

Class of 1966

Class Agent
Cal Black

April 2025

Dear Men of '66,

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Our Dean for College Advancement is Michelle Janssen, and she is a very special lady. She "gets Wabash" and it certainly is evident by the success of the Advancement staff under her leadership. Some people are just difficult to describe but not Michelle! Here are a few words that help describe her: appreciative, beautiful, bright, capable, caring cheerful, clever, considerate, creative, delightful, determined, dependable, efficient, encouraging, enthusiastic, empathetic, entertaining, fun, fashionable, friendly, generous, hard working, intelligent, imaginative, kind, likable, loving, loyal, motivated, organized, polite, resourceful, sincere, sympathetic, sentimental, trustworthy, understanding, vivacious, welcoming, X-traordinary, youthful and zealous. Now you know Michelle, so next time you are on campus stop in Kane House and greet this gracious lady.



A Journey of Advancement and Purpose

As a first-generation college student, I have learned that passion and determination can open unexpected doors. My life has been shaped by opportunity, hard work, and a commitment to the transformational impact of higher education.

I grew up in Logansport, Indiana, which is located on the banks of the Eel and Wabash Rivers (maybe some career foreshadowing?). As a Logansport Berry, I played in the band, competed in speech and debate tournaments across the state, and experienced a college campus for the first time when my Mom and I traveled to the Lambda Chi house at Wabash—it is a good story, so ask me about it the next time you see me!

My professional journey in advancement has been deeply meaningful, serving institutions that transform lives. As the Dean of Advancement at Wabash College, I have been privileged to work with two amazing presidents, an outstanding Campaign Executive Cabinet, and group of talented College Advancement colleagues on the historic Giant Steps comprehensive campaign, raising over \$250 million to support the amazing mission of Wabash College. This achievement represents more than financial success—it is about creating pathways for Wabash men like the young first-generation student I once was.

Throughout my career, I have held significant roles across respected institutions. At Berea College, I served as Vice President of Alumni and College Relations, leading teams focused on fundraising, communication, and engagement. A most cherished professional chapter was at my alma mater, Valparaiso University, where I directed a comprehensive campaign that exceeded its \$200 million goal by \$38 million.

My professional recognition includes holding status as a Certified Fund-Raising Executive (CFRE) and receiving both the Virgil Anderson Award for lifetime achievement and the President's Award for Volunteer Service from the Association of Lutheran Development Executives. These honors reflect a career committed to advancing education and success among nonprofit and advancement professionals.



When I am not hard at work for Wabash, you will find me cheering on my favorite college basketball teams—a lifelong passion. Since coming to Wabash, I have also learned to love football, adding another exciting dimension to my sports enthusiasm. At home, I'm surrounded by



love—my husband Wade, our son Noah, and our beloved rescue dog Sassy complete my world.

Looking back, I am grateful for my parents who sacrificed a great deal to help me get my degree, and for the educational foundation that set me on this path. Each campaign, each relationship built, each dollar raised represents an opportunity to transform lives through education—a mission that continues to inspire me every day.



I'm also so inspired by the fierce loyalty of our alumni, and your class provides such a wonderful and dependable example of a devotion to your alma mater that endures. I'm sure

Cal will appreciate that the theme of this year's Day of Giving calls on all of us to Sing Thy Praises on 04.30.25. We chose this theme to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the version of "Old Wabash" we've since sung loud and long at every sporting event, every Chapel Sing, and throughout each school year. On April 30, I invite you to join the chorus as we look to reach 5,000 gifts—or more! —in just one day.

Sing Thy Praises,

Cal