



February 28, 2025

Lilly Scholar finalists visit campus

OWEN VERMEULEN '28
STAFF WRITER

A typical Wabash weekend might include a variety of new faces, but on the weekend of February 23, a cohort of 18 important potential Wabash men spent time in and around the student body: candidates for the Wabash College Lilly Scholarship.

The scholarship is a competitive merit-based award that a very select few get the opportunity to compete for — potentially earning a fully-paid Wabash experience. These individuals are chosen for a broad spectrum of reasons, chief among them being academic performance, extracurricular involvement and community-wide impact. These prospective students are being looked at as potential leaders of the graduating class of 2029.

After the Admissions Office finished with Scarlet Honors Weekend two weekends ago on February 17, they had to quickly shift gears to get ready for the Lilly Scholarship candidates this past week.

Assistant Director of Regional Admissions AJ Clark '16 spoke about some of the goals the Admissions Office had for the weekend.

“We know that every finalist is a great student in more ways than one.”

- Assistant Director of Regional Admissions
AJ Clark '16

“The goal of the Lilly Scholar search is to identify, out of an outstanding cohort of prospective freshmen, who is the most outstanding among them,” said Clark. “In thinking about the ‘goal’ of the weekend, we want all of the finalists to decide to enroll at Wabash and become a part of the incoming class.”

Each year there are 18 candidates chosen from a list of 40-50 applicants to come participate in Lilly Scholars weekend. These applications are reviewed by a group of eight high school college counselors from around the country. If their application is chosen, then they are invited to campus.

“For me, [the Lilly Scholarship] just reiterates that I have to push myself to prove that I was deserving.”

- Lilly Scholar
Gus Sanchez '26

“When I was selected, I got an all-expenses-paid flight to Wabash,” said Henry Chilcoat '27, a recipient of the Wabash Lilly Scholarship. “Once we got to Wabash, they split us up into three groups of six and they chose one scholar from each group.”

During Lilly Scholars Weekend, the candidates do tours of campus and meet professors as well as participate in a mock classroom to see how they perform in an academic setting.

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CHAMPIONSHIP

W.

WEEKEND

GRAPHIC BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

It doesn't get any better than this. “Championship Weekend” has come to the Little Giants. On February 28, three Wabash teams — all fighting for the same goal — will take on the challenge of bringing home a banner.

Wabash basketball will travel to Denison to face the Wooster Fighting Scots in the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Tournament, with hopes of pulling in their fourth-straight NCAC title.

Track & Field will look to reclaim the top spot in the NCAC Championships hosted by Oberlin.

And the NCAA Region V Wrestling Tournament will come to Crawfordsville, where the Wabash wrestlers will look to reassert their annual dominance.

Follow the action in a special section brought to you by *The Bachelor* beginning on page five.

- Ethan Wallace '25 | Sports Editor

Search for next Dean of Students drawing to an end

JAMES WALLACE '26
NEWS EDITOR

After a tenure of six years as Dean of Students at the College, Gregory Redding '88 will be vacating the position following the end of this academic school year. The search for his replacement — which started in the fall of 2024 — is beginning to draw to an end, promising a new chapter at the College.

But Redding's path to becoming Dean of Students at the College is atypical for someone in his position.

“I stepped in as interim Dean of Students when Dean Mike Raters '85 stepped away in 2019,” said Redding. “The then President, Gregory Hess, and Dean of the College Scott Feller asked me if I could step in for the year. I agreed to do it, thinking that a year later I would be back in the classroom.”



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Luis Rivera '25 speaks at a lunch talk that featured Dr. Scott Brown, the first initial finalist for the Dean of Students position on February 26, 2025, in Baxter Hall.



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Current Dean of Students Gregory Redding '88 assembles pride flags following an incident in which pride flags were trashed by vandals, on October 21, 2024, on The Mall.

However, the original one-year term as interim Dean of Students was extended when COVID-19

swept across the globe in 2020. President Hess asked Redding to continue as Dean of Students to help the College navigate the pandemic. Again, Redding agreed to stay on for another year. After President Hess left the College, Redding agreed to a three year extension in the position as President Feller took the reins. While the 2023-2024 school year was supposed to be Redding's last year in the position, major institutional changes such as the retirements of Dr. Scott Douglas '84 and Dr. John Roberts '83, as well as the Director of Counseling Jamie Douglas, pushed President Feller to call on Redding one last time to see through the transition of these critical positions.

“Once all of that got stabilized, [President Feller] felt comfortable launching a full search,” said Redding. “I will have done the six years of my one-year term, and will be going on sabbatical next year.”

The full search for the

next Dean of Students began last fall, and the Dean of Students search committee is looking to make a selection before the end of the semester. The committee is composed of faculty, staff and a Trustee, and is chaired by President Feller himself, but also features a student voice in Luis Rivera '25.

“[Luis] is a tremendously accomplished student here at Wabash and has been involved in a lot of things,” said Redding. “I think he has a good read on things that are important to the Wabash student population.”

Up until this point in the search process, Rivera's membership on the Dean of Students search committee has been the most direct contribution from the student body in finding the next Dean, but the final steps of the process see to it that students and faculty alike have an important say in the selection of the final

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News around the world

JACKSON GOODYEAR '27
STAFF WRITER

Germany
On Sunday, February 23, Germany hosted its elections for its national parliament, the Bundestag. The country's center-right party, the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU), won the most seats in the Bundestag with 28.6% of the vote. Friedrich Merz, the leader of the Christian Democrats, is now in the best position to take office as Germany's next chancellor. The German chancellor is the minister that holds the most political power within the government. In order for this to occur, the Federal President of Germany must propose the candidate and the Bundestag will vote on the candidate as a whole. In order for the candidate to be sworn into office as chancellor, an absolute majority vote must be attained in the Bundestag. Since Merz's party won the most seats in the Bundestag, it gives him the best chance to become the next chancellor.

Along with the success of the Christian Democrats, other shifts occurred in the Bundestag for the other major German political parties. The most notable was the increase in votes for the far-right party, the AfD (Alternative for Germany). The AfD's total vote has increased to 20.8%, over half of what it was in 2021. This is the largest vote for a far right party in a German election since World War II. The success from both the Christian Democrats and AfD marks a historic shift towards conservatism in modern German politics. The vote for the far left party, SPD (Social Democratic Party), went down 9.3%, one of the worst elections for the party in recent years.

Although his party won the plurality in the Bundestag, Merz's work is not done yet. The Bundestag is often made up of multiple different parties. Since there is not one party that makes up a majority in the Bundestag, multiple parties must work together to reach the absolute majority needed for selecting a chancellor. This is how most decisions are made within the Bundestag, something called a coalition government. Merz must create a coalition government in order to seize his opportunity of becoming chancellor. Merz is motivated to have a coalition government by Easter.

Establishing a coalition government won't be easy for Merz as the Christian Democrats refuse to work with the far right AfD under any circumstances. It is now up to the Christian Democrats to work alongside the SPD as well as the Green Party in order to create a coalition government. Merz's ability to create a coalition government affects the future of the shape of Europe as Germany continues to have the largest economy of the European Union.

Ukraine

As the conflict between Ukraine and Russia begins to slow and a potential cease-fire looms, Ukraine and the United States are in the process of negotiating an agreement allowing the U.S. access to profits made off of Ukraine's mineral industry.

Ukraine possesses many

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Dean of Students

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candidate.

"This past September, there were student focus groups that asked student leaders what qualities and experiences they wanted to see in the next Dean of Students," said Rivera. "From there, they crafted a job description and sent it out."

The initial applicant pool totaled over 30, and the search committee then selected only seven of those candidates for Zoom interviews. After deliberation on the candidates who had advanced to the first round of interviews, the two initial finalists were selected by the search committee to travel to campus for the final parts of the interview process. But outside of the focus groups, students have had minimal input up until

this point.

This is slated to change with upcoming lunch discussions with each initial finalist. The opportunities give students and faculty a chance to ask pertinent questions and learn more about each candidate, and then send feedback to the committee. The feedback will be compiled and reviewed by the search committee, and will play a major factor in their final decision.

"We will read that [compilation] and see what students thought about each candidate," said Rivera. "From that report we will be able to make the decision of the next Dean of Students."

The student body's voice will help to determine who will eventually succeed Redding as he plans on moving back to the classroom following his upcoming

sabbatical.

"Dean Redding did a great job and I have a great relationship with him," said Rivera. "But there's something about [change], there are always steps to take forward. In this process, I have gotten excited about the possibilities for Wabash."

As Redding wraps up his final semester as Dean of Students at Wabash, both he and students alike are excited for the change to come.

"This is a really desirable job," said Redding. "I think it's a real privilege to be Dean of Students at a place like Wabash with the kind of student culture that we have. I hope that any new Dean would quickly realize and feel the same sense of privilege that I've had in my time."



Dr. Scott Brown speaks at an open Q&A between himself and students, one of the final steps for the initial finalists for the Dean of Students position on February 26, 2025, in Baxter Hall.

PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

News around the world

Continued from page 1

different valuable minerals and rare earth including an abundant supply of titanium, ytterbium and promethium, which generate large profits. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has agreed to meet with U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday, February 28, to officially sign the agreement. The agreement would allow the United States to share a portion of Ukraine's profit from minerals and rare earth. President Trump sees the agreement as reparations for the military aid provided to Ukraine throughout the past three years. Initially, the U.S. had proposed that Ukraine pay \$500 billion in reparations and that plan was strongly rejected. President Zelenskyy compromised for this

agreement, ideally wanting security guarantees in exchange for the deal. President Trump has refused, forcing Zelenskyy to rely on countries like the United Kingdom and France for security from Russia.

Chile

After suffering a nationwide blackout, Chile regained power on the morning of February 26. The blackout left 19 million people without power. Trains, elevators and traffic lights were among the numerous public devices that stopped working. The blackout began on the evening of February 25 and affected the entire country. All 14 regions of the country had lost power during the blackout, pushing urban areas into chaos. In the capital, Santiago,

security forces were deployed to subdue any unrest and aid in controlling traffic. The power outage not only affected the public, but it also affected some of Chile's major industries. The world's largest copper producer, the Chilean company Codelco, had to halt its operations along with other mining companies. Most of the chaos was due to the dark and confusion, as a majority of the blackout occurred during the night time. The immediate cause of the blackout was due to a failure in a backbone transmission line that carries power from the Atacama Desert to Santiago. Chilean officials are currently investigating why this occurred.

Lilly Scholar finalists

Continued from page 1

The selection committee also conducts 30-minute interviews with each of the candidates. This is the only point during the process in which the whole panel interacts with the candi-

"The goal of the Lilly Scholar search is to identify, out of an outstanding cohort of prospective freshmen, who is the most outstanding among them."

- Assistant Director of Regional Admissions
AJ Clark '16

dates in person.

"We know that every finalist is a great student in more ways than one," said Clark. "The College is looking for those students who they believe show potential and future promise. Who is going to have an impact not only on Wabash while they're

on campus for four years, but will graduate and have the greatest impact on their community."

"At first, I definitely felt pressure," said Gus Sanchez '26, another Lilly Scholarship recipient. "After the first year of college, I felt more excited than anything. But, just because you get an award like the Lilly Scholarship, you can't just be done. For me, it just reiterates that I have to push myself to prove that I was deserving."

The Lilly Scholarship has awarded 33 students with four-year funding since 2015, while also supporting Wabash College more generally and the Crawfordsville community. Being selected for a Lilly Scholarship is viewed as a high honor at Wabash, with three recipients being given the responsibility to make good on the academic investment that the College saw fit to give to them. Potential recipients will wait in nervous anticipation for the announcement of the award winners from the College in late April through mid-May.



This week at Wabash

Friday, Feb. 28

11:00 a.m. | NCAA DIII Region V Wrestling Tournament @ Knowing Fieldhouse

Saturday, Mar. 1

7:30 p.m. | 12 Angry Men @ Experimental Theater

Monday, Mar. 3

5:30 p.m. | WDPD 12 Angry Men Talkback @ Experimental Theater

Wednesday, Mar. 5

12:00 p.m. | Professor Derek Mong Poetry Reading @ Center Hall 216

Thursday, Mar. 6

12:10 p.m. | Biology Department Seminar @ Hays Hall 319



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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.

The Bachelor reserves the right to edit letters for content, typographical errors, and length. All letters received become property of this publication for the purposes of reprinting and/or redistribution. Profanity may appear in the publication, but only in cases of direct quote or if profanity is necessary to the content of the story. Please do not confuse profanity with obscenity. No article or picture of an obscene nature will appear in this publication.

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Wabash hasn't changed: The student body did



Christopher Wiatr '27

Reply to this opinion at cwiatr27@wabash.edu

I remember last year as a freshman, the seniors would say that the campus atmosphere is different than when they were freshmen. Leaning into this statement, I would say this change is not because Wabash made changes that resulted in this dwindling campus atmosphere; instead, it is the student body and the way we present ourselves that has led to this change. There are two reasons why I believe this is the case. One is because we have gotten too comfortable with living in rigidity. The other is what I'll call "not showing out."

What is living in rigidity? If experiencing Wabash in its intended way, then we are quite busy pretty much all the time, so because of that, we need to create very tight schedules to help us through each day. An unintended consequence of this is that we get too comfortable with our schedules and just go through the motions while not living every day. What do we need to do get through the week if we're only waiting for weekend fun? What we need to do is blend fun into our daily schedules. Do something different. It can be as simple as studying in a different location than normal or going on a walk just as you finish your last class of the day to just let it all soak in. Step outside of your normal routine and enjoy today.

Another issue that we as a student body suffer from is not showing out. This doesn't just mean attending events happening on campus. It means being present. Too many of us are walking stone walls with our music and phones. My favorite part of walking to class is not listening to my killer

mix, it's walking with a friend or chopping it up while running into other peers. Having that brief but dopamine-filled interaction as we pass each other makes my day.

This issue is also presented within living units. The weekend is supposed to be a lively time where the Wabash Brotherhood grows and strengthens, but this academic year the weekends felt empty. Some too many people will go home every weekend simply because they can, and miss a crucial point of what makes Wabash special, or they will just sit in their rooms the entire weekend and never show face.

The campus energy has changed over the years. The change from last year to this year is quite significant; however, it does not need to stay like this. We as a student body can make a change, it's not too late. It is important we recognize the issue at hand and take responsibility for it, so that we as a Brotherhood can create the campus we want. What will you do to create a better Wabash?



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25
Students visit the La Alianza stand at Wabash's fall 2024 Club Fair.

HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

FREE MARKETS AND PERSONAL LIBERTIES

Lo-five to the Washington Post "opinion" section. Last we checked, an opinion forum with predetermined ideas isn't a real opinion forum, that's just D***w.

NOT SO HONORABLE SOCIETY

Lo-five to the "Honor Society" for continuing to pollute student inboxes with honeyed words of false academic praise. \$90 will go a lot further when dedicated to post-commencement festivities.

BLAME THE PLUG

Lo-five to Texas police for arresting Big X on marijuana charges. We thought there weren't crimes against a good time in Texas.

A VOTE FOR AI REGULATION

Lo-five to the Trump Gaza advertisement for mixing AI music with generated photos to create a strange beachside facade. While we may not agree on how Trump should act in office, we can all agree nobody needs to see that again.

GAIL PEBWORTH DAY

Hi-five to Todd Barton for making February 22 Gail Pebworth day to honor the trail blazing coach. Do students get the day off?

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Beauty in the bustle



Bryce Kinnaman '27

Reply to this opinion at bwkinnam27@wabash.edu

Walking into my fraternity kitchen knowing that I had a lunch job, I let out an audible sigh when I learned I had to do the dishes. I turned my head right, and there they were, a mean assortment of crusty bowls and probably fermenting liquids. But I smiled. The next 45 minutes were spent listening to Whitney Houston Essentials and turned out to be the best moment in my day. I have learned to find beauty in the bustle.

If you had caught me at this moment last year, I would have said it was the worst part of my day! I had to do the dishes! So, what changed?

I was initially against the concept of journaling. I didn't want to add another habit that felt like a hassle, like my Duolingo streak that I can't bear to lose. However, over the summer and through a little nudge from Alejandro Reyna and my CIBE internship, I looked back into my past to conjure up a different mindset of journaling.

I attended a church camp when I was a kid, and it was a staple event every summer. Cabins, events, music, brotherhood and learning highlighted this trip. Maybe more parallels to Wabash than I initially thought. One summer there was a question that my cabin leader asked us every day,

"Where did you see God today?"

Initially, this didn't make sense to me. Yes, God is omnipotent and all-knowing, but I can't see him? It finally clicked this summer.

I started to see and feel the moments of my days where I could "see" God. Maybe a silly squirrel on the mall, finally being on the other side of that intimidating test or having a strange but challenging debate in the fraternity dining room, I started to be more grateful and be more present in my day-to-day life.

This question can easily be made secular: "Where did you see beauty in the bustle today?"

I challenge you, starting tonight right before you go to bed, to reflect on your day, and think about this question. Do it on your phone, or even better, buy a journal, buy a pen, and set them down on your pillow.

In this digitized world, we are losing tangible pieces of ourselves. This is a one-time-buy where you can impart pieces and memories from your life to look back on. I am currently on my 237th day, and looking back on my journal to remember where I saw God is one of my favorite activities to reminisce about.

I promise you, over time you will start to feel more present, feel more grateful, and realize that yes, Wabash College can kick your butt, but you will always be able to find beauty in the bustle.

Leeper's lunch: Scrumptious servings at Smitty D's Hotdog Cart



Jackson Leeper '25

Reply to this opinion at jlceeper25@wabash.edu

What up, bozos? It's your man, Jackson Leeper. I've returned for another weekly review, recovered from my food poisoning and back in my true gluttonous form (screw Taco Bell). As I mentioned last week, I'm on the prowl for food trucks. A little birdie suggested this place and gave a link to their Facebook page (the person rhymes with Peann Larrish).

After stalking their site, I knew I had to check this place out. Their advertising was really good with a bunch of movie references of characters like Fat Bastard and Ace Ventura (if you don't know those characters, you're lame and do some research) and they had an interesting menu.

So, this week's review is Smitty D's Hot Dog Cart. They travel around Crawfordsville and do serve at events, but their main serving location is the parking lot of Town and County Homecenter.

As their menu suggests, they serve weiners (yes, they call them weiners on their menu).

Their variety comes from the different toppings they put on their dogs. For example, they have a weiner called the Purdue Petey (boiler up, hammer down). It's a weiner with grilled pineapple, bacon and memphis sweet and siracha, which is a very interesting combination that I might partake in if I was not sober.

They also serve a special item occasionally. This week's special was some chicken bacon ranch sandwich and in past weeks, they had biscuits and gravy. However, I was laser-focused on their glizzies so let's get into what glizzies I gobbled down!

Their menu consists of six weiners, all with weird and wacky names. One of them costs \$6, which is their O.G Honker and the other five weiners are \$8. They also have Philly cheese steak for \$10. I don't know about yall but \$8 for a hot

dog must be a damn good glizzy because that is expensive.

Due to my stomach hurting my wallet, I only got two weiners. I got their O.G Honker, which is a weiner with mustard, onion and sweet relish, and the Boot Scooter, which is a weiner with bacon, sweet bbq sauce, jalapeño and onions.

I got my order and waddled my big back to the car as I had high hopes for the weiners since I dropped \$15 on some hot dogs. Based on looks, I was impressed as they were some BIG weiners. These weren't some small dogs that you get from an eight-pack at Walmart. These were big glizzies and they were loaded with toppings too.

The Honker was a good version of a classic dog. It had a nice beefy flavor with a nice snap as I bit into the weiner with a good accompaniment of different flavors from the mustard, onion and relish.

The Boot Scooter was definitely better. The glizzy was elevated with the bacon, onion and bbq sauce, providing a sweet and smoky flavor as well as a bit texture contrast. However, the heat from the jalapeños were lacking.

The amount of food was okay, it didn't satisfy me but it would definitely be a solid meal for the average person. With the info provided, I give Smitty D's Hot Dog Cart a 7.9/10 burbers (knowers will know).

I wanted to give an eight but I couldn't do it because of the price. They were great dogs but I didn't know if they delivered based on the price. They also didn't fill my stomach based on the food that I got so I would have to drop an even bigger bag (con of being a void for food).

Still, the menu is attractive and the food impressed me enough to want to go back again. If y'all want some unique glizzies, give this place a shot! Look for next week as I'm going to another food truck!

What's missing from Wabash



Evan Bone '26

Reply to this opinion at ecbone26@wabash.edu

One of my favorite hobbies, as of late, is diving in the depths of *The Bachelor* archives and learning about Wabash men of the past. Often times when reading old volumes of *The Bachelor* I am amused by Wabash men's capacity for hooligan behavior and shenanigans, but looking back at our college's past can also be enlightening and revelatory as you can see how students have made meaning out of their Wabash experience.

Recently, I've learned of literary societies at Wabash from my escapades into *The Bachelor* archives. Literary societies were incredibly common and important for student life at American colleges in the 19th century. Literary societies at colleges revolved around writing essays, poems and music as well as debating and discussing current events.

These organizations offered community and belonging while developing students' ability to think critically, discuss respectfully and to write effectively.

Literary societies at American colleges gave way to fraternities and sororities, as many literary societies have gone inactive and their purpose has been inherited by other organizations and clubs at colleges.

Fraternities, sororities, cultural centers and other organizations offer belonging and community while debate teams and politically oriented clubs offer the space for students to develop important skills. But this shift towards debate teams and politically oriented clubs isn't present at Wabash today.

Literary societies were prevalent enough at Wabash that the first *The Bachelor* volume included a lengthy article on the election of new officials for the two societies at the time. Additionally, it mentions that the annual debate between the two societies was approaching and many students were excited for it following debates with Butler and Earlham.

Clearly, these two organizations were important for finding meaning at Wabash for many students, leaving myself to wonder if Wabash students today are missing out on an important opportunity that could develop skills that can last a lifetime.

But we must also recognize that times have changed, students' interests have evolved and students may struggle to put

the proper amount of time into a debate club or a similar organization. One could also argue that these conversations and debates are occurring on campus already in the classroom, in fraternities and all across campus.

I'd agree that they occur, of course, but I've also heard all too often from professors that Wabash often does not well-read on current events, especially in the context of comprehensive oral exams where students are often expected to apply their education to real world events and trends. A space, club, organization or any kind of structure dedicated to debate or simply engaging with current events would do Wabash students a great service.

Wabash is an institution meant to prepare students for the world that awaits them by imparting students with skills and experiences to shape and change the world for the better.

But living in the bubble that is Wabash can often disengage us from the world. I, myself, feel as though I've developed great skills and have had deeply meaningful experiences in the classroom, my fraternity and around campus in various clubs and at events, yet I often feel disengaged with the world outside of Wabash. Lunch talks and the occasional Wabash Democracy and Public Discourse (WDPD) deliberation can only do so much to pop the Wabash bubble and show us what is going on in the world.

Ultimately I'd like to see students create a new organization or organizations that would promote and host discussion among students about current events. If we want to receive the best Wabash education possible, we must be seeking difficult conversations that are relevant today like Wabash men of the past once did. But creating this space falls on us as students just as it fell on Wabash men of the 19th and early 20th century.

If we want to be prepared to make a difference in the world we can't expect to be informed by passively going through our four years at Wabash. We must be willing to create platforms and space for discussion where there is none, so that when our four years are over, we aren't passive men watching the world go by, but, instead, we will be engaged citizens confident and informed enough to use our voice.

This is just one example of something that is missing from Wabash that could give our time here more meaning and value; I hope that all Wabash men, especially freshman and sophomores, around campus are actively thinking about what's missing from this beautiful campus so that they can organize and add onto our wonderful institution.

The Bachelor
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NEW OFFICERS OF THE LYCEUM AND CALLIPOEAN

Literary Societies Start Spring Term With New Sets of Officers—Question Selected for Spring Debate.

COURTESY OF THE ROBERT T. RAMSAY, JR. ARCHIVAL CENTER

Organizations such as the Lyceum and Callipoean allowed students to meet and discuss literature as early as 1908. These societies were prominent enough to feature in *The Bachelor* that same year.

TRACK & FIELD

Little Giants assemble

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

There's room for one more in track & field's trophy case. The Little Giants will begin the hunt for their 10th North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Indoor Championship on Friday, February 28 hosted at Oberlin. Bringing their unique philosophy and long winning tradition, Head Track & Field Coach Clyde Morgan and company will take a season-long development path and leave it all on the line.

"We don't change our philosophy," said Morgan. "You shouldn't make something bigger than it is. We don't walk around with pens and count scoring [at] any other meet. So we don't do that at conference."

The Little Giants – after four seasons at the top of the conference – were narrowly dethroned by Wittenberg in last year's indoor championships. This year promises another thrilling contest between the two dominant programs.

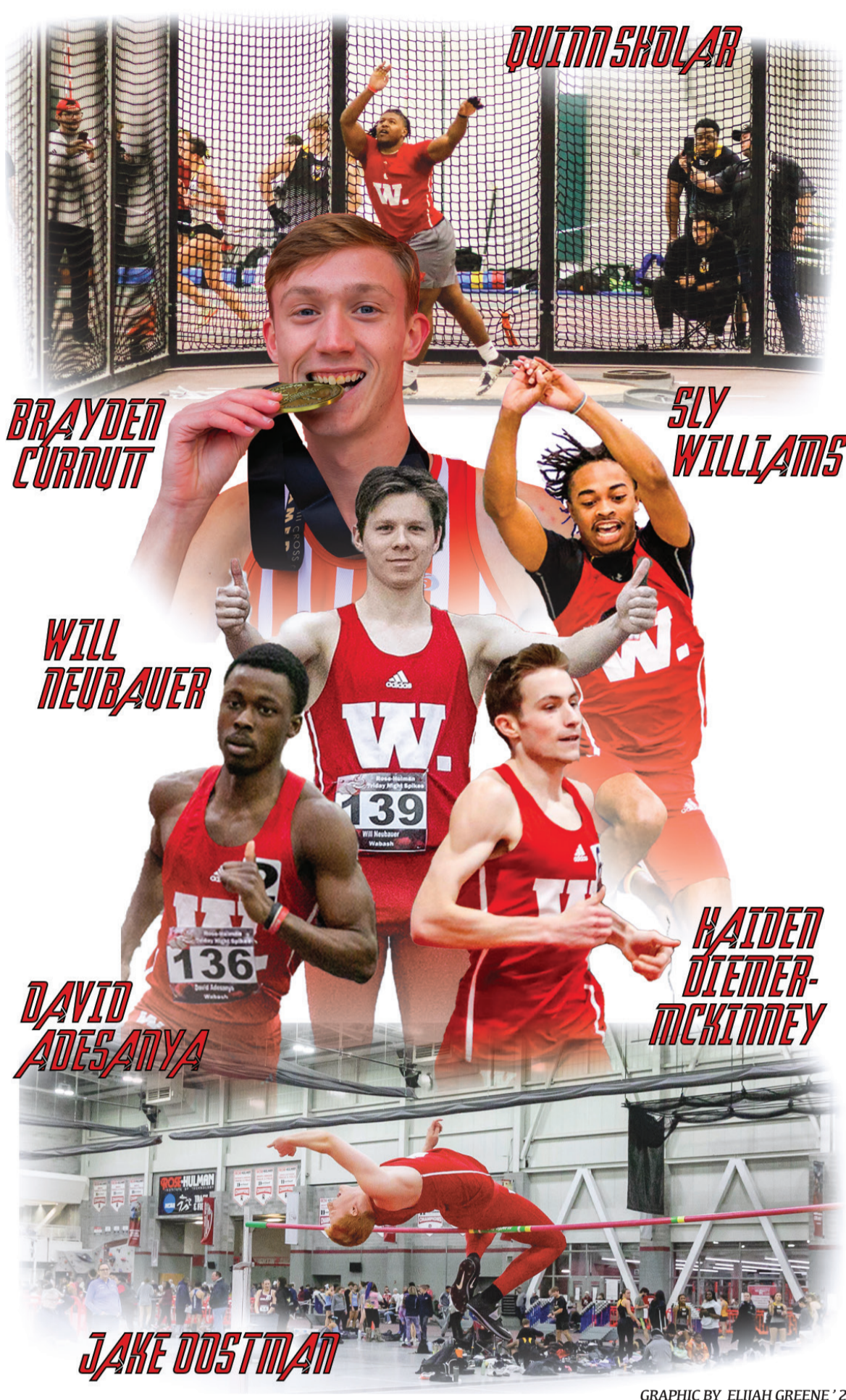
"The culture that Coach Morgan has built has taught us to keep our heads down and to just keep working," said Sly Williams '26. "We have already dealt with that pain of losing last year. We definitely have not forgotten how that feeling felt; so we will just be showing the work we've done and just letting our work talk for us."

For a handful of teams, the competition began on February 22 at the NCAC Indoor Combined Championships, also hosted at Oberlin. The two days of competition were held for competitors in the heptathlon. The single event should have minor consequences for final scoring but did give teams a chance to get an early lead. Wabash did not send anyone to compete in the competition.

- Results after Heptathlon:**
 Ohio Wesleyan – 15 points
 DePauw – 11 points
 Kenyon – 8 points
 Denison – 3 points
 Wittenberg – 2 points

In the pre-championship poll, five NCAC coaches picked the Little Giants to finish first. Wabash received a total of 76 points, narrowly finishing ahead of Wittenberg with 75 points. However – as the team would say – winning the poll is one thing, winning the meet is something else.

"I don't talk about other teams," said Morgan. "My philosophy is — it doesn't matter. Sometimes people



spend too much time talking about other teams and opponents and they miss what's going on in their own team. So we focus on us, and that's all you can do. We don't believe in paper champions. Last time I checked, you have to do the work to win."

In the final meet before the conference championships, a handful of Little Giants traveled to Indiana State University for the John Gartland Invitational. The meet was a final opportunity for the competitors to hit the conference cut-off in their respective events.

GRAPHIC BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Jakob Van Pelt '28 was successful, throwing a career-best 13.81 meters to earn a spot in the NCAC meet.

"I'm so proud of him when he did that," said Morgan. "That is huge. Because the more you can get qualified and the more depth

you have, the better."

While the team will mentally focus on doing the same things they've done all season, they will be bringing together the full force of the program for the first time this season. As fans have come to expect, several Little Giants will be on watch to win their respective events at conference.

Brayden Curnutt '25 – the man who ranks amongst the top runners in the country in both the 3,000-meter and 5,000-meter races – has spent most of the season running individually at meets where he can face the NCAA's best. Now, he will join the Little Giants in the NCAC meet for a chance to pull in multiple first-place finishes.

Williams, who was out for a significant portion of the season, has been dominating the long jump in the few weeks leading up to the NCAC meet. His numbers put him comfortably near the top of the NCAC this season with a chance to take gold.

"Since getting back, I have had high expectations for myself," said Williams. "I want to end on a high note. So, I am going to give it all I can and hope I finally come home with the first-place finish I've been working for."

Wabash's fearsome 800-meter crew will be another event to keep an eye on. Will Neubauer '25, Haiden Diemer-McKinney '26 and David Adesanya '27 have all been consistently finishing at the top this season. Seeded 1-2-3 in the NCAC, these Little Giants will look to sweep this event for the second time this season.

Newcomer Hugh Ford '28 has made a splash in the pole vault. Taking home first at nearly every meet in February, Ford will be another Little Giant with a chance to rake in points for the team.

"As a freshman, going into your first big NCAA competition draws a bit of nerves, but also a lot of excitement," said Ford. "I'd say it's important to realize you get the opportunity to do the thing you love, and those nerves will become minimal."

The list goes on for Wabash, as top-to-bottom they will bring a team with more winning experience than anyone else in the NCAC.

"I love championship season," said Morgan. "Because chasing the marks and the times is over. The only thing that matters now is places. And as a coach, you get to that point where you finally get everyone on the same bus. That's what it's all about. That's the fun part. We just attack and have a good time doing it."

Owning the 800 — Wabash trio looks for NCAC sweep

ELIJAH GREENE '25
PHOTO EDITOR

Ask almost anyone who ran track in high school what their most dreaded event was and there are good odds they will say the 800-meter run. This grueling, ultimate test of speed and endurance strikes fear into the hearts and minds of some of the world's best athletes; but for three Little Giants, it's their favorite race.

Wabash's devastating trio of Will Neubauer '25, Haiden Diemer-McKinney '26 and David Adesanya '27 have been running teams off the track in the 800 for the entire 2025 indoor season. In their most recent outing at the DePauw Invitational, the team swept the podium, with Neubauer placing first and Diemer-McKinney and Adesanya not far behind in second and third. A mere two seconds currently separate the threesome's season-best times, and Neubauer and Diemer-McKinney both have top-30 times in the country (17th and 28th, respectively) which makes the Wabash 800-meter run cohort a top-10 team in all of Division III.

"Every single time we go to a race and line up for the 800, it's one of the best 800's that's being raced in the country because we have three guys in the top 50 [nationally]," said Associate Track & Field Coach Tyler McCreary. "They're the top three guys in the conference right now, and there's some decent separation."

McCreary, who is in charge of training the mid-distance and distance runners on the Wabash track team, takes special pride in both recruiting and developing a high-caliber, competitive 800 squad. As a former 800 runner in both high school and college, McCreary pays



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Will Neubauer '25 and David Adesanya '27 finished in first and second place, respectively in the 800-meter race at the "Friday Night Spikes" meet held at Rose-Hulman Institute for Technology on Saturday, January 25, 2025.

special attention to landing talents like Neubauer, Diemer-McKinney and Adesanya, and puts them through their paces once they arrive on campus.

"Neubauer is just a flat out competitor," said McCreary. "He just wins, and that's been his mentality since I first started recruiting him. He's a very smart, savvy, veteran-type runner, and will just run the race however he needs to get the win. Diemer-McKinney is not very far off of that. With his talent, he can just go bleed it out, make himself hurt and run really fast. And Adesanya is just tough as nails, not too different from Neubauer, and is just a gutsy guy. And, they all run the 800 in terms of strategy very similarly: getting out pretty quick and making it honest right away.

That bleeds out a lot of the other guys in all their races, and allows those three to separate every time."

These three Little Giants are as competitive as they come, each fighting for the top spot every time they race one another. But it's tricky. The 800 is an intense, physically demanding distance and not a race that suffers many mistakes. The wrong timing of a tactical move or a slow start off the line can effectively end a runner's hope for a quality outing.

"The 800 is an event that really engages your anaerobic system towards the end [of the race]," said Diemer-McKinney. "The reason why it's so hard is because you're functioning without oxygen, and that builds lactic acid in basically your entire body. And as far as the

actual race goes, you only have one or two moves. In a sprint, you just go. In a distance race, you can have multiple opportunities to make a move. In the 800 you only have one time, and if you miss it, then you're screwed."

To match the difficulty of the race itself, Neubauer, Diemer-McKinney and Adesanya have to train at the limits of their aerobic capacity; that, along with their almost identical times make for stiff competition during practice sessions.

"[The competition] just flows, honestly," said Adesanya. "I'm focused on my progression but also ready to push both of them. For example, [Neubauer] has excellent foot speed and I know if I make a move on him there's a higher chance of him responding back which re-

sults in a faster race naturally. Us three take losing personally, but we are also focused on progression and not just an individual race."

Not only are they inseparable on the track, but the three teammates also live together, along with several other members of the track team. Spending time outside of sports and forging a connection based in brotherhood is a crucial component of their dynamic, as well as motivating them to perform not only on race day, but in the classroom too.

"Watching these two work on school and athletics every day lets me know that I'm going to get the best out of them at practices and at meets," said Neubauer. "It makes me want to bring everything I have to the table and give everything I've got."

"It makes the race much more fun and exciting for me," added Adesanya. "And, there's less mental pressure and more pride in winning. You might see me laying around silently listening to music but I'm always ready to mess with someone too. Racing is fun but [brotherhood's] bigger than racing."

Neubauer, Diemer-McKinney and Adesanya will be poised to win big-time points for the Little Giants track team at the North Coast Athletic Conference Indoor Championships on February 28-March 1. Seeded first in the coaches' poll by only a single point above Wittenberg, Wabash track and field will rely on these three Little Giants performing at their very best to bring the coveted trophy back to Crawfordsville once again.

BASKETBALL

“We’re still the champs” Basketball pursues fourth-straight title

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

In hopes of a fourth-straight title, the Little Giants are North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Tournament bound. Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett will lead his three-time NCAC Tournament Champions against a familiar opponent in the Wooster Fighting Scots.

Heading into the tournament Wabash looks to have hit its stride. In the final game of the regular season Wabash defeated Oberlin 71-60 at Chadwick Court.

In what must be an NCAA record, it took the Fighting Scots 23:38 to record their first field goal inside the three-point line. The Oberlin roster recorded all 23 of their first-half points from beyond the arch or at the charity stripe. Meanwhile Wabash recorded 36 points in the paint.

The contrast was no coincidence however; Noah Hupmann '25 played one of his best defensive games in a Scarlet uniform. From four blocks to critical pressure, the 7-foot 2-inch senior hounded the Yeomen every time they moved inside. Hupmann finished the game with 12 points, as he continued to ramp up his scoring output through the end of the regular season.

Rich Brooks '26 extended his 15-point streak to three games as he knocked down a pair of threes and went 4-4 from the free throw line. His continued increase in output could be a major factor if it continues through the tournament.

“I’ve been building up a lot of confidence these past few games,” said Brooks. “My teammates are giving me that confidence. Every time they give me the ball, they want me to shoot it. I’m stepping up and trying to be one of the best players on the team. It’s been my goal for the entire year, and I want to keep living that goal until the last game that we play.”

The win secured the second and a first-round bye in the NCAC Tournament.

Wabash will play its first game in the tournament on February 28 against the third-seeded Wooster. This familiar matchup will be the fourth-straight time the two powerhouses have faced in the tournament. With a neutral site — the tournament is hosted by Denison — and with a 1-1 record against



Vinny Buccilla '25 throws a pass up the court in the Little Giants' game against Ohio Wesleyan on February 12, 2025, at Chadwick Court. Buccilla, in his senior season, is a three-time North Coast Athletic Conference Tournament Champion, looking to win his fourth.

PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

each other in the regular season, these teams promise another thrilling encounter.

Wabash is 8-2 in their last 10 matchups against Wooster but lost their most recent 61-66 encounter on February 8.

Previously-ranked Wooster leads the NCAC in scoring, averaging 76.3 points per game. The Fighting Scots are led by senior Ashton Price who averages 18.5 ppg. They also pack fifth-year senior Nick Everett who is a perennial contender for best center in the conference. Add in a high-skill point guard in Jamir Billings and a host of role players

who can punish a lazy defense, and Wooster can say they have just as good a chance of winning the NCAC as anyone else.

While they stand at second in the bracket, Wabash and its conference-leading defense has the tools to win it all.

“Defense and rebounding is what really makes it happen,” said Brumett. “And the offensive piece that really allows your defense to work is whether or not you turn it over.”

Given their 60.5 points per (ppg) game allowed through the NCAC season, the Little Giants are perfectly suited to that play. The Little

Giants also boast one of the nation’s best defenders in Hupmann who leads Division III in blocks with 93 on the year.

“My teammates normally let me know where I am on the rankings,” said Hupmann. “But I love blocking shots. So the more I get, the better. It’s awesome. But, I’m just trying to win. I don’t really care where I am in the rankings.”

Wabash leads the nation in fewest turnovers per game, averaging only 8.6 a contest. They’re ability to hold onto the ball has been a huge factor in their regular season success.

Vinny Buccilla '25 leads Wabash

in scoring, with 15.1 points per game. With 113 games wearing scarlet and three NCAC Tournament Championships under his belt, Buccilla is one of the most experienced players in the nation.

“We’re still the champs,” said Buccilla. “Someone still has to take our throne in the tournament. Even though it’s at Denison, I know they’re going to be riled up. I know Wooster is going to be ready to play us. They’ve fallen to us the past three years. So they’re going to feel some type of way. And we have to come in and know that we’re still the one to beat at the end.”

The Little Giants also bring a wide arsenal of scorers, so that if someone has a bad day, the team will still find points. Seven members of the Scarlet & White have gone off for 20 or more points in a game so far this season.

“Depth is something that we haven’t always had,” said Brumett. “And a lot of times you might have depth, but it’s not always scoring depth. This team, we have a lot of different guys that can really go off. I think you need that in a tournament setting. You always worry about how you shoot it when it’s lose and go home. The fact that we’ve got a number of different guys that can play and score for this team, gives us a lot of confidence.”

It’s the same old rules from here on out for Wabash — if you win, you play again, if not, you go home.

The winner between the Fighting Scots and the Little Giants will advance to face the winner of nationally-24th-ranked Denison and the fourth-seeded Ohio Wesleyan. But one game at a time is enough of a task.

Wabash enters the playoffs 17-8. So far they’ve been just short of beating the top two teams in the country and suffered two losses to a ranked Denison team. They’ve shown signs of greatness, but will need to put it all together for two games if they want to defend their title.

After a full regular season that saw the NCAC at its strongest in a long time, four teams remain. Anyone who says they know who is going to win is lying. All that’s left now is tipoff.

“We’re just all ready to get over to Granville [Ohio] and play,” said Buccilla. “I feel it’s been a long week so far, and we’re so excited. We got the bye, got some rest and got healthy. But we really just want to go over there and get this fourth-straight conference championship.”

McRoberts: Here’s what you’ve missed so far in the NCAC Tournament

NOAH MCROBERTS '25
SPORTS WRITER

Several twists of fate late in the season helped decide the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) basketball tournament bracket and secure Wabash basketball a second-seed placement. Having dropped both games to Denison this season, the Little Giants’ best way to secure this was with a win over Oberlin in the last game of the regular season. However, since DePauw closed the season with a 76-70 victory over Wooster on February 22, Wabash earned a second-seed placement regardless of the Oberlin game’s outcome. Thus, the Little Giants received a first-round bye, with their first game of the newly styled NCAC tournament — now featuring six teams instead of eight — coming on Friday, February 28, in Granville, Ohio.

That left Wooster at the third-seed facing off against Oberlin last on February 25. In years past, the Yeomen have been upset specialists come February, but they never had a chance against the scorned Fighting Scots, who are seeking their first conference title in over 3 years. The Wooster that showed up on Tuesday looked much more like the team that spent the first half of the season in the top 10 of the national rankings.

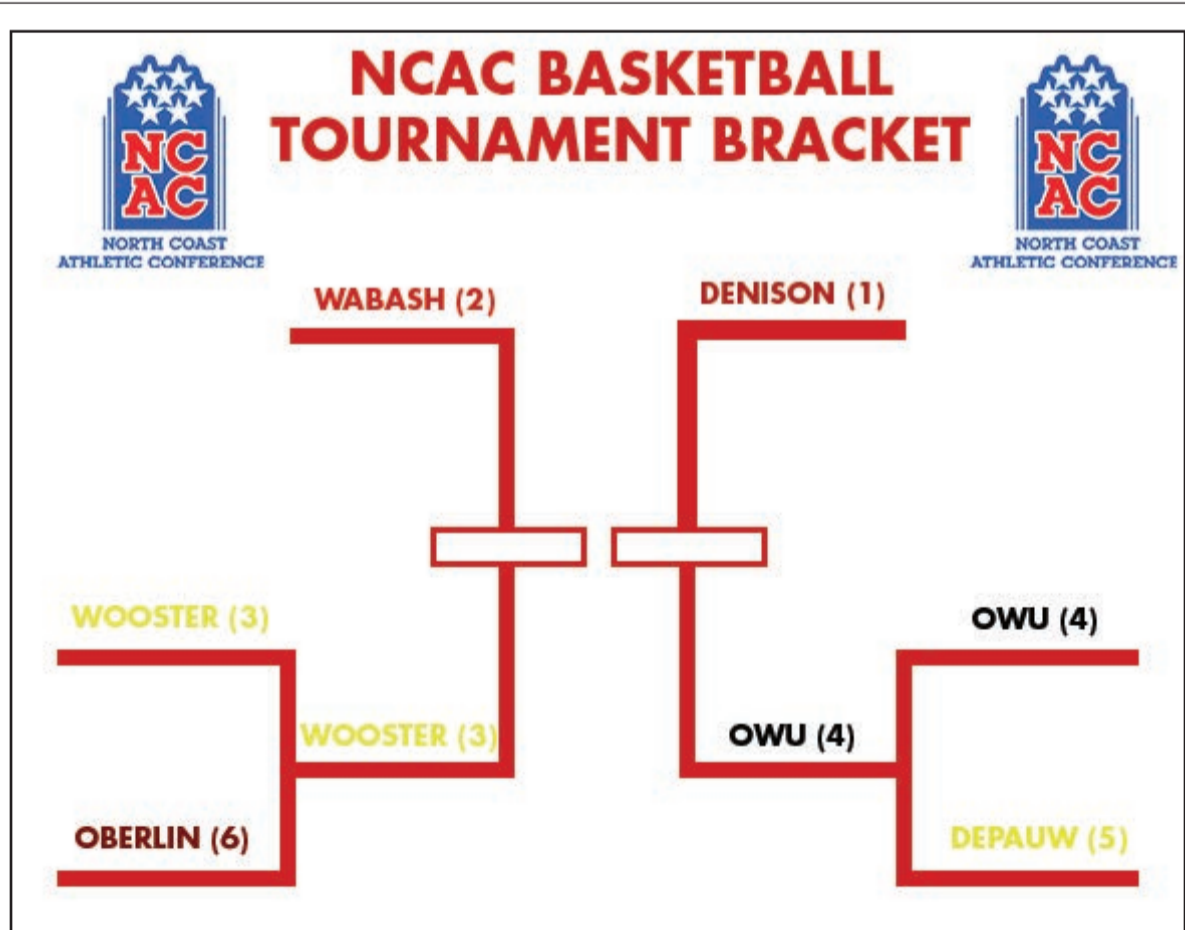
Point guard Jamir Billings shot 38% from beyond the arc as the primary shot-taker and scorer, which helped him pick up 13.4

points per game in the 2025 season. An all-around scoring specialist, Ashton Price is fourth on the team in total points scored, maintaining a whopping 49% field goal percentage. Their other primary scorer is big man Nick Everett, who averages just over 12 points per game on a 61% from the field. With these three guys taking over on Tuesday, the Fighting Scots were up 57-27 on Oberlin at halftime. Off the back of this win, they ride into Friday’s matchup against the Little Giants with some momentum.

However, the Little Giants have had the edge in the post season in recent years. And, with a top tier defense led by the formidable Noah Hupmann '25, Wabash certainly has a shot to move on to the championship. Furthermore, Wabash and Wooster split their games this season, with the home team winning each matchup, so we should expect the neutral playing field to determine the superior squad.

On the other side of day one stood Ohio Wesleyan at the four-seed, and DePauw at the five-seed. These two squads have been neck-and-neck the entire season, finding themselves everywhere from sixth to third in the NCAC at any given point in the year. The Tigers sport a young, raw talent in big man Reph Stephenson, who sports a 59% field goal percentage and seven and a half rebounds per game.

With the only exception being



GRAPHIC BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Saturday against Wooster, DePauw is 0-7 against teams above them in the conference standings and 8-0 against teams below them in the standings. Alas, Tuesday was no different, with the higher ranked Ohio Wesleyan moving on to the semifinal against Denison. The Bishops — if they catch fire — are tough to stop. They have taken 200 more three-point shots than any other team in the NCAC, except Wooster, while also holding the highest three-point percentage of any team in the conference.

However, their primary downside is that they also give up the highest three-point percentage of any team in the conference.

So, they rely on a run-and-gun style of basketball, hoping to catch the opponent on an off day, which did happen against Wooster back in January, where they won by 15. But, in their last match against Denison they led by nine at the half. So, an Ohio Wesleyan upset of the one-seed on Friday isn’t out of the question.

However, Denison rightfully deserves the one-seed, having lost only three games all season, which places them as the 24th-ranked team in the country. They sport the all-NCAC senior duo of power forward Ricky Radtke and point guard Daren Rubin, both of which average just south of 13 points per game alongside soph-

omore big man Trevor Reed. As a unit, they are the best team that has visited Chadwick this season.

However, only time will tell the winner. Each team left: Denison, Wabash, Wooster and Ohio Wesleyan, has a legitimate chance of coming away with the trophy this year. On February 28 at 5 p.m., Wabash will face off with the Fighting Scots of Wooster before Ohio Wesleyan and Denison cap off the night at 7:30 p.m. The NCAC Championship will then take place on March 1 at 4 p.m., no matter who is left standing.

WRESTLING

NCAA Region V Tournament comes to Crawfordsville

COLIN BAKER '26
STAFF WRITER

The College has been the site for many collegiate wrestling tournaments for a long time. From hosting the annual Wabash College Invitational, to Indiana Little State, this campus has seen a lot of good competition on the mat. This year Wabash has the privilege of hosting the 2025 NCAA Region V Tournament.

In the 2010's, Wabash was a prominent location for hosting regionals, hosting in 2014, 2015 and 2016, as well as 2018 and 2019. This will be the first time Wabash has hosted a regional since 2019, where they took first scoring 156.5 team points and qualified six for nationals.

“My youngest son is in seventh-grade wrestling, and I’m really excited to take him to regionals here at Wabash. It’s going to be a great experience.”

-Professor Joe Scanlon '04

The Region V regional consists of 18 teams: including three of the top 20 teams in the nation, 11th-ranked University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 13th-ranked North Central College, and 19th-ranked Wabash College. Each team will have one athlete represent them at each of the ten weight classes. In order to qualify for nationals, the athletes must place in the top three of their weight class.

Every year, schools who are interested in hosting the regional will put in a bid to the NCAA where they will choose based on a number of criteria. These criteria consist of a number of things, such as facilities and budget. Associate Director of Athletics and Recreation Victoria Gregory, went into details on what the criteria and what it takes to host this event.

“We put in a bid to the NCAA, and they consider hotels, the facilities and that you’re able to accommodate all of the security and medical needs,” said Gregory. “So the town is also a part of it with having those resources as well. Then it’s also the budget. Like, how efficient can you be with the budget to help the NCAA with that as well.”

While fitting the criteria to host the event takes a lot of work, it takes just as much to run the event. The school is responsible for hiring staff and making reservations for those traveling to work the event.

“We set everything up, from securing hotel rooms for the officials, to security, hiring an ambulance, all of that,” said Gregory “We’ll have our athletic trainers and a doctor here, and some of the members of the wrestling team will be helping with game operations at the tables, at each mat. We use a lot of our own equipment, and they send us some.”

As the school prepares to take on the challenge of hosting this important event, the wrestling team is preparing to compete in front of their home crowd. Going into his second season at the head of the program, this is the first time Head Coach Jake Fredricksen will get to coach his team in a regional hosted at Wabash.

The Wabash team has competed at home two other times this season, but with the stakes much higher, having home field advantage could help the Little Giants tremendously.

“I think it’s a huge advantage, to have our guys sleep in their own beds, and then they can walk two minutes over to the facility,” said Fredricksen “They’ve wrestled on those mats hundreds upon thousands of times, that gives you a lot of confidence as an athlete.”

Another person who is excited to take advantage of this opportunity is returning All-Ameri-

can James Day '26. Day looks to qualify for nationals for the third year in a row, this time in front of a home crowd.

“Being able to compete in a familiar environment, I think will serve as a big advantage and I’m super excited to be able to compete in front of a home crowd.” said Day. “I’m hoping to win regionals this year and punch my ticket to nationals, and there’s no better place to do it then at home.”

Day has been a key contributor for the Little Giants this season and looks to continue that this weekend. He currently ranks second in the region and seventh in the nation at 133-pounds, according to the National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA) rankings.

Along with Day, there are some other Little Giant wrestlers to watch out for. Daniel Uribe '25 is competing to qualify for the national tournament for the fourth time in his collegiate career. Uribe is currently ranked first in the region and eighth in the country at 149-pounds according to the NWCA rankings

Chase Baczek '25 is a two-time All-American for the Little Giants, placing sixth in 2022 and seventh in 2023 at 184-pounds. Baczek is wrestling to qualify for his fourth trip to nationals. He is currently ranked first in the region and fifth in the nation according to the NWCA rankings.

While performing well for the success of the team is often something that’s important, the Little Giants have a different mentality going into an important event like this one, hoping to qualify as many guys as they can for the national tournament.

“I think the team goal is pushing through as many guys as possible,” said Fredricksen. “I don’t really think about where we want to end as a team. Placement wise, it’s more about how many guys we can push through to the national tournament.”

Hosting this event has also brought a lot of excitement to Wabash students and wrestling fans. For many, this is an opportunity to watch high level competition right in their own backyard.

“I’m hoping to win regionals this year and punch my ticket to nationals, and there’s no better place to do it then at home.”

-James Day '26

“I’m super excited for it,” said Professor Joe Scanlon '04. “The one thing that is tough about wrestling is they don’t host a lot of home events. And to host regionals, where people are competing to go to nationals – the ultimate goal – is really exciting. My youngest son is in seventh-grade wrestling, and I’m really excited to take him to regionals here at Wabash. It’s gonna be a great experience.”

Many members of the Wabash community have the opportunity to watch and support their friends, students, peers and roommates – watching as they compete in one of the biggest tournaments of the year, and potentially become a national qualifier.

With this year’s NCAA Region V Tournament being hosted at home, there is a lot going on from both ends. The school is working hard to make sure this event goes smoothly, while the Wabash wrestling team prepares to go to battle in front of a home crowd, with their seasons on the line.

Fans should make sure to go out and support the Little Giants as they compete in the NCAA regional at home on Saturday, March 1 in Knowling FieldHouse.



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25 AND KYLE FOSTER '27

(Top) James Day '26 grapples with an opponent at the Wabash Wrestling Invitational on February 1, 2025, in the Knowling Fieldhouse. (Middle and Bottom) The Knowling Fieldhouse will be transformed for the 2025 Region V Tournament.

PROJECTED STARTERS

Andrew Punzalan '26	- 125 pounds
James Day '26	- 133 pounds
Mason Weyant '28	- 141 pounds
Daniel Uribe '25	- 149 pounds
Ayden Lutes '26	- 157 pounds
Mawuli Nevis '25	- 165 pounds
Jaylen Young '28	- 174 pounds
Zach Huckaby '28	- 184 pounds
Chase Baczek '25	- 197 pounds
Titus Waters '27	- 285 pounds

GRAPHIC BY ETHAN WALLACE '25

Coach Romano and rugby welcome the future

Together they aim for more recruitment, development and championships

SAM BENEDICT '25
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The hardest-hitting club at Wabash is ready to take the pitch. The Wabash rugby team will make their debut on March 1 at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, MI. Following a disappointing end to the season in 2024 — where a last-minute change in conference rules prevented the team from having a chance at competing at the national tournament — rugby leadership has refocused and revitalized the team's offseason approach.

The past development season started off with the addition of a volunteer head coach in Kelly Romano, a coaching veteran who has volunteered to take the helm of the rugby club. This addition alone immediately elevated the level of play for the team. Historically, the rugby team is coached by students, but that has created significant burden and strain on the student-athletes working to coach rugby, play rugby and do everything else that Wabash demands.

"I think the most direct impact (of Romano on the team) is the level of knowledge and IQ on the team because of her facilitating practices," said President and Captain James Wallace '26. "In the past, it's been student-leaders leading the practice... We never 'kicked to touch' before Kelly came along, and it's just little IQ things and then bigger term planning that she's able to facilitate since she's so experienced as a coach."

Besides the addition of a head coach, the team has increased the intensity of their offseason practice schedule. In the past, the team has practiced three times a week, but have now moved their schedule to five days a week with tournaments on Saturday — a significant increase in the intensity of their preparation.

"One of the quotes we live by is that exceptional success comes



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Volunteer Head Rugby Coach Kelley Romano kisses the Monon Keg, the traveling trophy Wabash formerly shared with DePauw's abandoned rugby team. The photo comes from rugby's media day on February 28, 2025 in Lilly Library.

from exceptional circumstances," said Wallace. "And we think we know we have exceptional circumstances."

"The team is bought in on a level unseen before," said Rugby Club Vice President and Assistant Coach Tanner Quackenbush '26. "Our system and methodology in development has gone through growing pains, but we are ready to see the results and

fruits of our labor."

With an increased training schedule, the team hopes to be prepared for a rigorous set of matches this spring that includes five seven-on-seven tournaments and a possible berth to the Collegiate Rugby Championship, the National 7's Rugby Tournament. However, the path to Nationals changed dramatically last year and this year is no different.

This year, the team will focus on developing a strong "resume." A team's resume looks at how many tournaments they won in a given year as well as the individual teams that they beat. By having a strong resume, the team hopes to capture an at-large bid. Previous years have offered multiple paths to qualify for Nationals, including specific tournaments that can be won like the conference championship. This year, the only tournament that the team is able to travel to that will count as an auto-qualifier for Nationals is the Fighting Irish 7's auto-qualifying tournament on March 29 at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana.

Although the conference championship will not have the same stakes as it has in years past, Wabash will still be fighting tooth-and-nail to leave victorious. The tournament will be played at Little Giant Stadium for the first time — marking a major milestone for the club.

The final advance that the team has made this offseason is in their recruiting efforts. Previously, the team had done minimal recruitment, but after realizing that they may have an untapped resource in the Advancement Office, the team developed a committee to tackle the issue.

We're working closely with [Dean for Enrollment Management] Chip Timmons '96 and the Admissions Office to connect with prospective students and gauge interest in rugby within the country," said Quackenbush. "For recruiting outside the country, we've partnered with Chris Dixon and the International Center to reach out to students from all over the world to come to Wabash."

The ambitious recruitment efforts will hopefully continue to expand the club's size and ensure that the team's depth and skill is untouched for years to come. Already, the team has seen a positive result.

"In the short few weeks that we've started, we've had four to five prospective rugby players reach out," said Wallace. "We're working hand-in-hand with admissions and, in particular, international admissions, since we do want to source talent from abroad."

"This team, Team 47, is probably going to be — and already has the ingredients to be — the most successful team thus far in Wabash history," said Romano. "They are what's going to put Wabash on the map for rugby, and people are going to start to want to come here to be part of this team. And not just come here to play for this team or to play with this team, but to come here just to be a part of it in any capacity, because that's how infectious this team is, and that's how they are building success. People want to ride that wave."

While previous teams have been defined by star talent, this year's team looks to approach the season as a unit. With everyone doing their job, the team expects to have opportunities for success.

"People want to play our brand of rugby," said Romano. "There are no heroes on our team. There's not a quarterback on our team that our team rises and falls by the breath of. And right now, our team is on fire, and they just keep getting hot and fire catches and it keeps getting hotter and hotter, and we don't have a standout, because you can't be a standout in rugby and be successful."

"Every one of our members is a major factor," said Quackenbush. "We have a phrase, 'Everyone sweeps the shed.' From our star players, to our incoming freshmen, no individual is bigger than the team. And we wear our scarlet W's with pride, knowing that we are a part of something bigger than ourselves."

Baseball opens 2025 season in Lafayette

Cam Scheidt '25 ties all-time triples record

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

The weather wasn't perfect, but Wabash baseball was bursting at the seams to get their 2025 season underway. On February 23 in Lafayette, Indiana the Little Giants split a double-header against the Manchester University Spartans. With a new coach in the bullpen, a stacked conference schedule and school record one swing away from falling, it's time for America's favorite pastime to return to campus.

The Scarlet & White went one for two against the Spartans, losing the first game 5-8 before bouncing back for a 14-4 victory in game two.

"I'm not sure there was a huge difference in mentality [between games one and two]," said Head Baseball Coach Jake Martin '04. "In game one we were on our heels a little bit offensively. We didn't attack hittable fastballs in RBI situations, and left some guys on base. That's not who we want to be. We want to be aggressive in those spots and look to do damage. There are no excuses there. If you had to have one, it's an early game, our first time out, first time competing. We are really looking forward to getting back after it this weekend to see a change in our aggressiveness."

Camden Scheidt '25 started off the season with historic achievement, as he cracked his 17th career triple to tie the all-time Wabash record. With a combination of a left-hand batting stance and unmatched speed on the basepath, Schiedt is optimized for stretching to third. After 150 years of Wabash baseball, all it will take is one more three-base hit for Scheidt to cement himself as the triple king.

"It felt great to be back out there this past weekend," said Scheidt. "I think the whole team has been getting some cabin fever from practicing inside the first month and a half. So it was great getting back into a competitive environment."

The big question surrounding the team this season is how the addition of Pitching Coach Mac Lozer will impact the Scarlet & White's bullpen. "Attack Mode" is the mindset for Wabash's pitchers this season, and it is a focus of Lozer's pitching program.

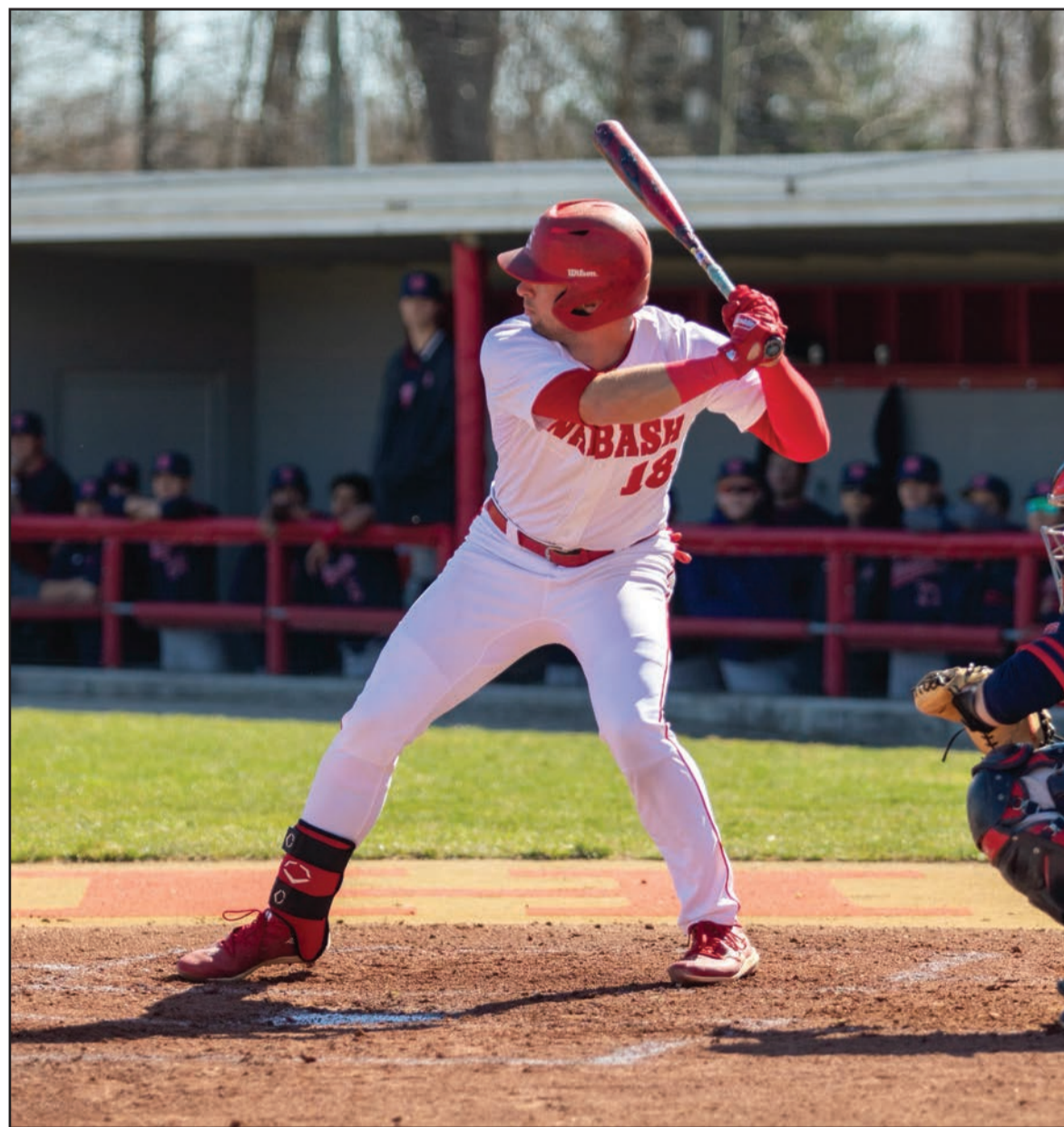


PHOTO BY KYLE FOSTER '27

Cam Scheidt '25 stands at the plate in the Little Giants' home game against Hanover College on March 17, 2024, at Goodrich Ballpark.

"Coach Lozer has been doing a great job all around," said Caleb Everson '26 who started on the hill for Wabash in the second game. "He has been preparing us physically through a detailed throwing progression, and mentally with daily pitchers meetings centered around psychology and team mindset."

There were ups and downs through the first two games as the team started with a 6.57 ERA. After giving up 14 hits and eight earned runs in the first game, Wabash kept Manchester to six hits and just three earned runs in the

later outing. Robbie Manuzzi '25 was credited with his first win of the season.

"We believe there was not much of a difference between the first game and second game when it comes to mound performance," said Lozer. "We are a process-based staff, instead of a results-oriented staff. In 16 innings pitched, we were able to limit ourselves to four walks while yielding 11 strikeouts. Yes, they touched us up a bit in the first game, however, that's the game of baseball sometimes. We will continue to

stick to our approach of limiting free bases and attacking hitters."

The Little Giants will have their work cut out for them in the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) this season, as the conference looks to be as stacked as ever. With only four spots in the NCAC Tournament, it will be a dog fight all conference season to see who is in and who is out when May rolls around.

"It's nothing new," said Martin. "We tied Kenyon two years ago and won the tiebreaker... Last year we tied Kenyon and lost a tie breaker to have to stay home and watch.

The guys know how tight it is. It's about understanding that it does come down to one game, a couple of innings every year. We're trying to compete against ourselves and hold ourselves to a high standard of playing winning baseball. We're going to be a competitive group that should contend in this league."

The Denison Big Red — who are riding high on their fourth-straight NCAC title and a trip to the NCAA Super Regionals — were picked as the team to beat in the preseason coaches poll. When the D3baseball.com top 25 rankings come out on February 28, the Big Red will undoubtedly make an appearance in the top 10.

Not too far behind them in the poll was Wittenberg. The Tigers had some of the hottest bats in Division III last season and could find themselves competing with Denison if they can make a few improvements on defense.

Wabash and Kenyon tied for third in the poll, but the DePauw Tigers are not too far behind. Wooster — a team that canceled Wabash's conference tournament trip in the final game of the season last year — could play spoiler again in 2025. And as always Ohio Wesleyan, Oberlin and Hiram, in their last year with the NCAC, will probably scrape a few wins away from top teams.

"The NCAC will always be one of the toughest conferences in the country," said Scheidt. "We have set high goals as a team and have put in the work to compete with these top teams at the highest level. I think we will go 'under the radar' this year and I love that. We are a sneaky team with a lot of talent. We're an experienced squad, with some younger guys that are hungry to get in the mix as well. So I think if we stick to our identity while also playing with confidence, we can be at the top of the conference standings."

From February 28 to March 2, the Little Giants will play three games, facing the University of Wisconsin-Platteville on February 28 and March 2 and Elmhurst University on March 1. All three games will be held in Lafayette at Loeb Stadium.

This week in sports

HAIDEN DIEMER-MCKINNEY '26
STAFF WRITER

February continues to be a busy month for Wabash athletics. Some teams are just opening up the spring play, while winter sports are in the midst of the championship season. Here's a rundown of all the action and excitement.

Basketball:

The basketball team celebrated Senior Day on Saturday, February 22 with a 71-60 victory over Oberlin College to sweep the Yeomen on the season. Noah Hupmann '25 posted his third double-double of the season, scoring 12 points and crashing the glass to claim 16 rebounds. Vinny Buccilla '25 finished with 14 points and three assists in his final game at Chadwick Court.

The Little Giants finished the season on a four-game winning streak and secured the number two seed in the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Tournament, enough to clinch a first-round bye. Wabash will face the winner of third-seeded College of Wooster and sixth-seeded Oberlin College on Friday, February 28 at 5 p.m..

Baseball:

After a long winter, the 2025 baseball season is underway! The Little Giants opened with a doubleheader against Manchester University at Loeb Stadium in Lafayette, Indiana. Although Wabash fell 8-5 in the first matchup, a monster nine-run 5th inning in game two fueled a 14-4 advantage over the Spartans for its first win of the season.

In that second game, Camden Scheidt '25 tied the school record for career triples, racking up his 17th three-base hit. Scheidt stands atop the school history books with Jared Wolfe '19 and will seek to surpass the career triples record this season.

The Little Giants are back at Loeb Stadium on Friday, February 28 when they welcome the University of Wisconsin-Platteville to Lafayette, Indiana.

Track & Field:

The Wabash track and field team sent a small group of athletes to Indiana State to compete in the John Gartland Invitational on Saturday, February 22. This meet

was an opportunity for athletes to hit the NCAC standard marks for next week's NCAC Indoor Championships.

Jakob Van Pelt '28 took advantage by setting a new personal best in the shot put with a launch of 13.18 meters (43 feet, 3 inches), which equaled the conference standard and secured him a spot in the championship meet.

With 76 points and five first place votes, the Little Giants are slated as the favorites for the championships according to the coaches pre-championship poll. The meet will take place on Friday, February 28-Saturday, March 1 at Oberlin College.

Tennis:

The tennis team continued a hot start to the spring season with consecutive shutouts over Simpson College and Principia College in Elsah, Illinois on Saturday, February 22. The Little Giants are now 7-2 on the season, riding a four-game winning streak.

Scoring back-to-back 7-0 victories, not a single athlete lost a game over the 18 matches that took place over the weekend. This was the first doubleheader shutout since February 25, 2023 against Principia and Earlham College.

Wabash opens NCAC play on Friday, February 28, welcoming the Owls of Kenyon College to Collett Tennis Center.

Volleyball:

The volleyball team traveled to Aurora, Illinois on Saturday, February 22 and split its doubleheader against St. Norbert College and Aurora University. The Little Giants started with a 3-0 sweep over St. Norbert, never giving up the lead in a single set. However, Wabash met its match when challenging the 14th-ranked team in Division III, Aurora University. Despite dropping 3-0, the team was composed and competitive against one of the best teams in the nation, forcing 26 ties and five lead changes across the three sets.

Wabash is now 11-2 on the season and will begin its Midwest Collegiate Volleyball League portion of the schedule with a trip to Wittenberg University on Thursday, February 27.



PHOTO BY SEAN BLEDOSE '26

Ethan Koeneman '26 celebrates a point in the Little Giants' home doubleheader against Anderson University and Earlham College on Saturday, February 15, 2025, at Collett Tennis Center.

Lacrosse:

The lacrosse team resumed its dominant 2025 campaign on Saturday, February 22 with a 12-6 victory over Muskingum University, avenging its loss from last year. The neutral site match was played at Mount St. Joseph University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Although the Little Giants relinquished the first goal of the game, they responded with five first-period goals and never looked back. Attacker Quinn Fitzgerald '25 led the way with seven goals and is currently well ahead of pace to break the Wabash single-season goals record.

But the program's top priority is winning, which it has done so starting off the season 3-0. The Little Giants will compete to extend its record to 4-0 when they travel to Ada, Ohio to challenge Ohio Northern University on Saturday, March 1.

Swimming & Diving:

The swimming and diving team had select athletes compete at the Wabash College Last Chance Meet at the Crawfordsville High School Aquatic Center. This meet on Sunday,

February 23 was an opportunity for (swimmers) to post a mark fast enough to qualify for the NCAA Division III Championships in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Every Little Giant that raced swam to a new lifetime best, with the highlight coming in the 200-yard backstroke, where Ryan West '28 shattered the school record in both the prelim and the final. The freshman's time of 1:47.56 is over three seconds faster than the previous record set by teammate Nick Plumb '27 last season. Quinn Sweeney '27 jumped to fourth all-time in the 100-yard fly with a time of 50.29, while Ethan Johns '25 and Barret Smith '26 earned individual victories in the 200-yard freestyle and 100-yard breaststroke.

Although Wabash didn't advance any individuals to the national championships, the team shrank the gap at the conference meet while achieving new school records and multiple all-time top 10 marks. A strong end to a memorable campaign hopes to carry positive momentum into the offseason.

Ethan Johns '25 - A lasting legacy in and out of the water

NATE JOVEN '26
STAFF WRITER

In this year's North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Swimming and Diving Championship meet hosted by Denison University, Wabash proudly walked away from the four-day competition after achieving third place. In true Wabash fashion, the Little Giants fought hard and accomplished much during that time. There was no shortage of broken records and goals achieved. Among the successes, one senior that stood out was Ethan Johns '25.

"[E] Johns has had tremendous performances this year in all of his events," said Head Swimming and Diving Coach Will Bernhardt. "He earned all lifetime best times by the end of the season. That is really hard to do and he managed to drop significant amounts of time in all of his events. It was a wonderful year and I am so happy for him to 'retire' on those swims."

At the NCAC championship, Johns recorded season best times in the 50-yard freestyle and the 100-yard freestyle. Since then, Johns improved his 200-yard freestyle time in Wabash's Last Chance meet. As a team, Wabash has improved over the course of Johns' career.

"In this year's conference championship we put ourselves in our own tier," said Johns. "We came into each session with passion, filling the atmosphere of the meet and drowning out every other team, including Denison and Kenyon. We stood out way ahead of Wooster, Oberlin and DePauw, teams who were our focus in previous years. While we are still behind Kenyon, we are as close to them as these



PHOTO BY DIEGO BANUELOS '27

Ethan Johns '25 is the holder of several Wabash swimming records and has been the backbone of the team for his four years. Wabash swimming & diving hosted the Indiana DIII meet on October 4, 2024 in the Class of 1950 Natatorium.

teams are to us."

This separation represents the growth that Wabash swimming & diving has been undergoing. Second by second, the team has put more swimmers in more competitive positions to earn points.

"What set us apart was the depth of our roster and the mentality we carried into the meet," said Johns. "Over the course of the meet we were consistently getting guys into the B finals rather than the C final and this difference became evident. Wooster, Oberlin

and DePauw did not have the same depth and as a result we outscored them significantly."

Johns himself has built an impressive resume during his time swimming for Wabash. Through hard work in the pool as well as the weight room, Johns improved tremendously this season.

"He took every aspect of his training seriously this season and it paid dividends in the end," said Bernhardt. "I believe his plan with the trainers to increase his flexibility really added to his phenomenal performance in the pool. From freshman year until now, he constantly raised his level of competitiveness and never relented when the training got tough. He fought for every single time drop that he achieved this year."

A dependable swimmer, Johns was elected by his teammates as a team captain when he was only a sophomore. He has held that position since then.

"I have never had a three-year captain before because so many sophomores just haven't developed enough as leaders," said Bernhardt. "But he had the trust of his teammates and our staff. Each year, I would say that he became a stronger leader with each season. He was the guy that gave fiery pre-meet locker rooms speeches and really got our guys locked in for great meets."

John's is more than just a great swimmer, however. He is also a great student.

"Ethan is our best student on the team and leads the overall GPA out of everyone," said Coach Bernhardt. "I am proud that he led our team not only in the pool but showed them the way in the classroom as well. Over his three years as captain, we have constantly raised our team GPA to some of the highest averages in our programs history with the last four semesters being above a 3.45."

Johns hasn't always been the great student athlete that he is today. He has gone through much development over his four years at Wabash.

"As a leader, I've seen Ethan grow in his confidence over the past four years," said Bernhardt. "As a sophomore captain, he was still trying to figure it all out. We were becoming a closer team and getting stronger culturally.

He adjusted his leadership style as he saw the roles that needed to be filled within the team. He is very sharp and he really helped develop team standards and our pillars of success. I cannot say it enough, but our team is in such a better place now than when he came into it because of his leadership and that of his other captains that invested so much time, effort and dedication to mold our team into one of the best in program history."

Creating a strong culture has been a major focus for the swim team. Graduating only one senior from last year's team, this season the team has been more connected than ever.

"Over my four years we worked incredibly hard to create an uplifting, motivating, and energetic culture," said Johns. "It took everyone to buy in to make this happen and while not everyone bought in right away, everyone is well on board now."

"He has spent hours outside of the pool with guys on homework, tutoring, life conversations, etc," said Bernhardt. "I am truly grateful for his sacrifices and dedication to our team. It was such fun getting to work with him for his collegiate career and very rewarding as a coach to see him go out on such a high note! He is so much more than just a fast swimmer that holds some records. He is the embodiment of everything that this institution stands for and proclaims can happen when you come to Wabash."

"Wabash molded me into the swimmer I am today," said Johns. "I came in as a freshman and dropped time at an astonishing rate because the coaching staff invested time into fixing my technique and creating a specified training regiment to fit my needs. This continued effort paid off over the years and it showed in my final season."

The improvement didn't end with times in the pool. Through the swim team, Johns has developed as a leader and as a person.

"Serving as a captain of this team has been my most rewarding experience at Wabash," said Johns. "As a freshman I was seen as a leader by example but now I have developed the skills to lead in active, concrete ways to help our team."

Despite the enormous success the Johns has found in both the pool and classroom, these are not the things that he will remember most from his time at Wabash.

"My relationship with my coaches and teammates have defined my experience at the College," said Johns. "I am excited to see how these connections continue to grow because I know the bonds that have formed are ones that last a lifetime."

As a final message to the Wabash community, Johns would like to encourage readers to try attending a swim meet or even joining the team.

"This team brings energy and makes swim meets fun, worthwhile experiences," said Johns. "Also if you are looking to get more out of your Wabash experience, consider joining the team as a diver. No diver on our roster dove before coming to Wabash and have made a huge impact on the team. You could be next."

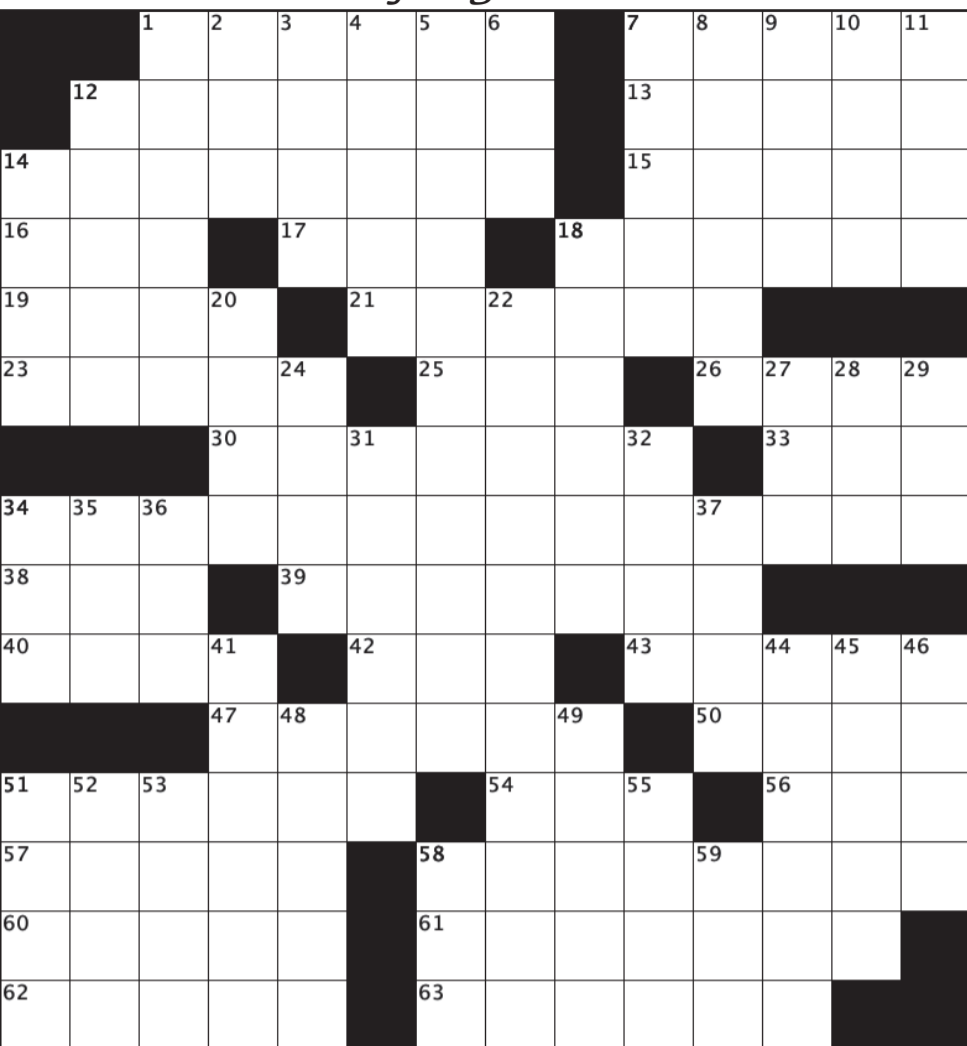
**Congratulations,
Dr. John Roberts '83
& Dr. Scott Douglas '84
WCI's Men of the Year & Some Little Giants**



[instagram.com/wabashclubofindianapolis](https://www.instagram.com/wabashclubofindianapolis)

'Law enforcement'

Crossword by Logan Weilbaker '25



ACROSS

1. Law enforcement group
7. Carnival music
12. Official title that literally means "in place of the king"
13. Paragon
14. Disappearing words on an online application
15. Backpacker's path
16. They, in Marseilles
17. Grazed
18. Potential finding of 51-Across
19. Took to court
21. Mythical beauty who lent her name to a continent
23. Accelerator, for one
25. 76ers, on a scoreboard
26. Org. whose Parliamentary Assembly is assembling in Dayton, OH this May
30. Nudnik's activity
33. Obey the coxswain
34. 1957 legal drama
38. Distinctive feature of Mr. Spock
39. "The Bourne Identity" plot device
40. Queen's getup
42. Robot add-on
43. "November Rain" soloist
47. Bowling alley buttons
50. Verbal feedback?
51. Law enforcement group in 34-Across
54. Granola grain
56. Adj/hyp
57. City in New York's Mohawk Valley
58. Potential finding of 51-Across
60. Doorbusters
61. "Sticky" bureaucratic stuff
62. "I see it!"
63. Go along with

DOWN

1. Seeing red... or seeing double
2. Big campaign mo.
3. Actress Headey of "Game of Thrones"

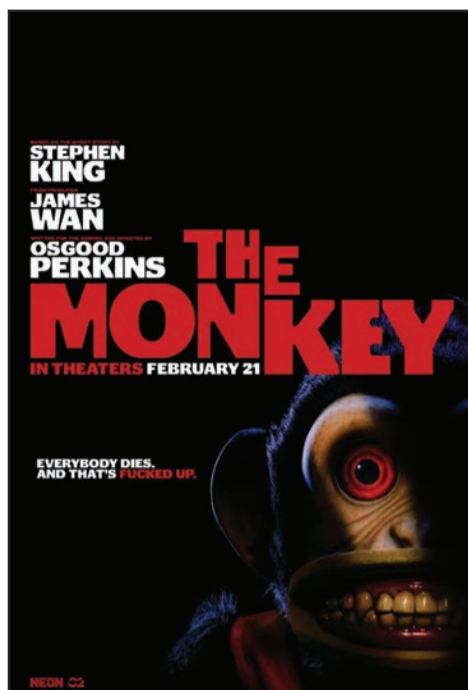
4. Seeing red
5. Just deserts
6. See
7. Get out of a slump?
8. "Rocky" shout
9. It may be square
10. Worms, e.g.
11. Adversary's antithesis
12. "x" in an equation
14. Daffy Duck trait
18. ___-on (happenings)
20. Writer Roald
22. What's used to doll up Dolly
24. Lamp blobs, supposedly
27. It gets bigger with curls
28. "Little piggy"
29. Part of MYOB and BYOB
31. "I would be ___."
32. Blanc + noir
34. Bear in a hit 2012 comedy
35. Revolutionary, e.g.
36. Geologic time period
37. New Haven team
41. Food processor?
44. RSVP "yes," say
45. Was a star?
46. Letterman or Leno
48. Render unreadable
49. Smooths with rough stuff
51. Like the legal system, one hopes
52. State with a new, eponymous hockey club
53. Stir (up)
55. Carry-on, maybe
58. Apt name for an accountant
59. When repeated, a dance



Scan for solution!

'The Monkey'

Comedy or horror?



COURTESY OF BLOODY DISGUSTING

BEN WALLACE '25 STAFF WRITER

This movie is best described as wildly absurd. For an hour and a half, it delivers complete nonsense, it is pure stupidity in its most unfiltered form. But that's exactly what it set out to be.

However, I expected something entirely different. Last year, director Osgood Perkins delivered "Longlegs" one of my favorite films of the year which was a masterful blend of horror and thriller that left me genuinely unsettled as I exited the theater. Naturally, I assumed "The Monkey" would be on a similar level; however, these two films couldn't be further apart on the horror spectrum. I also tend to avoid trailers to go into movies blind, which likely contributed to my wildly misplaced expectations.

The film begins by establishing how The Monkey operates. The first kill is actually pretty cool; brutal, gory and executed in a surprisingly original way. After that, we're introduced to the film's two main characters, twin brothers Hal and Bill. The two don't get along, and Bill often bullies Hal.

The Monkey is a cursed object passed down from their father, and Hal gradually begins to understand its deadly nature. Once he realizes it kills people, he tries to dispose of it by

dumping it in a well, where it remains for 25 years. The film then jumps forward in time where Hal is now an uninvolved father, while Bill is nowhere to be found. But when The Monkey resurfaces, Hal is forced to return to his hometown to confront it once and for all.

The script is utterly ridiculous, and the plot feels pretty elementary. In a whacky film, you typically establish a world where the absurdity feels natural, but this movie fails at that entirely. Another thing is that the film leans more into comedy than horror, which I don't think works at all. Most of the jokes fall flat, though occasionally, the sheer absurdity of the movie earns a chuckle. The ending lacks any real climax, making the entire plot feel like the setup for a larger joke that ultimately doesn't land.

The movie also introduces a plethora of side characters, some better than others, but it quickly becomes clear that they exist solely for a cheap kill. The kills themselves, much like the jokes, are hit or miss. Some are creative, delivering cool and necessary gore, while others feel underwhelming and just plain dumb.

In a movie like this, acting performances take a backseat since the actors don't have a script they can actually work with. That said, everyone was fine and no one was outright bad. Colin O'Brien, who plays Hal's son Petey, stands out with some of the better comedic timing in the film, making his performance slightly above average compared to the rest of the cast.

I can't lie, I didn't have a terrible time watching this in the theater with my friends. It's one of those movies where everyone walks out with the same bewildered expression but completely different opinions. Half of us saw it as stupid fun, while the other half thought it was just plain stupid. Either way, we all left wondering what exactly we had just watched.

Even with a shorter runtime, I personally wouldn't recommend this to anyone. The film's uneven tone, weak script and lackluster execution make it a tough sell. However, I can't fault someone for enjoying it, as there are moments of absurd fun sprinkled throughout. If you're in the right mindset and just looking for mindless entertainment, you might get a kick out of it, but don't expect much beyond that.

FINAL VERDICT: 2/5 WALLYS



Senior Spotlight: Tom Oppman '25

Humble striving



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Tom Oppman '25 presents at the 23rd Celebration of Student Research on January 27, 2023.

BRYCE KINNAMAN '27 STAFF WRITER

"Work hard, success will follow" is a mantra that Tom Oppman has lived to the fullest in his time thus far at the college. Oppman hails from Edwardsburg, Michigan, and credited the saying to his father, Robert "Bob" Oppman '88.

"When I am in the thick of it, I really like to rely on that mantra that it is okay to simply put your head down and do the work," said Oppman.

While Oppman has had many accomplishments and achievements from putting his head down and trudging along through the difficult journey of Wabash College, the senior often unselfishly picks his head up, and offers a helping hand to the men and women around him.

Micheal Abbott '85, professor of theater at Wabash, and a fellow juror of Oppman's in the Wabash Theater's production of "12 Angry Men," admired a lot of his characteristics that might go unnoticed.

"Tom's intelligence is obvious, but he's also a deeply compassionate man," said Abbott. "Last semester, a student in my film class was struggling personally, and Tom reached out to him numerous times before class, checking in and asking how he was doing. He did this quietly, but I noticed."

Oppman is an independent on campus who majors in biochemistry and minors in psychology. While he was naturally interested in his father's alma mater, Oppman was pulled to Wabash because of the old academic feeling that he felt walking across campus. Since his decision to attend Wabash and its hallowed halls, Oppman has worked tirelessly but attentively to contribute to campus in a variety of ways.

Arguably, Oppman is most recognized for his roles in Wabash theater productions, where he has given plenty of Wabash men, faculty and community members laughs, tears and smiles. Oppman has been a part of four Wabash productions: "Saturday Night Live," "Stage Kiss," "Something Rotten!" and the ongoing classic "12 Angry Men."

Oppman is also a past president of the Public Health Organization and a brother of the Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies.

Even when the spring semester ends, the senior continues to hike the tougher trail. Oppman has had three successful internships over his summer "breaks." During one summer, Oppman worked for the St. Joseph County Department of Health and spent time observing Dr. Bob Einterz '77, collaborating on strategic planning for a HPV vaccination. Oppman also worked in a biochemistry laboratory at the University of Notre Dame under Katherine White, and last summer he took a trip with the Global Health Initiative (GHI) to

Peru and worked the rest of the summer with the Crooked Creek Food Pantry in Indianapolis. He was also a member of Professor of Chemistry Walter Novak's biochemistry lab for three semesters and worked on designing and optimizing the LOCKR protein system.

Oppman's resume showcases his deep interest in medicine and helping the community, two elements he plans on centering his career around. He aspires to be a practicing doctor and has an interest in becoming a primary care doctor. He has applied to medical school and has already heard positive news from one of the two schools he is hoping to attend.

A star and leader on both the stage and in the laboratory, the senior admits that his combination of interests is somewhat unusual, but it is necessary for the future.

"Research is important, but it's only so

valuable as your ability to share it and communicate it with others," said Oppman. "Our society really lacks effective science communicators, and one way to bridge that gap could be through a story, through acting and by sharing research."

Reflecting on his experience, Oppman was frank about what he hopes current and future Wabash students will seek and prioritize.

"Embrace the community and the brotherhood," said Oppman. "Stay humble and be connected to others. I noticed there is a unique part of brotherhood to this school, and I wanted to join it."

Tom Oppman exemplifies how Wabash men should strive to combine their personal interests with assisting the communities around them. He leaves behind not only a legacy of success, but of humility.

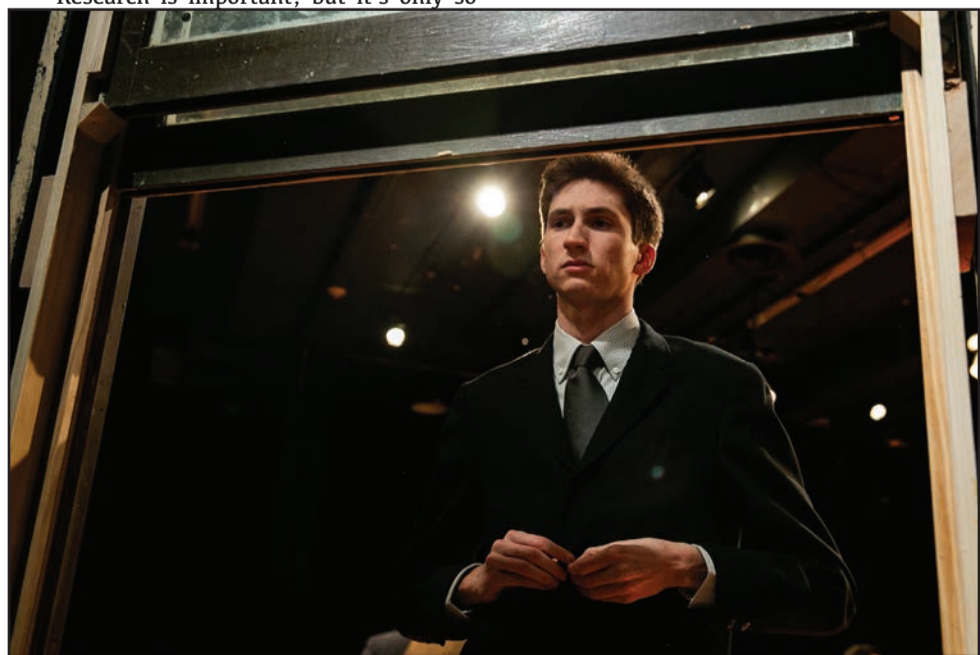


PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Tom Oppman '25 prepares for his role as juror #8 in the rehearsal of the play "12 Angry Men" on February 24, 2025.

Behind the curtain

A conversation with '12 Angry Men' director Logan Weilbaker '25

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
FEATURES EDITOR

This week marked the premiere of the first of two Wabash College Theater productions this spring, namely the drama “12 Angry Men.” However, the show has a particularly interesting twist: it is directed by a current Wabash student, Logan Weilbaker '25. *The Bachelor* staff caught up with Weilbaker the day before the play’s premiere to inquire into the background of his choice of “12 Angry Men,” how he relates the script to his Wabash experience and whether he views himself as more of an actor or a director.

OK, first question, and a burning one really: why “12 Angry Men?” Why choose it instead of a number of other plays you could have chosen?

“12 Angry Men,” I think initially came up during a Google search, “plays with lots of men,” so there’s that sort of practical aspect. I’d never seen it at the time, although it’s now an almost-70-year-old movie. And so I watched it and loved the script and story. And I think, that it’s a play that’s very Wabash in a lot of ways, particularly what I address in my director’s note [in the play program], this concept of being in a pressure cooker environment where everybody is thrown together into this small room, all these people with different beliefs, different perspectives on life, come into confined space. In “12 Angry Men” that’s a jury room, at Wabash that’s a four square block radius in Crawfordsville, and all these beliefs and ideas and understandings of the world come into dialogue. Oftentimes, as we see in “12 Angry Men,” and the same is true at Wabash, tempers flare when people don’t agree. I also think that that’s what the world needs right now, the ability to have difficult conversations, the ability to be in a place with people who have diverse perspectives and to be able to, even though it’s going to be hard, to have difficult conversations.

Do you think that after watching

the movie, and now going through the process of directing a version of it, that it’s changed the way you look at Wabash and the way you reflect on your experiences here?

One of the big themes in “12 Angry Men” is that one person can make a really big impact, and that the decisions we collectively make are not predestined in any way. When the show begins, the ending is completely unknown. We know it

because we’ve been rehearsing it, it is written down, but as you’re experiencing for the first time, the jurors could come to a guilty verdict or a not guilty verdict. And it’s through the course of small decisions made over a long period of time that we reach our end, and that end is only one of an infinite number of possible outcomes. Even though there’s “guilty,” “not guilty,” there’s all sorts of smaller ends like, how are people going to leave? How are individuals going to be changed? So, as I come to the end of my time at Wa-

bash, I now see that the end each of us come to after four years of Wabash is just a result, as it is in the play, of all sorts of small decisions, all sorts of personal interactions that end up coming to some sort of conclusion that nobody could have predicted at the beginning. I think if you ask any senior, “Are you ending at Wabash where you thought you’d end?” all of us would agree, “No,” because the interactions that we have here there’s no stopping, there’s no time to catch your breath. Wabash is similar in that way as well, where it all kind of happens before you realize and then you’re at the end and you go, “Wow, I didn’t know we’d come to that conclusion, but I did.”

Can you talk a little bit about what your preparation and process as a director is like, both before casting, and now, gearing up to premiere?



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

“12 Angry Men” director Logan Weilbaker '25 reads from the script at rehearsal. Though he has directed shows in the past, “12 Angry Men” is Weilbaker’s largest undertaking as a director at Wabash.

fundamentally change who we are as human beings, same as in the play.

I think you really see that when we ask, “How carefully do we track the accumulation of our little choices day-to-day? And maybe the answer is, “Well, not so carefully that we can predict where we’re going to end up in a few years,” or something like that.

Right, and like in the play, it all kind of happens at once. There’s just this noise. We’re staging this play like a real jury room. There’s no intermission, there’s no breaks,

Thanks for bringing that up. We’ve met every week since October, just about. We’ll meet and the designers will say, “Here’s what we’ve been working on.” And I’ll say, “These things work, these things don’t work; Go back to the drawing board.” And so that was kind of our preparation before auditions. And this was my senior project. I picked the play in March of 2024, so I had been thinking about this well before August, when we got back to campus. And then August to January was all about making sure that we’re

ready to hit the ground running. After winter break, the first day of classes we had auditions, and that’s when it starts to get really fun, because for months it’s just been theoretical. You kind of know in broad strokes how you want the play to feel, but until you have actors, you don’t know what that means. It was good to put a face to each of the jurors. And since January it’s just been about working with those actors to bring our vision to life.

There’s bringing in the design and production aspects and all that, and then there’s working with and weaving together the filaments of the play, the actors. Some are students who are younger than you, but there are also college staff and faculty. How’s that been, working with a cast like that?

I’m in a unique position. I’m a student director, but I also have faculty and staff who we don’t, usually at least, welcome openly to come to auditions. But one of the things I wanted to make sure of, even from auditions, is who’s bringing energy to the room, who’s reaching out and making connections with people. It’s an ensemble cast. There’s 12 jurors, and they all pull equal weight. You see this in rehearsal. One person’s absent, and it’s like, “Oh boy.” And so making sure that this is a very tight knit cast, and making sure that during our rehearsals we have time to just talk about our lives, talk about other things that are going on. I’m also somebody who generally likes to work very collaboratively. I want everybody to feel like they’re part of the process, because they are. The director has to be the eyes, this third person view, but the actor’s experience is super important, and their perspective is super valuable to me. So I always try to make sure that if we’re faced with a problem in rehearsal, the first thing I do is turn that to the actors, and say, “What’s working for you? How can we collectively fix this?” And so having those diverse perspectives is really important, especially in those situations.

The themes of ‘12 Angry Men’ Spoiler warning

TY MURPHY '27 and ELIJAH WETZEL '27
FEATURES EDITORS

The stage was set for director Logan Weilbaker’s '25 rendition of the classic 1957 movie “12 Angry Men.” And in the face of sold-out shows it succeeded in leaving an impression first compellingly forged in the original depiction.

The story itself is one of perspective. And each perspective led to a much different result in each character. Whether it was Juror #2’s lack of confidence that led him to initially go with the guilty crowd or Juror #3’s estranged relationship with his son that led him to hold out, the jurors’ preconceived attitudes toward life shaped their views. In these ways it combats a flawed legal system through the basis of emotion, stereotypes and conformity. And quite frankly, these themes have never been more applicable than to today.

Additionally, what is apparent throughout is the price that we pay for resorting to vitriol and villainization instead of reasoned, civil discourse. In a time when “owning” other people and ridiculing the opposition by any means necessary is in vogue, “12 Angry Men” reminds us that nothing productive ever results from hatred or cheap stereotypes. As Juror #3 desired the boy’s execution because of his own past, others in our society wanted to see the executions of the innocent Central Park Five, Brian Banks and countless more. We should not be so quick to arrive at conclusions, especially when insults and low-blows are our methods of counterargument. Rather, we should take Juror #8’s example and slowly digest facts, utilizing them not as instruments to be twisted at will, but sacred truths that need to be carefully and evenly presented.

But “12 Angry Men” goes further than insisting we stick to the facts. It implores us to resist the temptation to go with the crowd. This is not to say that it implores us to be contrarian; rather, we should not find ourselves in the majority simply because it is the majority. Those who twist facts are nefarious, but those who quail when asked to dissent may be worse. We need courage. Not just courage to do the right thing, but courage to do the right thing when it’s unpopular, may get us hurt or will ruin our reputation. Justice is not always compatible with convenience. We need to embody the late Rev. Martin Luther King’s words: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Take Juror #8 for example. There is a lot to be said about this juror and his personality. In the play he used what others lacked at first, critical thinking and compassion. He stood boldly and did not cater to the other sides

knowing what was at stake. This is something that a lot of people lack today. They are too easy to hate and too scared to stand for what they believe in. Now more than ever the world searches for scapegoats in its problems, but not enough people have thought deeply enough about who they are blaming. They too easily fall into mob rule. It is people such as juror #8 who are able to look past the blaming and the pointing of fingers to think critically enough to see both sides. An idea that is almost rare to find in a world ruled by the mob, but it is found in this specific play.

Finally, we want to stress how absolutely crucial theater and other presentations of the arts are to a liberal arts education and a full education more generally. We were lucky enough to view “12 Angry Men” early during a special showing for first-year students in Enduring Questions (EQ). Who knows how many of those young

men had never encountered theater beyond a middle school play or a church skit? Yet they were about to be treated to an experience that brought their education to life in a new way, presented angles they may not have realized existed and hopefully directed them to view their own perspectives and notions about the world under a finer microscope. In a time when many view higher education as a means to an end and courses outside one’s concentration are criticized as wastes of money, the arts urge us to question that notion, to expand our learning experience beyond the classroom and to encounter the world in new ways. If at Wabash we’re serious about shaping young men into leaders, humanitarians and world-changers, we will continue to invest in the arts and introduce students to them. If we don’t, we’d be hurting our students and their education.

Red Velvet review

Jokes, music and roars of laughter



COURTESY OF THE MALCOM X INSTITUTE OF BLACK STUDIES

ALEX SCHMIDT '27
STAFF WRITER

The Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies (MXIBS) hosted their annual Red Velvet comedy event this weekend. Red Velvet brought the comedic likes of Meechie Hall and the MC of the evening, Binkey. Also, it included a musical sense to the show with works of fellow Wabash student Jeremiah Clayton '26 and famed award winning re-

cording artist Keya Trammel. This event was the biggest of the many Black History Month events that the MXIBS produced throughout February.

The Red Velvet show brought many students and their families to the Ball Theater. Binkey immediately drew the crowd in with some of his opening jokes and helped set the stage for Clayton’s musical performance. Clayton’s innovative production was one in which he wanted to be involved with the audience members. Everyone in Ball Theater thoroughly enjoyed Clayton’s show and was even more excited for the following guest of the evening, Meechie Hall.

Hall’s comedic performance was met with thunderous laughter from those in the theater. He recounted many jokes about the current political state of society and also jabbed at jokes about issues regarding being a man and sexuality. Some might not have been the biggest fans of this standup routine or the fact that Hall was telling jokes by seemingly reading them off his phone to remember, but there were massive amounts of applause and waves of laughter that were met with his performance.

Binkey then introduced the crowd to the next performer, Keya Trammel. Trammel’s soulful and uplifting music resonated with seemingly everyone in attendance. In the middle of the set, almost everyone got on

their feet and began to dance to her performance. Trammel’s music was the peak of the whole Red Velvet comedy show, and the source of the cheering and hollering of the night. The sights and sounds of Keya Trammel truly embedded themselves into the minds and souls of everyone in Ball Theater.

Binkey closed the night off by performing a quick little standup routine, highlighting the struggles of being a Black man in American society. This part of the night used comedy to promote and talk about a serious issue, which resonated with everyone in that audience. Then, following that provoking bit, Binkey would end the night by showing off his freestyling skills. He used an audio mixer to repeat the sounds he was making back to him and the audience,

and then he performed a song using those sounds. It was an impressive performance and a great way to end the night.

Overall, the Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies gave the Wabash campus a night to remember. Throughout the night, the theater was filled with laughter, applause and snaps from all the audience members. This Red Velvet was memorable for many students and their families who attended the event. The event gave Wabash students a chance to experience live comedy on campus. Also, it provided them with not just listening to a professional musician but also a musician who’s a member of the Wabash brotherhood. Red Velvet was a joyous occasion that many Wabash students will look forward to next year.

**FINAL VERDICT:
4.5/5 WALLYS**



'12 Angry Men' opens to sold-out crowds



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

The jury in '12 Angry Men' cast their votes during dress rehearsal on February 23, 2025. The play unfolds completely in a small jury room, and it follows twelve jurors tasked with deciding if a young man murdered his father and will receive the death penalty. The production deals with heavy themes like justice, empathy and courage. While the show officially premiered Wednesday, an additional show was performed Tuesday night to accommodate demand. A matinee showing on Saturday was also added.



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Michael Abbot '85's character, Juror #3, lunges at Juror #8, played by Tom Oppman '25, in a moment of fury. Oppman and Abbot's characters faced off at multiple points in the drama, escalating the suspense and energy on stage.



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Juror #4, played by Adam Phipps '11, examines one of the pieces of evidence available to the jurors, a small handheld switchblade — the murder weapon. Phipps last graced the stage in a Wabash Theater production in 2010.

'12 Angry Men' review

True to its promise, '12 Angry Men' brings the heat

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
FEATURES EDITOR

"12 Angry Men" Director Logan Weilbaker '25 closes his director's note in the program audience members receive on their way into the Experimental Theater with an apt moniker for the play's venue and atmosphere: "Welcome to the Pressure Cooker." The production exceeded expectations and lived up to this nickname, compressing intense acting, timeless themes and suspense into an 80-minute performance. Confronted with a challenging script and limited space — the entire play takes place in a small, relatively cramped area — the actors acquitted themselves well, delivering poignant moments matched by intense outbursts. "12 Angry Men" was a memorable show, and left me, and will leave you, asking tough questions about justice, empathy and courage.

One of the first things I noticed upon entering the Experimental Theater in the Fine Arts Center's basement was the compactness of the space. By no means is this a negative; in fact the Experimental Theater's closeness was exactly what Weilbaker desired when he decided to put on the show. Audience members are seated on all four sides of the room and face the singular rectangular table where the jurors will deliberate whether a young man accused of stabbing his father is guilty and should be executed. But the actors use the full extent of the space, frequently rising from the table and pacing about the room during a moment of tension or frustration. The kinetic energy of their movement sped up my heart and brain as I rotated between the table and the standing jurors, not wanting to miss a moment of action. Occasionally, the actors would face outward, toward the audience and pause, their faces contorting or easing with their emotions. These moments were intimate, drew me into the drama of the situation and further enhanced my emotional and intellectual involvement in the plot.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIJAH GREENE '25

Juror #8, played by Tom Oppman '25, kneels in front of an evidence diagram of the apartment where the murder took place.

The acting ensemble must also be commended for their stamina and concentration throughout the play. An hour and twenty minutes does not initially seem like a very long time, and it isn't a long run-time for a college production to run. However, there were no breaks for any of the jurors. Contained to a jury room that rose in temperature as the plot progressed and under constant scrutiny from all four sides, the jurors maintained their stamina throughout while the pressure mounted like the pile of used paper water cups strewn around the wastebasket.

While the production was thoroughly a group effort from beginning to end, and especially among the cast, some characters stood out and delivered particularly exceptional performances. Juror #8, played by Tom Oppman '25, stood out during several moving mono-

logues, acting first as the sole voice of empathy and increasingly the voice of reason and prudence. Oppman's character begged for his peers to walk around the evidence fully before reaching their decision, rebuking their instinct to lay aside reason for assumptions and prejudice. From start to finish, Oppman was superb.

Another highlight throughout was Juror #4, played by Adam Phipps '11. Juror #4 was often Juror #8's intellectual foil, retorting his points with equally well-thought out points that honestly made me wonder whether acquittal was the correct verdict. Phipps' portrayal was excellent in this regard; he played the part of the high-society man well. He was also a voice of reason, refusing to lend his support to the xenophobic and discriminatory remarks of jurors who agreed with his assessment of the accused's guilt.

Finally, Michael Abbott '85's portrayal of Juror #3 was terrific. Abbott's character stalked the room like a caged predator from the moment the jurors filed in, insisting that the 19-year-old on trial be sent to the chair and berating any man who disagreed. His barely subdued rage threatened to, and did frequently, boil over at any claimant of reasonable doubt. Juror #3 offers a deadly serious lesson: that appeals for justice to be served can be motivated by prejudice just as easily as an honest desire for righteousness, and efforts to dispel nuance in favor of expediency should alert us as such to that dangerous motivation.

Further plaudits to the cast could go round. Nate Baldwin, a web developer at Wabash, impressed in his Wabash stage debut. Alex Schmidt '27 continued his stellar career in the role of Juror #12, and Josh Campbell '25 shouldered a difficult role as the bombastic and xenophobic Juror #10.

The questions that "12 Angry Men" raises are fundamental, the sort of nagging, essential inquiries we should expect a decent education should ask of us. The cast, crew and director could not have been blamed if they had backed away from some of the script's more difficult aspects and settled for producing a solid, engaging play. But they did not back down. They forged through complex subjects and a challenging premise, succeeding in Weilbaker's vision of creating a "pressure cooker" environment that held the audience rapt for 80-minutes.

If you attend a showing of "12 Angry Men," I implore you to dress for heat. The play brings it in waves, and when it hits you, you'll find the pressure is marvelous.

FINAL VERDICT:
5/5 WALLYS

