowerman. "As a coach, there were a lot of technical and tactical details I could see that we needed to spend more time on at practice, but for our players, I think the biggest lesson was the competitive mindset necessary to compete against other good teams at this level. As much as we try to simulate game situations in practice, there is really no substitute for the real game experience that you get from competing against another team."

In their first match, the Little Giants dropped a close first set to Wittenberg 21 to 25. Wabash rebounded in the second set, picking up the second set by a razor 25 to 23 margin. The match would bounce back and forth with Wabash losing the third set 17 to 25, only to come back to win the fourth and fifth sets 25 to 18 and 15 to 10.

Ricky Session 24', who produced eight kills and two aces in that first match, describes the team atmosphere leading up to the contest at Whittenberg.

"We had a chip on our shoulders for sure. I'll be the first to admit that the game against Adrian was a blowout," says Session. "I've talked with a couple of my teammates and they agreed that the hard loss against Adrian just pushes us to keep improving. It opened our eyes to the level of competition and lit a fire under us. We used that motivation and drive to really push through and battle back during the close game."

The team, which is composed of seven freshmen and two upperclassmen, is looking to establish a strong team culture for the future.

"Our team culture and mindset this season is all about growth. As a young team primarily made up of freshmen in a brand new program, we all

know there is a lot of growing to do, both on and off the court, and I've been extremely impressed with our team's commitment to that mindset so far," says Bowerman. "Every day, our team shows up to the gym wanting to be better than they were the day before. I think we're already seeing results from this in the short term each weekend when we compete, but I think instilling this mindset now will also serve our team well into the future of the program. Expecting improvement every day is becoming the norm for our team, and I think our guys will expect and demand that from the new student-athletes who come into the program in the future."

After an hour-long break, the teams took back to the court for a showdown that looked similar to their first match. This time however Wabash jumped out to a two-set lead, winning the first two sets 25 to 13 and 25 to 23. Whittenberg came roaring back to even the match at two sets apiece, picking up the third and fourth sets 25 to 13 and 25 to 14. The Little Giants truly showed what "Wabash Always Fights" means, pulling out the fifth set by a score of 15 to 9.

Both Coach Bowerman and Session mentioned Luke Wallace as an integral part of the team's

leadership.

"Luke Wallace has been a team leader from the very beginning," says Session. "He has experience with the process of college athletics and what it means to be a student-athlete beyond the rest of the team. On our team, we sometimes might not always have the right mindset or resilience due to being mostly freshmen. Luke helps push us to go beyond why we think we can go and always work harder."

This young Little Giants team has their eyes firmly set on the future.

"Our goal is just to continue to grow and get better every day," says Bowerman. "Even in our losses against a very good Fontbonne team this past weekend, we were able to identify a lot of areas of improvement in addition to other areas that still need a lot of work. If we can continue to stay eager to improve every day that we're in the gym, it's going to be fun to look back at the end of the season to see how far we've come in our first year."

The team's next doubleheader will be on February 21st, 2021 when they will travel to Baldwin Wallace University to compete in another doubleheader.



