



## NIL comes to Wabash



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Vinny Buccilla '25 dribbles in the paint while Noah Hupmann '25 prepares to set a screen while playing against Kenyon on January 18, 2025, at Chadwick Court. Both athletes already have an NIL agreement with Scarlet Banners Collective LLC.

ETHAN WALLACE '25  
SPORTS EDITOR

Just a few weeks after partnering with Opendorse to provide support services to student-athletes looking to capitalize on their name, image or likeness (NIL) for monetary gain, Wabash College and the community have taken major strides into the NIL landscape. While there is a very complicated set of regulations to navigate, Wabash occupies the forefront of Division III for NIL opportunities.

In 2021, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) announced they would no longer prohibit athletes from profiting off of their name, image or likeness. While no longer prohibited, NIL agreements are still heavily regulated. Athletes are required to declare all NIL activity and to comply with a number of policies.

The most important stipulation for engaging in NIL activity is that student-athletes cannot be paid for their athletic performance, but must provide non-athletic services in return for compensation. Unlike the Division I model where institutions directly pay student-athletes for their participation, Division III colleges are extremely limited in what they can do to advance

NIL. Instead, small colleges like Wabash are able to provide educational materials.

"It's different from what a lot of people are probably reading right now on ESPN," said Director of Athletics and Recreation Matt Tanney '05. "[Division I] is going to a revenue share model. Institutions will start paying athletes directly... It's a different model from what we're living in."

This system has made marketing the primary source of NIL engagement in DIII.

There are two main avenues for college athletes to engage in NIL at the Division III level. Wabash now has both avenues available.

The first option is a school-sponsored NIL marketplace. Wabash's new marketplace is operated through Opendorse and can be accessed at the Wabash Athletics web page under the "NIL" tab. Opendorse specializes in providing NIL services to help student-athletes navigate the process of monetizing their name, image and likeness. Wabash's partnership with Opendorse, which began in November, became one of more than a dozen Division III colleges to adopt an Opendorse NIL marketplace.

Opendorse does not fund NIL

deals with students, but instead facilitates NIL engagement, by providing support services. Opendorse operates as an established and reputable organization provides aid to student-athletes to prevent infractions against the strict guidelines laid out by the NCAA.

"The reason for [partnering with] Opendorse as a third party is risk mitigation," said Tanney. "The NCAA doesn't care if it's a \$50 appearance at a birthday party or if it's free pizza for the season; if the student-athlete is not in compliance, then bad things could happen to that student-athlete. We're in the opportunity business, but we're also in the risk mitigation business. Because we care about our students first as students. We care about our students as athletes second."

Participation in the marketplace is optional, and student-athletes must decide to opt-in before a potential deal can be organized through Opendorse. The newness of the marketplace means that only a handful of athletes have begun interacting with it. It remains to be seen how common participation will be for Wabash athletes in the future.

"We've had a small number of

students that have sort of activated their accounts," said Tanney. "It's only been rolled out here for roughly a month. So, we're still in the early days of it."

Apart from the financial benefits, Opendorse offers student-athletes valuable education that will help them develop skills beyond athletics.

"I was really attracted to the Opendorse partnership because of the student-development part," said Dean for College Advancement Michelle Janssen. "It's an opportunity to learn from professionals who are doing this throughout the whole ecosystem of NCAA. They're working with Division I athletes all the way down to Division III, and they're coaching and helping student-athletes learn how to present themselves in compelling ways that would translate to how they might portray themselves on their LinkedIn profile for the first destination, or how they might market them in other spaces once they're professionals."

The second option for NIL engagement is the establishment of an NIL collective.

Scarlet Banners Collective LLC is a new alumni-run organization that will raise and distribute funds to create NIL opportunities for Wabash student-athletes. As an NIL collective, Scarlet Banners is completely independent from the College. Unlike Opendorse, Scarlet Banners is not a support service, but instead offers NIL deals to student-athletes.

Scarlet Banners was founded under the leadership of three alumni; John Cox '00, Jack Davidson '22 and Andy Rankin '98.

"Scarlet Banners exists to strengthen Wabash's athletic programs and support its student-athletes by creating direct, meaningful NIL opportunities," said Rankin. "What makes our approach unique is the Wabash community itself – a passionate and dedicated network of alumni, parents and supporters who are committed to the success of Wabash men in all areas of life. Our purpose is to mobilize that support to help retain talented students and elevate Wabash's profile, while distributing 100% of contributions directly to student-athletes in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations."

While Scarlet Banners will not make Wabash the first Division III college with an NIL collective, it will be one of only a handful of small colleges with an NIL collective. As a NIL collective, Scarlet Banners is still accountable to all applicable NIL regulations. They can collect funds to provide NIL services to student-athletes, but must receive a service before offering payment to an athlete.

"As far as fundraising goes, we are just launching," said Rankin. "We have selectively made a handful of alumni aware of Scarlet Banners. That is the source of our current funds. We are currently in the phase of a broad, advertised launch. Social media, limited advertising and a webpage have been or are imminently being launched."

Student-athletes who enter into an NIL agreement with Scarlet Banners would receive money in exchange for making a promotional post on social media or for wearing branded apparel. Scarlet Banners has already pursued NIL agreements with a handful of Wabash athletes. Two of them are Noah Hupmann '25 and Vinny Buccilla '25, senior members of the basketball team.

"This NIL deal will definitely impact me as a student-athlete because it shows that my athletic work has paid off," said Buccilla. "In a sense because I'm being compensated for those actions and also being able to represent Wabash in a positive way. Being able to make some money is also super exciting and something I have always wanted to do."

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## President Trump takes office as 47th president

CONNOR PHILLIPS '28  
STAFF WRITER

Following a divisive and competitive campaign season, Donald J. Trump was inaugurated as the 47th President of the United States on January 20. He is only the second president to do so for his second non-consecutive term, the first since Grover Cleveland in 1892. The historical significance didn't end there – it was also the first to be inside due to extreme cold since 1985, when Reagan was inaugurated for his second term.

This historic event drew roughly 250,000 people to Washington, D.C., to witness the inauguration, and 24.6 million people tuned in to watch it, the highest since Obama's first inauguration in 2009. An unprecedented 25,000 members of law enforcement were deployed to the capital to keep it secure.

**"There's a lot of uncertainty heading our way, and I think it's important at this moment for people to figure out how they will cope with it."**

- Professor of Political Science Shamira Gelbman

The first 100 days are considered some of the most important in a presidential term. President Trump, in his first term, used his first 100 days to appoint Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court and undo many of Obama's economic and environmental policies.

"The first 100 days of a president's term are very important – they determine the direction that the president wants to go," said Gavinn Alstlott '25. "Trump's executive orders signal that he is focused and determined to set the agenda without delay. He wants to take America back from the Democratic left."

"It's not unusual for a President to come in and issue a bunch of executive orders on day one. It is unusual for it to be quite this sweeping and to touch things that previously seemed untouchable or beyond the scope of what presidents can do on their own," said Professor of Political Science Shamira Gelbman.

**"The first 100 days of a president's term are very important – they determine the direction that the president wants to go."**

- Gavinn Alstlott '25

As most Republicans and Democrats await President Trump's actions, they hope to be unified under his second term. Following a divisive campaign season, there are concerns of that division spilling into everyday life.

"We don't really know the scope or impact of changes coming at us in the coming weeks and months," said Gelbman. "There's a lot of uncertainty heading our way, and I think it's important at this moment for people to figure out how they will cope with it."

Trump's changes varied greatly, as he signed nearly 200 executive orders in the first 12 hours of his presidency. Some orders of note included an executive order pausing the TikTok ban for at least 75 days to allow his Attorney General to investigate whether there is a way to keep the app while protecting American private information. He also signed an executive order to undo 78 of Biden's executive orders.

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## NIL DO'S AND DON'TS

### DO:

1. Follow state laws and NCAA guidance
2. Use Opendorse the platform for disclosing ANY NIL deal, *even if the deal is acquired outside of the platform*
3. Come to Opendorse student-athlete education sessions, starting with our first on *Thursday, Jan. 30 at 7 pm* in Salter Hall
4. Take advantage of the opportunities and ask questions!

### DON'T:

1. Enter into agreement that:
  - A. requires no action on your part
  - B. contingent on your enrollment at Wabash
  - C. is pay for play
2. Use Wabash's intellectual property (*including a jersey*) without permission from our Communications and Marketing Department
3. Forget to disclose every activity
4. Assume something is okay or true because you see it on social media, an alum shared it with you, etc.

# NIL comes to Wabash

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At least through their early months, Scarlet Banners will focus on creating NIL opportunities for the football and basketball programs. Scarlet Banners also allows anyone to make an NIL donation to any of Wabash's 12 varsity sports and to any individual athletes.

"As our fundraising increases, we will consider addressing other sports, but football and basketball are initially our primary focus," said Rankin. "The reason for this is because those are the two most public-facing sports at Wabash. They drive the most attendance and the most engagement with students, parents, alumni and general Wabash fans."

"When I was approached about being a part of Scarlet Banners, it was a no-brainer for me," said Davidson. "My athletic experience at Wabash was incredible — and I've always wanted to be able to give back and help future Wabash athletes have a similar experience. I believe Scarlet Banners will further enhance the experience for Wabash athletes and reward these student-athletes for the immense value they bring to the College."

Anyone seeking more information on Scarlet Banners can contact them at [mafia@scarletbanners.com](mailto:mafia@scarletbanners.com).

While NIL continues to spread through all levels of NCAA athletics, it is still unclear what scale it will take in Division III. As time



Opendorse provides similar NIL services for other Colleges and Universities for NCAA athletes.

COURTESY OF OPENDORSE

moves on, Wabash and its community will need to approach NIL with careful thinking to protect the unique student-athlete experience that is held in high esteem.

One of the questions surrounding NIL is how it might affect recruitment. The NCAA prohibits institutions from using NIL for recruitment. One such violation recently took place at Florida State University where a prospect was promised an NIL deal by an NIL collective in return for his enrollment at FSU.

However, knowledge that an institution has a strong structure for educating and supporting student-athletes will still have an impact on how potential students make their decision. Recruits can make their decision to come to Wabash, understanding that there are resources available, but cannot be contacted about any deal before they are enrolled.

"We talk about NIL in the same way that we talk about our new strength and conditioning coach, David Williams, and the investments we've made in the weight room," said Tanney. "It's a resource that not a lot of [small

colleges] have available to students."

But due to the restrictions placed on use of NIL in recruitment, it is unlikely that Wabash's developments in NIL will have major implications in attracting talented athletes. At the Division I level, NIL money has been used to attract talented athletes to make moves that some believe is harmful to the integrity of college athletics. But with DIII's restriction on performance-based NIL deals, small colleges are protected from the often transactional NIL deals that lead to student-athletes utilizing the transfer portal to receive bigger payouts.

"Certainly, we've had students go on and use their athletic experience professionally," said Faculty Athletic Representative Professor V. Daniel Rogers. "But, the idea that we're going to have the next Sheduer Sanders here is probably not feasible. And the notion that we can collect a bunch of NIL money, and that's going to happen, and then that would be good for us, I'm not convinced. I really believe in the Wabash College student-athlete, scholar-athlete

model and I want to make sure that I'm doing whatever I can to help support and encourage that kind of model to prosper because I think DIII is uniquely situated to play that role."

Another concern surrounding the NIL availability at Wabash is that NIL may begin to compete with organized fundraising campaigns from the Advancement Office. If too many donors choose to contribute funds directly to individuals in athletic programs through NIL engagement, they would circumvent the usual donation process that creates opportunity on campus. This would pose a serious risk to the quintessential Wabash experience, that relies on alumni donations.

"I have an amazing team of people and an amazing group of trustees who work with me year in and year out to secure the promise of a Wabash education for our amazing young men," said Janssen. "And every year the work begins anew...We have a grand tradition of alumni philanthropy and philanthropy in general. I wonder [how might this be] butting up against that tradition."

Apart from the potential impact on institutions, mismanagement of NIL opportunities could have serious repercussions for student-athletes. In this light, the College will continue to focus on educating students to avoid the dangers of engaging in NIL.

"An education-based approach is what we have here," said Tanney. "Because I want a student that engages in this type of activity to understand what that means. Let's say somebody gets a \$500 NIL deal. They think, 'great,' and then they go spend that \$500. Well, guess what? [They're] going to have to pay taxes on that. There's a whole ecosystem built around this type of activity that if you go into it blind and you don't know what you're doing, you really set yourself up for problems. We encourage all of our athletes to go through this — if you're going to sign a deal, you need to have somebody that knows what they're looking at. Look at it because you're entering into an agreement or a contractual relationship with a third party."

The question of how NIL will affect Wabash is one that will be answered over the next several years, however a careful approach will provide the best safeguard against the damages that mishandled NIL behavior has inflicted on other institutions.

Student-athletes seeking more information are encouraged to attend the Opendorse informational presentation on January 30 at 7 p.m.

## 2025 ORR FELLOWS ANNOUNCED



### Denison Parking – Andres Peralta '25

*"I'm excited to join Orr and think it will be the perfect jumpstart for my career. The things I'm probably looking forward to the most is the opportunity to learn a ton and all the new people I'm going to meet. That being said, my mom is definitely the most pumped of all because I got a job."*

### Steel Benefit Services – Ben Wallace '25

*"The Orr Fellowship to me is a great way to advance my career, gain connections and learn new skills. In addition to being partnered with a company for a job, Orr Fellowship will allow me to learn new skills and enhance my career. I am looking forward to meeting all the other fellows and creating lifelong friendships."*



### Model1 – Mark Stolte '25

*"The Orr Fellowship is a wonderful opportunity to work in the Indianapolis area with like-minded individuals that share the same hunger and interest in professional development as me. I am beyond excited to dabble in finance, data and sales."*

### Applied Research Institute – Olivier Tuyishime '25

*"This fellowship means that I can continue to be close to my family, friends and the Wabash community. I am excited to come back on campus and to share about my experiences in the program after I graduate. I more importantly want to help even larger numbers of Wabash men to be competitive for these types of opportunities."*



### Elate – Ryan Papandria '25

*"I am excited about the Orr Fellowship because they emphasize community and career development in similar ways that Wabash does. This, along with the ability to get work experience in Indianapolis, my hometown and start my career are some of the main reasons why I felt Orr was right for me."*

### Bridge Builder Strategies – Seth Acero '25

*"The Orr Fellowship is a continuation of development that has begun since I first arrived at Wabash. Not only do I get to do what I love and help nonprofits, but I'm also granted the opportunity to grow my professional skillset so that I can create more impact for myself and the communities I help in the future. This provides me with a chance to be a genuine Wabash man for the rest of my days."*



### Warehouse Services, Inc. – William Morris '25

*"As the only Evansville Orr fellow from Wabash, I am excited to represent Wabash in southern Indiana and connect with the other fellows that are part of this expansion to Evansville. Being the first cohort in Evansville is an opportunity of a lifetime and I'm ready for the challenges that come with it."*

# News around the world

## President Trump

JACKSON GOODYEAR '27  
STAFF WRITER

### United States and China

The international social media platform, TikTok, was restored to service in the United States on January 19 after President Trump promised to extend the deadline for the ban of the app. TikTok is owned by the Chinese company ByteDance. Chinese companies such as ByteDance are required to share data with the Chinese government, allowing the possibility of the Chinese government having access to millions of Americans' information via TikTok. The Supreme Court unanimously upheld the federal ban for TikTok on January 17, forcing the app to shut itself down. The ban required the parent company ByteDance to sell TikTok to an American owned company. ByteDance was unsuccessful in selling TikTok before January 19, solidifying its demise. This all changed when President Trump announced that he would sign an executive order in regards to the ban on his inauguration day of January 20th. The executive order has extended the period that ByteDance has to sell TikTok. TikTok restored itself in response to Trump's comment. Trump's executive order has now given ByteDance 75 more days to find an American buyer, keeping TikTok accessible to Americans for the time being.



COURTESY OF NBC

**Banning TikTok began during President Trump's first stint in office, but his recent executive order extends the ban period.**

### Iraq

The Iraqi Parliament passed three laws on January 21, that give Islamic courts major authority over citizens' family matters. The laws give court officials more power in the areas of marriage, divorce and inheritance. The laws are backed by many conservative Shiite lawmakers who are determined to reduce

Western influence on Iraq. One of the most controversial implications of the laws is the ability for clerics to rule in the courts based on their own interpretation of Islamic law. This allows clerics to decrease the minimum age for legal marriage, which was previously 18 years old. Some interpretations of Islamic law set the minimum age as early as nine years old. The new laws have received fierce pushback by other lawmakers and the public. Some lawmakers that were present are claiming that the parliamentary session was illegitimate and that half of parliament did not vote. This resulted in chaos and frustration inside the parliamentary chamber. Many activists now claim that the new laws violate the 1959 Iraqi Personal Status Law, which had given safeguards for women in Iraq.



COURTESY OF AP

**Protesters gather to demonstrate against a proposed law to permit underage female marriage on August 8, 2024, in Baghdad, Iraq. Underage female marriage is a key controversial aspect of the recent laws passed by the Iraqi Parliament.**

### Italy

Libyan warlord Ossama Anjem was arrested in Italy on January 19 on a warrant issued from the International Criminal Court (ICC). Anjem is a part of the Special Defense Force (SDF), a Libyan militia that has been active in the decade long Libyan civil war. Anjem was responsible for the oversight of many detention centers inside of Libya. Many of these detention centers have been reported for abuse by human rights groups. This prompted the ICC to issue the warrant for Anjem's arrest. Italian authorities executed the arrest in the city of Turin after Anjem had been in town for a Juventus-Milan soccer match on January 18. The arrest sparked criticism from the SDF and praise from many human rights groups including the Libya

Crimes Watch. The warrant by the ICC is one of a handful that have been issued in the past year against Libyan officials guilty of human rights violations.



COURTESY OF BBC

**The warrant issued for Ossama Anjem originated from the International Criminal Court. These warrants bind member-countries to arrest individuals with an active warrant.**

### Tanzania

A sample in northern Tanzania has tested positive for the highly infectious Marburg disease. The World Health Organization first reported an outbreak of the disease on January 14 in the Kagera region of Tanzania. The outbreak claimed the lives of eight people. The Marburg disease is known to be 88% fatal in untreated cases. Symptoms include fever, muscle pains and vomiting. The disease originates in fruit bats and can spread among people quickly through bodily fluids and contaminated surfaces. The outbreak is the second in the region since 2023. This outbreak comes after substantial outbreaks in Tanzania's bordering country of Rwanda. Rwanda had reported an outbreak in late September which led to 15 deaths and over 50 cases of the Marburg virus. Groups such as the WHO are now helping Tanzania control this new outbreak of Marburg.



COURTESY OF WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

**The World Health Organization help to handle outbreaks such as the most recent outbreak of Marburg disease in Tanzania.**

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Trump also had many things to say about border policy. Trump declared a national emergency on the southern border, allowing the deployment of the armed services and National Guard to respond. In addition, Trump clarified the purpose of the military's role in border security as to "prioritize the protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the United States along our national borders" (NPR). Trump also signed an executive order calling to build more of the wall, end the catch-and-release program and replace it with having refugees wait in Mexico.

Also with immigration in mind, Trump signed an executive order ending birthright citizenship. The order argues that the 14th Amendment, which enshrines birthright citizenship, does not extend to individuals born in the country but is not "subject to the jurisdiction thereof."

**"Trump's executive orders signal that he is focused and determined to set the agenda without delay.**

- Gavinn Alstlott '25

Trump also signed an executive order making it the United States policy to recognize only two genders — male and female.

Many of his executive orders have drawn support or criticism from individuals on different sides of the political aisle.

"I hope to see Trump unite the country more than divide it," said Alstlott. "He has all of the tools and experience that comes with a first administration. He has a house, senate and conservative Supreme Court that will make his presidency successful. Trump's second administration may be one of the most important in my lifetime."

# This week at Wabash



## Friday, Jan. 24

12:00 p.m. | Celebration of Student Research

## Saturday, Jan. 25

12:15 p.m. | Community Center Groundbreaking

## Wednesday, Jan. 29

7:00 p.m. | Basketball vs. D\*\*\*\*\* @ Chadwick Court

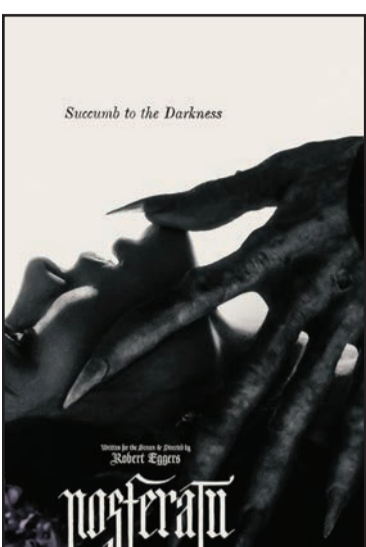
## Thursday, Jan. 30

8:00 p.m. | John Charles Lecture @ Hays Science Hall

## Friday, Jan. 31

12:00 p.m. | Casino Night @ Lilly Library

## 'Nosferatu' review: Reinvented, and the best version yet



COURTESY OF IMDB.COM

**BEN WALLACE '25**  
STAFF WRITER

"Nosferatu" delivers some of the year's most striking visuals and performances, offering a fresh and compelling take on the classic tale. As the third big-screen adaptation of "Nosferatu," director Robert Eggers reinvents the story with his signature visual flair and a reimagined narrative focus, making it feel both new and invigorating.

The film opens with a foreboding atmosphere, immersing viewers in its eerie world as Thomas, a real estate agent, sets out to meet his mysterious client, Orlock. It quickly becomes clear that the neighboring towns of Transylvania live in fear of Orlock, establishing a haunting and ominous tone around Thomas's journey.

The story closely follows Thomas and his wife, Ellen. While Thomas serves as Orlock's real estate agent, Ellen harbors the secret that she is possessed by a demon which is a revelation that deepens as the film unfolds.

When Orlock arrives in Wisborg, the home of Ellen and Thomas, a mysterious disease begins to spread. This leads to one of the most striking shots of the year: a massive shadow of Orlock's hand ominously stretching across the city, perfectly capturing the film's eerie atmosphere.

Eggers, known for his dark and brooding style in previous films, masterfully applies his aesthetic to "Nosferatu," creating an atmosphere that perfectly complements the film's haunting tone.

In the original 1922 film, the boat ride from Transylvania served as a significant narrative element. In this new adaptation, however, it takes a backseat as Eggers shifts the focus to the relationships between Ellen and Orlock, as well as Ellen and Thomas. This change deepens the emotional stakes and brings viewers closer to the characters, making their struggles and connections more impactful.

Another change that this film makes is in the design of Count Orlock. When you first meet Orlock in the movie, he is hidden by light, almost as if Eggers wants his new design to be a big reveal. I believe it works, adding a haunting presence to the aura around Orlock.

Every performance in this film is magnificent, but Bill Skarsgård as Orlock and Lily-Rose Depp as Ellen are the undeniable standouts. Skarsgård's transformation, including his altered voice, adds to the character's unsettling presence. His brilliant physical acting, from his haunting posture to his deliberate movements, makes Orlock unforgettable. Every time he appears on screen, a sense of dread immediately takes hold.

Lily-Rose Depp is equally remarkable, delivering a captivating performance, especially in the scenes where her character is possessed. She commands every moment, making her portrayal both chilling and deeply compelling.

If you're expecting a traditional horror film, this might not fit the bill. It leans more toward being innovative and eerie rather than outright scary. While it is technically a horror movie, even those who typically avoid the genre might find it watchable without being too frightened.

This movie became one of my favorite films of the year, and in my opinion, it surpasses the two previous iterations of "Nosferatu" by a wide margin. However, when I watched it with my friends, they weren't as impressed. I recognize that my admiration for Eggers' visual style played a significant role in shaping my high opinion of the film. While "Nosferatu" may not align with everyone's personal taste, I'm confident it's a remarkable work that will only grow more appreciated with time.

### FINAL VERDICT: 4.5/5 WALLYS



## College Football Playoff roundup

**HAI DEN DIEMER-MCKINNEY '26**  
STAFF WRITER

After much anticipation to etch another milestone in college football history, the first ever 12-team playoff had its fair share of lopsided blowouts and all-time classics. From the hostile homefield environments to the iconic New Year's Six venues, the fans from every team brought the energy to each matchup with their desire to win a national championship. Following a month of postseason play, one program stands atop the college football world.

**First Round:** The action got underway with an in-state rivalry between #10 Indiana and #7 Notre Dame. The Irish defense forced the Hoosiers to be one-dimensional and an explosive 98-yard rush-

ing touchdown by Notre Dame's Jeremiah Love highlighted a dominant run game that carried the Irish to a 27-17 victory. The following day, #11 SMU entered the whiteout in Happy Valley to challenge #6 Penn State. From the opening kick, SMU's quarterback Kevin Jennings was rattled by Penn State's stout defense with three first half interceptions and two of them being returned for touchdowns. From there the Nittany Lions controlled the ball on offense and cruised to win 38-10.

The showdown between #12 Clemson and #5 Texas proved to be the most competitive, as the ACC champions wanted to show the SEC runner-ups they belonged with an opening touchdown drive. However, the Longhorns outscored

the Tigers 28-3 for the remainder of the first half and reclaimed control. Clemson managed to bring it within a touchdown in the fourth quarter, but Texas's running back Jaydon Blue put it away with a 77-yard touchdown, advancing to the quarterfinal with a 38-24 victory. To wrap up the first round, #8 Ohio State took out their anger against #9 Tennessee after falling to rival Michigan for the fourth year in a row. The Buckeyes started with three straight touchdowns, then put up another three touchdowns in the second half to cruise to a 42-17 win. The first round of games were rather uncompetitive and the home field environments proved to be a huge advantage.

### Quarterfinals

**Quarterfinals:** The quarterfinals kicked off on New Year's Eve out west with #6 Penn State bringing its strong defense to #3 Boise State in the Fiesta Bowl. Penn State quarterback Drew Allar took advantage of his offensive lineman's protection with two early passing touchdowns. The Nittany Lion defense only had one goal going into this matchup, stopping running back and Heisman runner-up Ashton Jeanty. They set every edge and remained gap sound to force the Broncos to beat them through the air. Although Boise State made it a three point game in the third quarter, Penn State's Tyler Warren and Nicholas Singleton claimed a touchdown each to seal the victory, 31-14. The Peach Bowl between #5 Texas and #4 Arizona State turned out to be the most exciting game in the entire playoff, kicking off the New Year in thrilling fashion. It seemed all but over when the Longhorns were up 16 in the fourth quarter, but the Sun Devils, led by stud running back Cam Skat-

tebo, rallied all the way back to force overtime. ASU struck first in OT, but a clutch throw by Texas quarterback Quinn Ewers on 4th & 13 brought the game back to a 31-31 deadlock. Texas quickly scored a touchdown and two-point conversion in the second overtime, then an interception by defensive back Andrew Mukuba sealed the deal for the Longhorns in an all-time classic.

The most shocking result of this playoff was Ohio State showing no mercy towards #1 Oregon in the Rose Bowl, the only undefeated team in the nation up to that point. The Ducks were already down 34-0 before they could throw a single punch. Oregon couldn't stop Buckeye receiver Jeremiah Smith who caught seven passes for 187 yards and two touchdowns. Despite a few late touchdowns by the Ducks, it was too little too late as OSU strolled to a 41-21 win, punching their ticket to the semifinal. And as Notre Dame started the playoff, they finished the quarterfinal round in the Sugar

Bowl against #2 Georgia, who were without their starting quarterback. Defensively, the Irish rattled the Bulldogs backup quarterback Gunner Stockton, blitzing him all night. Although a slugfest to begin with, Notre Dame had one of the most unique three-play sequences you'll ever see—a strip sack which they recovered in the red zone, a touchdown pass, then a 98-yard kickoff return to open the second half. After scoring 17 points in 54 seconds, the Bulldogs couldn't find the endzone for the rest of the night and fell to the Irish, 20-3.

A key takeaway from the quarterfinals is that seeds one through four all lost. Even though three of those teams were underdogs, it seems the extended rest was a disadvantage, especially going against a team that had played a week before. In all fairness, the expansion was never about seeds #9-12 at face value, it was about seeds #5-8, and those were the four remaining teams we got for the semifinals.

### Semifinals and Finals

**Semifinals:** #7 Notre Dame and #6 Penn State were both carrying significant momentum going into their clash in the Orange Bowl. Although the game was slow through three quarters, the last 15 minutes of play consisted of two ties and three lead changes. Then when it seemed the game was headed to overtime, Penn State quarterback Drew Allar threw a costly interception with 33 seconds left. And like they've done all year, the Irish capitalized on their opponents' mistake as kicker Mitch Jeter nailed a 41-yard field goal at the buzzer to defeat the Nittany Lions, 27-24 and punch their ticket to the National Championship. Following this classic, #5 Texas found themselves in familiar territory at the Cotton Bowl, welcoming #8 Ohio State to Jerry World. For most of the night, the Longhorn defense was able to contain the Buckeyes' offensive weapons. However, Ohio State running back TreVeyon Hen-

derson took a 75-yard screen pass to the house just before the half to reclaim momentum. Then down 21-14, the Longhorns ran a pitch to the left side on 2nd & goal on the one-yard line that resulted in a seven yard loss. Then the following play, Ohio State linebacker Jack Sawyer stripped Texas quarterback Quinn Ewers, found the ball in his hands and took it all the way back for an 83-yard scoop and score to ice the game. Although a hard fought battle, the Buckeyes prevailed 28-14 and set their sights on Atlanta.

**National Championship:** After much adversity in the regular season and these playoffs, two teams remained for the right to be named national champion: #8 Ohio State and #7 Notre Dame. Although a heavy underdog, Notre Dame imposed their will early with a championship record 18-play touchdown drive to open the game. Unfortunately, that was the only luck the Irish could muster, as Ohio State's

offense had an answer for every coverage and quarterback Will Howard was wildly accurate going 17-21 passing (81%), setting a new championship record in conversion rate. Despite a desperate comeback, a missed field goal by the Irish in the fourth quarter left them little time for a miracle. Finally, the 3rd & 11 deep shot to Ohio State receiver Jeremiah Smith was a microcosm of the entire night—Notre Dame could not get off the field when it mattered, allowing the Buckeyes to go 9-12 on third down conversions. The Buckeyes bled out the rest of the clock and in a year where fans of the program were calling for Head Coach Ryan Day's job after his fourth consecutive loss to Michigan, they played to their ceiling in the playoff, finished the job with a 34-23 victory against Notre Dame and are your 2024-25 National Champions.

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# DIII goes pro in the Indoor Football League



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Former Wabash quarterback Liam Thompson '24 celebrates a walk in touchdown at the 129th Monon Bell Classicon Nov. 11, 2023 at Little Giant Stadium.

Elijah Greene '25  
PHOTO EDITOR

For almost every Division III athlete, playing past their four years as an undergraduate is a long shot at best. Most content themselves to enjoy their time participating in the sport they love, with the assumption that they will move on and join the world outside of athletics when they graduate. But for two Wabash football alumni, their dreams of playing professional sports have just been reignited.

Former Wabash quarterback Liam Thompson '24 and wide receiver Derek Allen '24 have both announced their signings to teams in the Indoor Football League (IFL). Thompson will battle for a quarterback position with the Bay Area Panthers in California, while Allen will compete for a spot with the Arizona Rattlers in Phoenix, AZ. Both players have been initially signed to their teams, but final roster decisions will be made closer to the league's opening day on March 30.

"I'm moving to Arizona to get a head start on training to prepare for camp on March 14," said Allen. "From there, I'll compete for my active roster spot and hope to make the team and play for the Rattlers in 2025."

"Obviously I want to get on the field, but also understand that I have to learn the game and earn that opportunity to do so," said Thompson. "I'm excited to learn from the coaching staff and other guys who have been in the league already."

Both Thompson and Allen will have their work cut out for them getting up to speed in the IFL. While still resembling the 11-on-11 format of the NCAA and NFL, the IFL is an eight-on-eight league, with its own peculiar rules and regulations. Played on a 50-yard field – shaped more like a hockey rink than a football field – the IFL places greater emphasis on speed, both in terms of actual game pace and in decision-making.

With a smaller field and fewer players, in-game decisions have to be made even quicker than in 11-on-11, resulting in a veritable influx of touchdowns. While a 40-point game in the NFL would be considered high-scoring, it's common to see IFL teams score upwards of 50 points per game.

It seems that landing in the IFL is a natural landing point for both alums, especially for Thompson. Well known for his electric scrambles and ability to create using his arm on offense at Wabash, Thompson's signature style of play will align well with the speed and action of the IFL. With 31 rushing touchdowns and 102 passing touchdowns over four years with the Little Giants, Thompson's ability to score plenty and often should serve him well in the Bay Area.

"I think development wise, [the IFL] is

a really good opportunity, because the decisions have to be made so quickly and the ball has to get out fast," said Thompson. "You don't see some of the things that you'll see in traditional college and NFL football. But there's also things that I think do translate directly to playing traditional 11-on-11, like making quick decisions to get the ball out and understanding the offense to a point where you can adjust to the speed of the game."

Allen was no stranger to a quick, explosive play in his time at Wabash either. From transforming simple tunnel screens into touchdowns to elevating over defenders for spectacular catches, Allen's tenure as a Little Giant was marked repeatedly with high-light reel-worthy plays. His top-end speed and agility could be enough to propel him into a roster spot with the Rattlers later in 2025.

"Playing in the IFL will give me an opportunity to get some more exposure and film and get my name out there to bigger teams," said Allen. "It will also just give me an opportunity to see what professional football looks like, and I'm excited for that."

Most Division III athletes rarely get to see the field professionally after their NCAA eligibility expires; even more rare is to have two players from the same graduating class both make it pro. Playing at higher collegiate divisions often includes more resources and exposure to professional teams, but neither Thompson nor Allen regretted their choice to remain at Wabash.

"I think I just realized what football can be, and definitely grew to love it that much more by staying at Wabash," said Thompson. "Just knowing that I have that degree from Wabash to fall back on, all the things I was able to learn, and just learning how to learn. Wabash puts you in a lot of situations to make you uncomfortable, but also to help you grow and learn. I had zero regrets about choosing to stay at Wabash. Definitely one of the best decisions I've ever made."

"Wabash helped prepare me for adversity and challenges by showing me that not everything is handed to you," said Allen. "It's a place that shows if you can get through four years at a challenging institution you can achieve any dream as long as you work for it. Without Wabash, I don't know where I would be today and I'm very thankful to be a Wabash alum."

If they both make their respective rosters this spring, Thompson and Allen could go from teammates to rivals when the Panthers play the Rattlers in Phoenix on May 10, 2025. Regardless of their new jersey colors, both of these Little Giants will always represent the scarlet and white of Wabash College.

# Ringo goes Redneck: "Look Up" review



COURTESY OF CLASH MAGAZINE

NATHAN ELLENBERGER '26  
STAFF WRITER

Yes, you read that right, not only is Ringo Starr still making music, he made a country album. The Beatles' drummer has maintained a steady output of solo material since the peak of his stardom in the 1960s, with "Look Up" coming as his 21st album.

While Ringo no longer has a songwriting superteam around him, this album is very much a collaboration with composer and producer T-Bone Burnett, who has writing credits on almost every track. "Look Up" also heavily features guest performances from the likes of Billy Strings, Molly Tuttle, Lucius, and Larkin Poe, who each contribute on several songs.

"Breathless" begins the record with a simple melody that lacks the irresistible catchiness of the few, but memorable, hits he penned for the Beatles. It's no "Octopus' Garden," but is redeemed by lightning-fast licks from alternative country and bluegrass guitarist Billy Strings.

"Look Up" is a strange track. So far, it has some acoustic country instrumentation, but the album hasn't given us real country songwriting yet. This one sounds less like Nashville and more like a roots-rock, adult alternative sound.

Finally, the third track, "Time On My Hands" sounds like a proper country ballad, and the rest of the album follows with it. This song hits you right away with mournful slide guitar and lonesome lyrics—there's still Ringo's trademark simplicity, but the country sound compliments it well.

"Never Let Me Go" is a solid blues number that puts the western in country/western with piercing harmonica. At this point, however, the repetitive lyrics and basic composition of 'Look Up' start to wear thin. There's nothing wrong with the music strictly speaking, but it's definitely the type of song that plays in a Food Network show when the host travels to Texas.

From here on out, many of the tracks blend into one another, with perhaps one or two

memorable qualities. Classic country tropes like sad slide guitar and duet vocals from Molly Tuttle make "I Live For Your Love" listenable, but not much else. I remember that there was fingerpicking in "Can You Hear Me Call," but not the quality of it. I couldn't tell you a single thing about "You Want Some" either.

However, there are some standout tracks, which are elevated by great guest performances. "Come Back" is yet another teary-eyed ballad, but redeems itself with many of my favorite country elements: uncredited mandolin from Stuart Duncan, ethereal backing vocals from Lucius and lonely whistling from Ringo that really gives it a retro warmth.

"Rosetta" is another track that's kept afloat by its guest stars. Billy Strings going electric and the droning altos of Larkin Poe help resurrect Ringo's psychedelic side.

The final two tracks are oddly the most thematically striking. "String Theory" is quintessentially "Ringo" with its peace and love philosophy, simple rhymes and vibration-based imagery. Out of the entire tracklist, this one feels the most like something he would have written for the Fab Four. To round things out, Ringo reflects on some of the hardships of his past on "Thankful," and fittingly tributes his wife for brightening his life. A good positive note to end on.

"Look Up" has many endearing qualities and clearly embodies Ringo's love for a genre he hasn't created as much music in. However, it's largely dragged down by how repetitive and boiler-plate its composition is. Normally, I expect a shorter album to be lean, filled with only the best possible songs that made the cut. Instead, 35 minutes feels kind of long.

While it's far from my favorite, I can't say there's something \*wrong\* with "Look Up". You could square dance to it, but I'm not putting it on next time I enjoy a cold beverage on my porch, which to me is the ultimate test.

**FINAL VERDICT:  
3/5 WALLYS**



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# Gilman success paves the way to the Dominican Republic for J.J. Lancaster '26

Elijah Wetzel '27  
FEATURES EDITOR

While most Wabash students returned to campus burdened by snowy weather and frigid temperatures, some began semesters abroad in countries all over the globe. One such student is J.J. Lancaster '26. Lancaster won a Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship, a federally-funded and nationally competitive financial award, to study abroad in Santiago, Dominican Republic, which will help further his study of Spanish, a language he has already excelled at in his studies at Wabash.

"J.J. has a good aptitude for Spanish, but he really goes above and beyond what's expected for a class," said Jane Hardy, Associate Professor of Spanish at Wabash and Lancaster's advisor. "He looks for videos and music in Spanish, and then he will learn the lyrics to the songs. He also looks for people he can interact with. He's what in language acquisition circles we would call a 'high-input generator.'"

In fact, it was his efforts outside the typical classwork that opened Lancaster's eyes to study abroad opportunities, and motivated him to look for a program in the Caribbean, a place he immediately gravitated toward because of the rich culture. An interest in culture is also what focused his attention on the Dominican Republic; its rhythmic music, vibrant dancing and smooth accent were especially attractive to him.

But despite Lancaster's growing mastery of Spanish and his clear love of Caribbean life, it

was not a foregone conclusion that his desire to study abroad would come to fruition. After a study abroad program in Chile fell through and finding no programs available in Puerto Rico, Lancaster thought he may be out of luck. But after hearing about the Gilman Scholarship, which could guarantee fund-

he won, he could come back to the United States and encourage younger students to pursue study abroad. Additionally, Lancaster tied in his personal goals to connect further with elements of his Latino identity.

"I'm actually part Latino," said Lancaster. "I don't really talk about it because I was

through short essays. His rationale had to be deeper than just wanting to spend a semester in a new country, and Lancaster communicated that especially well, said Wabash Fellowship Advisor Susan Albrecht, who has helped thirty Wabash men secure Gilman Scholarships since 2016.

"JJ was true to who he is and what he wants," said Albrecht. For the Gilman, it is important that you detail the specific reasons you've chosen your study abroad destination, and that you show what kind of representative of America you want to be while abroad in addition to what it is you want to learn about the local culture, history and language while you're there. J.J. really did a nice job with all of that."

With his scholarship in tow, Lancaster arrived in the Dominican Republic on January 1 and has begun living up to the aspirations he outlined in his application. On top of enjoying Dominican cuisine, coping with locals' hectic driving practices and participating in a dance class – salsa is an excellent way to get cardio in, he said – Lancaster is taking the opportunity to immerse himself fully in Spanish. He asked his host family to speak to him exclusively in Spanish, and spoke glowingly of conversing with fellow gym-goers, even when his brain was tired. Getting better is part of the fun, both in Crawfordsville and Santiago.

"It's like a puzzle to me, a game," said Lancaster. "I like to play the game of learning Spanish, specifically Caribbean

Spanish. It feels like I'm playing chess, trying to connect the dots."

Lancaster's experience reflects the greatest assets of study abroad. He is expanding his language skills, but also expanding his understanding of culture and taking on new perspectives. The chance to see the world in a new light is part of why Hardy encourages all students to travel abroad if at all possible.

"I want to encourage every student to find a way to go abroad," said Hardy. "Even if you can't go abroad for a semester, we've got some summer scholarships, scholarships for summer study abroad or at the very least look for a course with an immersion trip abroad. Get a passport and use it."

And students shouldn't count themselves out of scholarships that make it more financially viable to study abroad, Lancaster urged.

"I feel like anybody can do it," he said. "I know it's a pretty competitive scholarship and it's hard to get, but I think if you put in time and the mental strength to actually sit there and think about what you want to do, anybody can win it. And if you don't win it, don't stop looking for other scholarships."

Despite setbacks, Lancaster ultimately reached his goal through persistence and a passion for the language he was learning and the culture he wanted to learn first-hand. His reward? Mid-eighties and sun, all winter long.



COURTESY OF J.J. LANCASTER '26

Junior Lancaster poses in the Dominican Republic with fellow students in his study abroad program.

ing to make a semester in the Dominican Republic possible, Lancaster was determined.

"My first thought was, 'Ok, I'm gonna win this thing,'" said Lancaster

Lancaster focused his application on telling a story, expanding not only on his passion for the Spanish language and Dominican culture, but also going into detail about how, if

never connected to that part of my family, and so I feel like language is a way for me to get some connection with that other part of my identity."

Though it can be difficult to communicate one's motivations and purpose for going abroad, Gilman's application process required Lancaster to plumb deep into his reasoning for going abroad and communicate that

## MLK Day speaker: Attorney Angela B. Freeman



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

On Jan. 20, 2025 during Martin Luther King Jr. Day the Malcom Institute of Black Studies (MXIBS) invited Angela B. Freeman, a former geneticist at Eli Lilly and current partner at Barnes & Thornburg. Using her own life story, Freeman addressed how to succeed while being one of few or the only one of a minority group in the workplace.



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

"It doesn't have to be 'us or them' or 'me or you.' There is plenty of power, plenty of money and plenty of positions to go around," said Freeman in a Q&A following her talk in Salter Hall.



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Quinn Sholar '26, chairman of the MXIBS and one of the event's moderators, presents Freeman with a MXIBS sweatshirt.



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of conscience and comfort, but where he stands during challenge and controversy," said Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Freeman quoted this and several other lines from King's speeches and writings.

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The purpose of *The Bachelor* is to serve the school audience, including but not limited to administrators, faculty and staff, parents, alumni, community members and most importantly, the students. Because this is a school paper, the content and character within will cater to the student body's interests, ideas, and issues. Further, this publication will serve as a medium and forum for student opinions and ideas.

Although an individual newspaper, the Board of Publications publishes *The Bachelor*. *The Bachelor* and BOP receive funding from the Wabash College Student Senate, which derives its funds from the Wabash College student body.

Letters (e-mails) to the editor are welcomed and encouraged. They will only be published if they include name, phone, or e-mail, and are not longer than 800 words.

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*The Bachelor* is printed every Thursday at the Purdue Exponent in West Lafayette. It is delivered freely to all students, faculty, and staff at Wabash College. All advertising published in *The Bachelor* is subject to an established rate card. *The Bachelor* reserves the right to deny requests for publication of advertisements. Student organizations of Wabash College may purchase advertisements at half the listed rate.

*The Bachelor* is a member of the Hoosier State and Indiana Collegiate Press Associations

# Stay connected with the NAWM

## National Association of Wabash Men Board

Reply to this opinion at dostalr@wabash.edu

It's hard to believe how quickly your time at Wabash College flies by. From your first steps on campus to that bittersweet day of commencement – it all seems to happen in the blink of an eye. No matter where you are in that journey, there's something important to consider: while your time as a student at Wabash will eventually end, your relationship with this special institution does not have to. Wabash College is more than a place—it's a life-long brotherhood, a community built on shared values and a common mission.

That's where the National Association of Wabash Men (NAWM) comes in, ensuring that Wabash connections remain strong well beyond graduation day. Hopefully you've heard of the NAWM, the College's alumni association, at some point during your time on campus. And while you might know the name, you might not know what the NAWM actually is, or what it does, and why it should matter to you.

The NAWM's mission is simple yet vital: to support Wabash College by fostering relationships that help the College achieve its goal of educating men to think critically, act responsibly, lead effectively, and live humanely. In short, the NAWM works tirelessly to connect alumni, students, faculty, parents and friends of the College. Together, we advance several key goals:

1. **Strengthening Community:** By participating in regional alumni associations and class reunions, you maintain the bonds forged on campus and meet new members of the Wabash network.

2. **Spreading Wabash's Fame:** Alumni serve as the College's greatest ambassadors, bringing promising young men to Wabash and helping grow its reputation.

3. **Supporting Students:** From career mentoring to hosting internships, alumni give back by guiding the next generation of Wabash men toward meaningful lives and careers.

4. **Ensuring Financial Strength:** Alumni play a vital role in sustaining Wabash through annual giving, ensuring future students enjoy the same opportunities you do.

You might be asking yourself: how do I become a member of the NAWM? Essentially, the moment you graduate, you officially join its ranks. And from that point forward, engagement with Wabash means showing up, giving back and staying connected. It's your opportunity to stay involved with the Wabash community. To attend regional events. To volunteer your time. To mentor a student. To support Wabash with your gifts. There is a great responsibility that comes with representing your alma mater, and finding time to help those men that are following in your footsteps.

By remaining engaged as alumni, you continue to play a critical role in shaping Wabash's legacy and future. No matter what your future holds, even though you leave these classrooms, Wabash College will never leave you. You will always be a Wabash man. No matter where life takes you, the NAWM offers countless opportunities to stay connected and make a difference. Stay engaged, stay involved, and continue to live up to the ideals that Wabash has instilled in you. Because "Wabash Always Fights"—and so do its alumni.

Meanwhile, as you remain on campus as a student, think about the ways you can already contribute to this Wabash mission. Reach out to alumni. Take advantage of events presented by the college. Build your network. Help recruit the next generation of Wabash men.

The NAWM's Board of Directors will be on campus this weekend, and we hope to see you in class, at the Celebration of Student Research, or at the Community Center groundbreaking ceremony. We look forward to meeting you and to having you join our ranks. We can't wait to welcome you to the National Association of Wabash Men!



## HI-FIVES

### FIVE THINGS WORTHY OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

#### SHAKING, CRYING, THROWING UP

*Lo-Five to American Dunkin' Doughnuts chains for running out of supply across the country. Seems like America will be walking on Dunkin' for the foreseeable future.*

#### IF ALL YOUR FRIENDS WERE JUMPING OFF BRIDGES

*Lo-Five to the entire Trump family for launching individual "meme coins" moments after entering office. If history truly repeats itself, we'll see a "Trump Tuah" podcast before the month ends.*

#### NOW HIRING

*Lo-Five to former Feature's Editor Nathan Ellenberger '26 for studying abroad. Just goes to show what some people will do to get out of Bachelor layout night.*

#### LET'S ALL BE ADULTS HERE

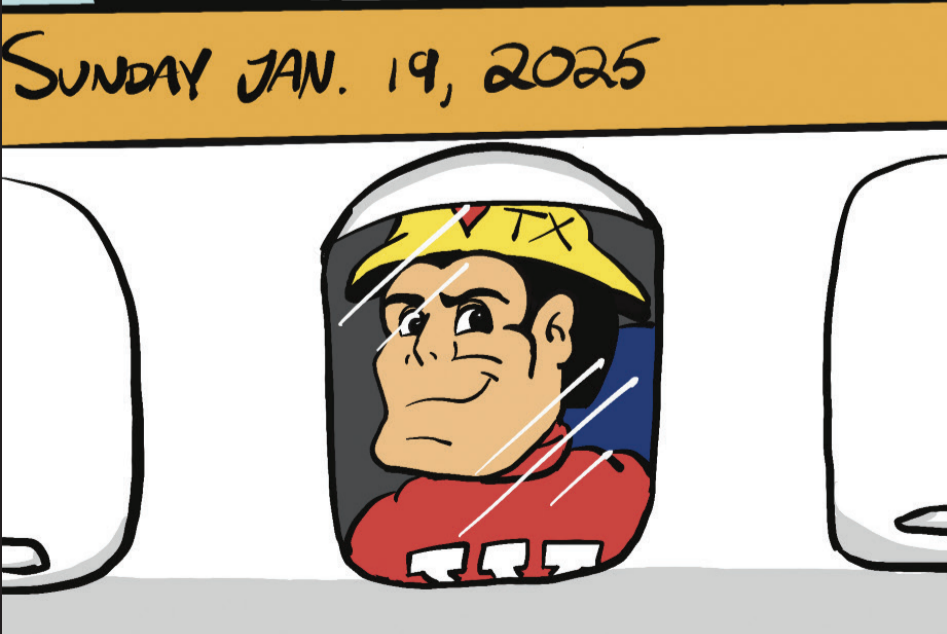
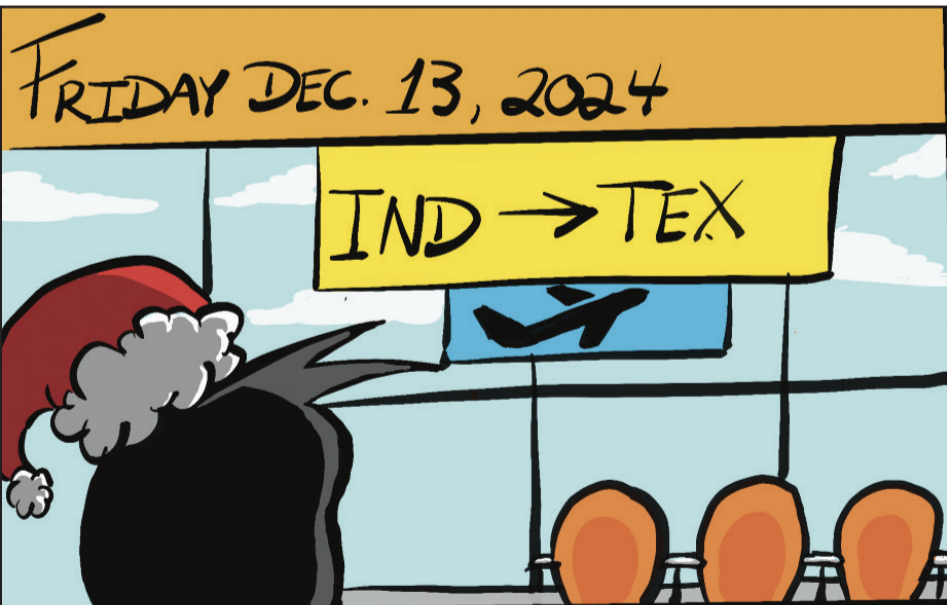
*Lo-Five to Wittenberg's head basketball coach for "rage quitting" during Wednesday's game. Sometimes, the Chadwick Crazies are just too hot to handle.*

#### GENTLEMEN RULE!

*Hi-five to Josh "Soup" Campbell for finally securing his missing backpack. Sometimes, the good guy wins in the end.*

# Beaches to blizzards

Comic by Drake Green '28



# Leeper's lunch: Banging booms at Brothers



Jackson Leeper '25

Reply to this opinion at [jcleeper25@wabash.edu](mailto:jcleeper25@wabash.edu)

What's up, bozos. I, Jackson Leeper, will be your host for the semester series of "Leeper's Lunch." Now, you may ask, "What is Leeper's Lunch? Who is Leeper and why does he have an article about lunch?" There are a lot of "mom and pop" shops and locally owned restaurants in the small town of Crawfordsville. For some reason, they get a bad rep. Plus, there are a lot of well-known chain restaurants that are safe bets to eat at. What I'm here to do is shine a light on these local restaurants and review their food! They might be small or look sketchy on the outside but they are hidden gems in the Athens of Indiana.

In short, if you like food, engage in big back behavior, and want to expand your culinary mind, this article is for you. But why, specifically, am I doing this? Well, I am a foodie. I have a reputation for gluttonous behavior and have been known to think about food constantly. I can slam a concerning amount of food and I enjoy the feeling of being full to the point of being sick. If that can't convince you, then you hate food but enough about me, let's get into the nitty-gritty.

The first restaurant that explored is one that most Wabash men know: Brothers Pizza. A lot of my peers have had their pizza as a lot of academic departments order from there, which is a sign that it is a damn good pizza.

When I was ordering from there, the first thing I noticed was their price. To get a large 14-inch cheese pizza, based on their menu, it is \$12.15 with an additional \$1.85 per topping. In my experience of pizza, that is cheaper than most, which I appreciate.

I have had their pizza before and I have not been disappointed before but I wanted to explore their menu. So, I asked what their "underrated items" are. In response, the worker at Brother's said their stuffed bread-

sticks and their grinders.

With that knowledge, I ordered a small pepperoni pizza, an order of their stuffed breadsticks, and a chicken parm grinder. For \$23, including the Wabash discount (BIG plus), that's getting a bang for your buck and I was about to bang this food based on how it was looking. The pizza was hot, the cheese was melted, and the pepperoni was crispy. At first taste, good balance of cheese and sauce with a hint of spice from the pepperoni. The crust was a little crunch, which I like, and had a little sweetness to it.

As I said, I've had their pizza so nothing mind-blowing but definitely would make me come back here again. The grinder was good as well. The chicken was cooked nicely and was seasoned well. However, the chicken wasn't fried but it was baked, which is okay but I prefer my chicken parm's fried but I'm not knocking it down because of my personal preference. The sauce and cheese complimented the chicken well and it was held together on a nice toasted bread. Would I get this grinder again? Maybe not but I would definitely try the other grinders due to the one I had.

Now, my favorite thing that I had was actually the stuffed breadsticks. You can choose between bacon or pepperoni with cheese on the inside and I choose pep. The breadsticks were covered with parmesan cheese and had a side of marinara (they also had a selection of dippings). What made me really like these sticks was the texture. I'm very much a texture person and the breadsticks made me do my happy dance with their texture. The cheese was melted but still squishy enough to have a nice bite to them. The pepperoni gave a meaty flavor with some kick. The bread encasing this glorious Italian combination was toasted and was a vehicle to tie everything together.

With all that being said, I give Brother's Pizza an 8.3 out of 10 burbers (knowers will know). So, if you're looking to feast on some good-ass pizza with a few complimenting appetizers while being easy on the wallet, this place is a go-to. Prepare for next week as my gluttonous desires take me to a sandwich shop that even I haven't been to before.

## Wally's wall: 2025 National Championship

### The Prompt:

What do you think about the 2025 National Championship? How do you feel about Notre Dame's run?

#### John Schnerre '26

Notre Dame's run to the National Championship has been nothing short of incredible. After a horrifying loss in Week Two, the Irish have rallied against seemingly insurmountable odds to overcome three straight Top 10 opponents. Regardless of the final statistics and the results of the game, Notre Dame has accomplished much more with much less raw talent than the Buckeyes.

#### Richard Ballentine '25

I don't watch football, and my grandfather was not a fan of Notre Dame. So, suffice to say I am not happy. Anyways, have a great day.

#### Shad Wilson '27

I have never rooted for the fighting Irish more than in the movie Rudy.

#### Justin Gineris '25

Literally every key group on the team has been decimated by injuries, which doesn't help when you're going against an already much more talented team in OSU, who has double digit 5 star players compared to ND's roster with none. Yet, they persist and somehow have found their way into the national championship game.

Towards the end of the season this has become the first ND team characterized by swagger and explosiveness in my lifetime, signaling a major shift in the program under the dynamic leadership of (THE DAWG) Marcus Freeman....

#### Andrew Dever '25

You'll have my reply post game...

Post Game: OH... IO!!!

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## Embrace tradition, discover potential



Tanner Quackenbush '26

Reply to this opinion at [tjquacke26@wabash.edu](mailto:tjquacke26@wabash.edu)

As the spring semester commences, it is time to begin the hallowed tradition in which a group of Wabash men will embark upon a semester-long journey that culminates with their initiation into one of the most recognizable organizations in collegiate America. This semester, the Sphinx Club looks to continue in a long line of outstanding Rhyne classes, and it is on you to make that happen.

As a current Sophomore or Junior, you qualify for the distinguished role of Wabash Rhyne. This means you can apply to be a member of our organization, regardless of any other affiliation, be it house, club et cetera. We in the Sphinx Club strive to better ourselves, those around us and the campus community as a whole. Thus, finding the most dedicated and enthusiastic individuals for Rhyneship is pivotal to our recruitment process.

What is Rhyneship, you might ask? That is a question that has plagued the minds of Wabash men for years. Only the great Sphinx knows the truth. By walking his

path, Wabash men, for generations, have come to build a deeper connection with Wabash's traditions, community and history. Through the Rhyneship process, you will discover new aspects of yourself, your peers and your campus.

If you are interested, we encourage you to submit an application. Many individuals have been unsure in the past and have come through the process and made life-long friends and memories along the way. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to any Club member; we are here to help. Be curious. Find out. Discover your true potential.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY WABASH COLLEGE  
Alex Ngaba '24 never failed to have a smile on his face while serving Wabash as a Rhyne in the fall of 2022.

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## What should you write about?

Interested in writing an opinion? Here are some ideas:

Do you like or dislike aspects of Donald Trump's ongoing presidency? Upset at state, local, or campus politics?

Was there a Bachelor review that really yanked your chain? House music on campus letting you down?

Have a particular take about the National Championship? Or something about sportsmanship at basketball games?

## Track & field gets out to a fast start

Brayden Curnutt '25 topples indoor 5,000-meter record in early outing



COURTESY OF TYLER CURNUTT

Brayden Curnutt '25 finished first in NCAA Division III Great Lakes Regional Meet with a time of 24:36.83. The meet was held on November 16, 2024, at the Blue River Cross Country Course in Shelbyville, Indiana. Curnutt finished the race 11 seconds ahead of second-place Luke Witvliet of Calvin University.

**ETHAN WALLACE '25**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Wabash track & field opened the new year with a pair of meets that featured no team scoring, but offered an early glimpse into how the team might perform later in the season. On January 11, the Little Giants traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio for the Mount St. Joseph Invitational. Then, on January 18, left for Bloomington, Illinois for the I-55 Meet at Illinois Wesleyan University.

The big story so far has been the early dominance of Brayden Curnutt '25. Following up on his dominance in the cross country season, Curnutt set a new school record of 14:24.55 in the 5,000-meter run, breaking the former record of 14:44.18 that Nick Boyce '15 set in 2015.

"With my early season success, I think it's hard not to look at what the season can be with a possible nationals appearance and what I can do at conference," said Curnutt. "But I think it's important to stay in the moment and to keep getting better each meet so I can put myself in

the best possible position to get into the meet."

For his performances, Curnutt received back-to-back honors as North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Indoor Distance/Mid-Distance Athlete of the Week. His time puts him at sixth in the nation for the 5k early on.

"Brayden has picked right up where he left off from Cross Country," said Head Track & Field Coach Clyde Morgan. "Coach McCreary has done a phenomenal job with him. His contribution to the team is major. He has shown the grit and grind that it takes to get to the national level and perform well."

Curnutt wasn't the only one to receive conference honors.

Carter Leininger '28, in his freshman season, finished the 60-meter dash with a time of 7.05 seconds at the Mount St. Joseph Invitational and was named NCAC Indoor Sprints/Hurdles Athlete of the Week.

Quinn Sholar '26 earned NCAC honors for throwing 17.17 meters at Mount St. Joseph. His toss was the 16th-farthest in the

nation this season.

"Knocking the rust off is always the hardest part about switching sports," said Sholar, who is moving into the track season after his football season. "As of right now, I'm throwing without expectations. I will say I am really happy and proud of what our throws squad is doing right now."

"Overall, I have been pleased with the work thus far from our young men," said Morgan. "We still have much to do. I would like to see the team as a whole get to the point where they are okay with being uncomfortable. I would like to see us handle life adversities better, and the track and field will take care of itself."

The team will continue their season on Friday, January 24 in Terre Haute, Indiana at the Rose-Hulman Friday Night Spikes meet. The annual gathering of excellent talent will provide another chance for the Little Giants to sharpen their skills against a strong field of competitors.

## Baker: Here's who standing out this wrestling season

**COLIN BAKER '25**  
STAFF WRITER

While most of the student body enjoyed the long break over the holidays, the wrestling team kept busy, competing in two events against the top teams in the country. The team traveled to Rhode Island to compete in the East Coast Duals, hosted by Johnson & Wales University. Wabash then faced off against the fourth-ranked team in the country, Johnson & Wales University, and the seventh-ranked team in the country, Baldwin Wallace University.

The team was back on the road a few weeks later, heading to Cedar Rapids, Iowa to compete in one of the biggest events of the year, the NWCA National Duals. During the event Wabash faced tough competition squaring up against three top-25 teams, the first-ranked team in the nation Wartburg College, the tenth-ranked team in the nation North Central College, and the 23rd-ranked team in the nation The University of Olivet.

With the season moving forward, there are some wrestlers that have stood out when contributing to the team's success and proving to be solid contenders in the upcoming postseason.

James Day '26 is one of the team's frontrunners, putting up an impressive performance in the first half of the season at 133 pounds. As a returning All-American, placing third in the country in 2024, it's no surprise that Day is dominating his competition. Throughout the season he has placed first in several of the tournaments he competed in and he also leads the team in team points scored in tournaments. Day's success this season is showing why he is one of the top athletes in the country at his weight class, and he

shows a lot of potential of getting back on the national podium in March.

Another athlete having a lot of success this season is Titus Waters '27. Waters took the starting job at 285-pounds as a freshman, and this season he is showing that he is a contender to be a national qualifier. In the first half of the season, Waters has placed in multiple tournaments, even those with very stiff competition. With momentum on his side going into the back half of the season, Waters looks to continue his success and help lead his team in the postseason.

Andrew Punzalan '27 is another key contributor to the team's success this season. Punzalan made the starting lineup as a freshman at 133 pounds and wrestled in the Central Regional for Wabash in the 2024 season. Coming into this season at 125 pounds, Punzalan has made tremendous strides, placing in numerous tournaments and winning some big matches for the Little Giants this season. Punzalan has a lot of potential to make some noise going into the post season and punch his ticket to nationals.

The team has had a busy winter break competing against a lot of very tough and competitive teams. With a handful of wrestlers showing a lot of success and leading the team, the stage is about set for the Little Giants to head into the postseason and show why they are consistently a top program in the country.

The Little Giants will compete on February 1 at home as they host the annual Wabash College Invitational, getting a chance to show their skill in front of a home crowd and continue the season-long journey.



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## Volleyball scrimmage promises a new season right around the corner



PHOTOS BY KYLE FOSTER '27

# Baseball's Dominican December



PHOTOS COURTESY OF WABASH ATHLETICS

**[Clockwise from top left] Wabash baseball participated in a Christmas parade during their stay in the Dominican Republic. As part of their community service, the Little Giants painted a house for residents of the Dominican Republic. Wabash players wait in dugout. The team was able to visit several historic sites including the old colonial zone in Santo Domingo, one of the oldest inhabited cities in the Western Hemisphere. The team toured a sugar cane mill as part of their immersion in the history of the Dominican Republic.**

ETHAN WALLACE '25  
SPORTS EDITOR

It was a Caribbean Christmas experience when Wabash baseball spent part of their December break in the Dominican Republic (DR). During their six-day visit, the team was able to play four

games, visit some of the important landmarks in the country and do community service work.

Before the trip, several members of the baseball team enrolled in a specialty Spanish 312 course with Professor V. Dan Rogers. The course gave the student-athletes a chance to learn about the

culture, history and geography of the Dominican Republic. The team was accompanied by Dean Todd McDorman, who sat in on several of the class sessions.

"I think the 15 or so members of the baseball team that took the class arrived in the Dominican with a better understand-

ing of its history and the role of baseball in their culture," said McDorman.

"Dr. Rogers's class allowed me to better connect with the people and the culture because I somewhat knew what to expect when I got there," said Grant Stratton '25. "It was a great class and I

enjoyed learning about the DR before I got there."

During the visit, Wabash baseball played four games facing the Dominican Army, Dominican Navy, Dominican Police and a team of minor league-affiliated players. During their games, the Little Giants were able to witness first-hand the deep love for baseball embedded in the culture of the Dominican Republic. One of the games was attended by 300 local children.

The Little Giants were still getting back into the swing of things, as it was the team's first time playing this season. They showed a little rust on the field, but saw promising signs for a December start.

"We saw some good things considering we were playing baseball in December," said Head Baseball Coach Jake Martin '03. "We kept our pitchers short so we didn't put too much of a workload on them during a time of year that they are not typically pitching. Our defense played well. Some individuals had a good week, but in general, we looked a little hesitant offensively. That can be credited to the quality of pitching we saw. We faced a couple of arms in the mid 90's."

As part of their trip, the team participated in several acts of community service: painting a house, preparing a baseball field and handing out candy in a Christmas season parade.

"The baseball piece of the trip was fun. However, the most impactful part of the trip was interacting with the players, kids and community," said Martin. "The community service opportunities allowed us to get a look at how the local community lives."

The team was also able to take a day in the capital city of Santo Domingo, where they toured the colonial zone – the oldest part of the city established by Spanish settlers in the sixteenth century.

Altogether the six days spent abroad gave everyone something different to take away, while they were able to use a baseball trip to achieve so much more.

"It really gave me perspective on what other countries and people outside of the U.S. have to go through each and every day," said Stratton. "The baseball was great and I can see how much they love it down there."

"As Dean, I don't get to spend as much extended time with individual students so one highlight of the trip for me was to simply be around the students and get to know many of them," said McDorman. "That part of the experience was rejuvenating for me."

"This was an amazing trip with a great balance of education, service and connecting to people through the shared love of baseball," said Martin. "I believe the student-athletes in our program returned from this trip with an appreciation for what we often take for granted, a better understanding of how the game of baseball has become so important to the country, and a new love for the sport. We are grateful for the support of so many who made the trip possible."

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# Four Little Giants reach double-digits to top Witt

Basketball continues hunt for conference crown into new semester



PHOTOS BY WILL DUNCAN '27

[Left to right] Nate Matelic '27 scored 11, Vinny Buccilla '25 scored 12, Rob Sorenson '28 scored 14 and Gavin Shippert '26 scored 10 to put the Little Giants ahead against Wittenberg on January 22, 2025 at Chadwick Court. The win kept the Little Giants in second place in the North Coast Athletic Conference standings.

## ETHAN WALLACE '25 SPORTS EDITOR

Wabash basketball came up big in a crucial stretch of their season. Going 7-2 over winter break, the Little Giants made a strong recovery from the season's 3-4 start.

Wabash's biggest victory came against then 10th-ranked Wooster in a 54-48 defensive standoff. The two losses came against the previously second-ranked Washington University in St. Louis and sixteenth-ranked Denison. Both were close losses that demonstrated the Little Giants' ability to hang with top-ranking teams in the nation.

"We're disappointed with losses against unranked Heidelberg, unranked Rose-Hulman and unranked Franklin," said Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett. "But I do think that from those losses we've reaped some benefits in playing some conference teams that have similarities to those schools. And we've been able to not make the same mistakes."

On Wednesday, January 22, Wittenberg 6-9 (3-5 NCAC) came to Chadwick Court to face Wabash in the first game of the new semester. Despite missing two starters in Josh Whack '26 and Rich Brooks '26, the Little Giants had little trouble dispatching the visiting team. Led by Rob Sorenson '28 who posted 14 points on five of nine shooting, the Scarlet & White cruised to a 72-46 victory over the Tigers.

After missing four games, due to a concussion, it was Sorenson's first game back in action and his first game on the starting lineup. He went 4-8 from beyond the arc, as he continues to establish himself as an elite shooter in

his freshman season.

"It felt great," said Sorenson. "I was excited before the game. I hated being home, not being able to be with the guys."

Wabash controlled the boards all night, out rebounding Wittenberg 39-28. With 10 points of his own, Gavin Shippert '26 led his team on the glass and was one rebound shy of a double-double.

"I don't care about stats," said Shippert. "But once I saw the box score at the end, I just let out a sigh. I don't care about how many points or rebounds or assists I have. All I care about is if we win or lose."

Alongside Sorenson and Shippert, Nate Matelic '27 and Vinny Buccilla '25 contributed 11 and 12 points respectively, to total four Little Giants in double digits.

Entering the start of the semester, Wabash stands at second in the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) with a 7-1 record against conference teams.

So far, the Little Giants have been a powerful defensive presence, holding opponents to an average of 62.5 points per game with a tough zone that funnels opponents into Noah Hupmann '25 who leads the nation in blocks.

The team has struggled to get consistent offensive production from the lineup. Seven Little Giants have reached 10 or more points in a game this season and four have recorded 20-plus point nights however only Buccilla averages over 10 points per game. While easier said than done, the Wabash roster – which has proven its capacity to score – needs to be more consistent in finding the bottom of the net. If the team can continue to perform as

they did against Wittenberg, they will be in the upper echelons of Division III basketball by the end of the season.

"I think it makes us really dangerous as a team," said Sorenson. "Any eight of us can have a really good night, which makes it tough on defenses, not knowing who's going to have a good night. It gives us a lot of options on what we're going to do offensively."

The Little Giants next contest will be a roadtrip to Hiram, Ohio to face the conference-bottom Hiram 6-11 (1-7 NCAC). With Hiram set to leave

the NCAC at the end of the semester, this may be the Little Giants' last trip to face the Terriers.

Posting only one loss to the conference leader Denison, the Scarlet & White are absolutely still in the hunt for another conference championship, provided they defeat Denison in the rematch and don't take more than one more loss to conference opponents. The path won't be easy, as February tends to throw a wrench in every NCAC teams' plans, but fans should be confident that Wabash will be a contender for the remainder of the season.

"[We have] already beaten those guys," said Brumett. "So, we need to win at Wittenberg because we're capable. We need to win at Hiram because we're capable. We need to win at Kenyon because we're capable. The trip to Wooster will be a dog fight. We need to beat DePauw, regardless of whatever other noise is going on, because we're capable. And then that lines up the Denison game, that's how we want it. I'm really happy with where we're at, because our goals are still right there for us."

NCAC Basketball Conference Standings	Conference record	Overall record
1. Denison	8-0	16-1
2. Wabash	7-1	11-6
3. Wooster	5-3	13-4
4. Ohio Wesleyan	5-3	10-7
5. DePauw	4-4	8-9
6. Wittenberg	3-5	7-10
7. Oberlin	2-6	10-7
8. Hiram	1-7	6-11
9. Kenyon	1-7	3-14

## Swim builds momentum over the break

### HAIKEN DIEMER-MCKINNEY '26 STAFF WRITER

During the time off campus for winter break, the athletes of the Wabash swimming & diving team didn't spend much time on the couch, but rather in the pool putting in serious work. With victories and personal bests achieved during the last few meets, the team is building significant momentum as they gear up for the final stretch of the season.

What's better than starting the break with a victory over the School Down South? On Friday, December 6, the Little Giants proved the Danies were no match for them, dominating the meet 194-100 with 11 event winners. Although Wabash fell 157-137 to Division I Valparaiso University on January 10, they responded a week later on senior night with a commanding 226-67 victory over Franklin College.

Despite this meet being about the senior class, it's difficult to ignore the dominance the underclassmen have shown this season, particularly the freshman. One of the standouts among this group is Ryan West '28, who in his first collegiate season, has racked up multiple event wins in each meet and has made an energizing impact on the team.

"The competition at practice has definitely helped with the success," said West. "Coming in every day and putting in everything I have, then recovering after each hard day



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Wabash swimming & diving hosted a double-dual meet against Albion College and Centre College on Saturday, October 26, 2024 at the Class of 1954 Natatorium.

is key."

Along with West, Mason Gilliam '28 has also showcased his toughness with multiple victories in the distance events. As a class, Wabash Head Swimming and Diving Coach Will Bernhardt is pleased with the buy-in the freshmen have put on display.

"All of our freshmen have done an amazing job of adapting to the training, schedule and overall cadence of a collegiate swim and dive season," said Bernhardt. "It is so rewarding to see their growth on a daily basis as many learn more about themselves this season than they have at any other point in their lives."

This isn't the first time the freshman class has come in and produced immediately. Last season Nicholas Plumb '27, Quinn Sweeney '27 and others made their presence known as rookies. This team doesn't follow the typical hierarchy of relying on upperclassmen and waiting for younger team members to produce, but rather building a reputation of developing young talent that contributes right away.

"The underclassmen are helping push our team to new heights and challenging upperclassmen daily," said Bernhardt. "This is a healthy challenge and the entire team has embraced the fact that we all need

to step up our game if we want to achieve the lofty goals we have set for ourselves."

On top of how the underclassmen have set an example, the upperclassmen are respecting their talents and supporting their new teammates.

"The upperclassmen were super welcoming when I got here and immediately made me feel like a member of the family," said West. "They saw what I did in high school and have always pushed me in practice."

With intense practice sessions over the break, the team is ahead of schedule in both training and

fitness. With the NCAC Championships just three weeks away, the Little Giants are confident they'll achieve the goals they've set for themselves, knowing they have the momentum and depth to compete at a high level.

"My goals are to win the 200-yard backstroke, make it to NCAA's and get a relay to NCAA's this year. I think we have a very strong chance of doing that," said West. "That's the motivation at practice and throughout the season, we have to nail our race strategies to get everything the way we want it to be."

"We have seen swims and dives coming out of winter training that we haven't seen at this time in previous seasons," said Bernhardt. "Anytime you can come off of the maximum volume and intensity of winter training and have a season-best swim or high scores on the boards, you know we are doing something right. We look to use mental training and physical rest to help that confidence grow exponentially within the remaining days of the season."

The road to NCAC's and national-level aspirations continues on Friday, January 24 when the team travels to Bloomington, Illinois for a dual meet against the Titans of Illinois Wesleyan University.