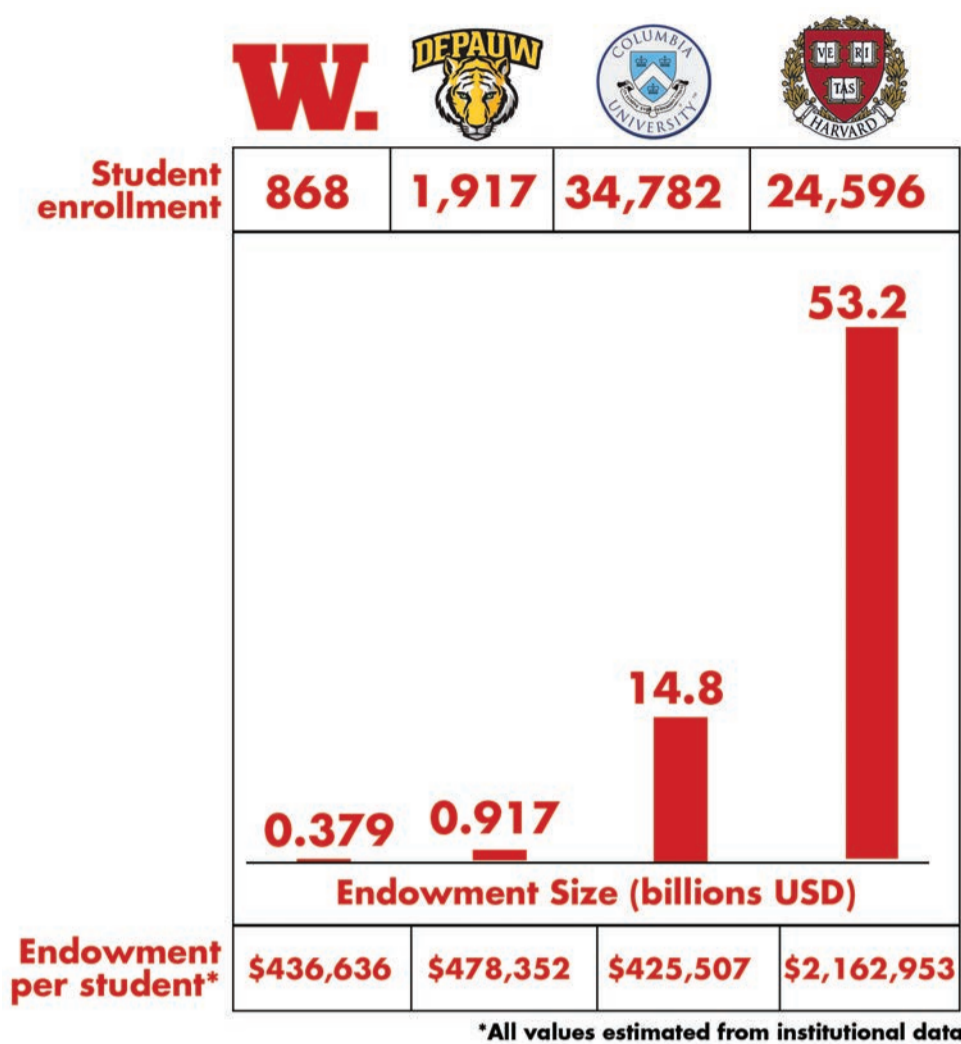


College endowment at risk from proposed tax hike

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
FEATURES EDITOR

Anxiety among institutions of higher learning is high as cuts to education spending and tax hikes are being floated by government officials across the nation. While institutions face an onslaught at both the state and federal level, the largest danger to the long-term health of private higher education are efforts in Congress to tax college and university endowments. Wabash could face significant financial losses if Congress extends and expands the current endowment excise tax.

The endowment tax is not new, nor is it a standalone measure. In 2017 during President Donald Trump's first term, Congress passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The Act was perhaps the largest tax overhaul in decades, and, among other functions, cut the corporate tax rate and increased standard deductions and family tax credits. To recoup some of the income from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act's tax cuts, Congress included in the legislation an "endowment tax," a 1.4% excise tax on private universities that have at least 500 tuition-paying students, more than 50% of whom are located in the United States and assets with a fair market value of



\$500,000 or greater per student.

In 2023, around 60 colleges and universities paid the endowment tax, altogether generating about \$380 million.

"Endowment" tax is also something of a misnomer, as the tax doesn't only

apply to an institution's endowment.

"An important thing that people don't understand is that it isn't just our pooled endowment that's included in the calculation for the tax," said Kendra Cooks, chief financial officer and treasurer at Wabash. "It

includes pooled endowments and the value of any investment assets that we have, including trusts."

Continued page 2

GRAPHIC BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Four Wabash athletes earn all-american honors



COURTESY OF JIMMY NAPERSTK, KODIAK CREATIVE
Chase Baczek '25 finished third in the 197-pound weight class at the NCAA Division III National Tournament held from March 12-13 in Rhode Island.

COLIN BAKER '25
STAFF WRITER

Improvement was the theme of Wabash wrestling this year at the NCAA DIII National Championships in Providence, Rhode Island. Several podium finishes, two All-America honors and a 12th-place team finish – eight spots higher than their

finish last season – capped off the Little Giants' 2024-2025 season on March 12 and 13.

The Little Giants went into the 2024-2025 season ranked 15th in the country, according to the National Wrestling Coaches Association Preseason Rankings.

Continued page 12

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

Roommates, teammates, All-Americans, Will Neubauer '25 and Brayden Curnutt '25 have shared in a lot of success at Wabash. The duo represented Wabash in front of the

best runners in the country at the 2025 NCAA Division III Indoor Championships. The two days of competition were held from March 14-15 in Rochester, New York.

Continued page 12



COURTESY OF D3PHOTOGRAPHY
Will Neubauer '25 finished eighth in the 800-meter race at the Division III National Championships hosted from March 12-13 in Rochester, New York.

Brown named next dean of students

SAM BENEDICT '25
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Following a comprehensive search that eventually narrowed the field to two candidates, Scott Brown was announced as the next dean of students at Wabash on Monday, March 17. Brown will succeed Professor Greg Redding '88, who is set to return to his previous role as a professor in the German department following a sabbatical during the 2025-26 academic year.

"We are all excited about President Feller's choice and look forward to being as supportive as we can to Dr. Brown during his transition."

- Luis Rivera '25

Brown accepted the offer following a multi-step process that eventually led to a final visit at Wabash where he was able to meet with members of the Wabash community — specifically students. The day began with a breakfast that included selected students and

Brown as well as a lunch that was open to the entire Wabash community. Brown answered questions ranging from his views on tradition to specific issues like division on campus.

"The fact that so many people took their time to meet with me and gave me the opportunity to meet so many different folks and so many different perspectives — I spoke to a good percentage of the entire Wabash population by the time I ended that day — and I'm really grateful for the opportunity," said Brown. "How you're conducted as a candidate tells you a lot about the institution. It felt like it was a place that everybody was all in. They (students) care deeply and passionately about Wabash."

The search committee was made up of faculty, staff and student voices that worked to find a candidate with a strong professional background and rich experience in student affairs. Furthermore, the candidate needed to show a strong commitment to Wabash's mission statement and both improve the Dean of Students office while engaging heavily with the student body.

Continued page 2



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27
Scott Brown speaks to students at an open discussion on February 26, 2024, in Baxter Hall.

BigXThaPlug headlining National Act

JAMES WALLACE '26
NEWS EDITOR

BigXthaPlug is set to take the stage at the National Act concert in what many current Wabash students hope to be the event's biggest and largest turnout in recent years. The Dallas-born rapper will perform in Chadwick Court starting at 8:00 p.m. on March 22.

"BigX was chosen based on the feedback we received from the student body," said Zackary Schroeder '26, Student Senate National Act committee chairman. "Earlier in the year a survey was sent out, and after finding Hip-Hop/Rap was the favorite, we decided to explore our options in that genre. Another survey was sent out where an overwhelming majority of students said they wanted to see BigXthaPlug."

Like years past, the budget for National Act was \$60,000, which covers for the artist's fee, booking agents, production costs such as staging and lights, security, EMS and artist hospitality. However, the Interfraternity Council and Student Life Committee are also throwing resources toward

National Act by hosting a "megagate," a pre-National Act tailgate that is slated to start at noon on the day of the concert.

"The IFC has put substantial effort and time into the megagate," said Interfraternity Council Treasurer Kyle Foster '27.

"Our hope is to create a night that will be a permanent memory for everyone."

- National Act Committee Chairman
Zackary Schroeder '26

"We are collaborating with many organizations such as the Brewing Society, DJ Club, IMA, MXI and WAR council. We also will be beginning a new partnership with Red Bull."

National Act itself has seen many different venue changes in recent years, and this year is no different.

Continued page 2



GRAPHIC BY WILL DUNCAN '27

See more on page 8!

College endowment at risk from proposed tax hike



COURTESY OF @SHAMIRAGELBMAN ON X
Students in PSC-210 pose for a picture with Indiana Governor Mike Braun ’76 in the Indiana Statehouse during Student Lobby Day on March 19, 2025. The students lobbied on behalf of Wabash, particularly as Frank O’Bannon Grants have come under fire recently.

Continued from page 1

The tax was meant to be a slap across the face of elite, wealthy institutions of higher learning from Republican lawmakers who, taking signals from President Trump, are increasingly hostile toward such schools because they are viewed as breeding grounds for “wokeism” and liberal extremism. But moves from politicians could put other institutions like Wabash in the tax’s crosshairs.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is set to expire on December 31 of this year, reverting the tax code back to pre-2017 status and eliminating the endowment tax. However, Republican lawmakers are looking to extend the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act through 2034. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jason Smith (R-Mo.) floated the idea in a committee meeting back in January. Additionally, bills have been introduced that would raise the endowment tax to 10% or even 20% of an institution’s revenue from its assets. Other bills promote lowering the \$500,000 per student threshold down to \$250,000, a move that would bring many more schools under the endowment tax. GOP lawmakers are employing budget reconciliation — a method of fast tracking certain budgetary measures that requires bills to pass the Senate with a simple majority and not the customary 60 member majority — to accom-

“We have kept other operational budget lines, including maintenance and upkeep of our facilities, to quite conservative levels for a number of years so there is just very little flexibility remaining in our budget.”

- Wabash College President Scott Feller

plish their goals in this area. Currently, Wabash does not pay the endowment tax. But the College is not lightyears away from the threshold. Indeed, if the stock market had not taken a tumble in January and February, the College’s endowment would have been almost valuable enough to reach the \$500,000 per student mark. “The value of our endowment was about \$423 million at the end of December,” said Cooks. “That gave us an endowment per student of \$488,000. If we had \$17.2 million more in growth, which I projected we would have had before the stock market’s downturn, we would have hit that threshold by the end of this fiscal year.” Assets totaling at least \$500,000 per student is not the only requirement for the endowment tax. Institutions must have at least 500 tuition-paying students. For most schools, having that number is a given. But

because Wabash only enrolls 868 students, admits many students who qualify for large financial aid packages and provides many scholarships itself, only about 480 students currently pay any amount of money in tuition at Wabash. Therefore, only those 480 are counted as tuition-paying students and not all 868 enrolled students.

“Tuition-paying means the value of our tuition minus scholarships that the institution provides, federal and state grants and federal work study or WISE money, as we call it,” said Cooks. “Outside scholarships are not included in that.”

“I would estimate in that first year [the tax would be] in the \$400,000 to \$600,000 range at 1.4%. The 1.4% is annoying and really will impact us. But an increase to a 10% or 20% rate would be really, really hard for us.”

- Wabash Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer Kendra Cooks

While the College will not have to pay the tax this year, if the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is extended and no exemptions are granted, Wabash’s assets will eventually crest the \$500,000 per student mark. After that bridge is crossed there is really no return. However, the College can still rely on having fewer than 500 students who pay tuition. That safety net is in serious danger. The senior class is smaller than average this year, meaning enrollment will likely be higher next year. Additionally, budgetary cuts to state and federal student aid programs, like Pell Grants or the Frank O’Bannon Grants, means more students and their families would have to pay tuition out of pocket. These factors would force the number of tuition paying students over 500.

The College does have a short term option if it reaches the threshold to pay the 1.4% tax. To prevent more than 500 students from paying tuition, the College could offer more financial aid to students so that there are never 500 students paying tuition. But that arrangement would be a short term fix because Wabash already dishes out significant financial aid. So how much would Wabash pay if it meets the criteria in a few years?

“It really depends on the year,” said Cooks. “But I would estimate in that first year somewhere in the \$400,000 to \$600,000 range at 1.4%. The 1.4% is annoying and really will impact us, but I finally got us to break even. But an increase to a 10% or 20% rate would be really, really hard for us.”

Simply put, an increase of the endowment tax without the inclusion of an exemption that Wabash qualified for would be a catastrophic blow to the sustainability of the College. Even paying the tax at its current rate would require difficult decisions for administrators.

“We have kept other operational budget lines, including

maintenance and upkeep of our facilities, to quite conservative levels for a number of years so there is just very little flexibility remaining in our budget,” said Wabash President Scott Feller.

In light of the extremely high stakes, College officials are working to lobby lawmakers so that institutions like Wabash are exempted from paying the tax. They want to tell Wabash’s story and differentiate it from the wealthy schools that initially drew the wrath of Republican politicians. The College earns around \$20 million a year from its endowment and one-off gifts, but Wabash actually pro-

vides more than \$20 million in financial aid each year. In fact, only \$16 million of the College’s approximately \$50 million yearly operating budget is revenue from students. More so than most other institutions which currently pay or could pay the tax in the near future, Wabash uses more than the value of its entire endowment revenue to provide financial aid to students.

“We’re trying to really work hard to educate the Internal Revenue Service, to educate legislators, to use some of our Wabash alumni that are in really great positions to help us and help rule makers understand,” said Cooks. “This tax was intended for an Ivy. We are not the kind of college or university that this tax was intended to impact.”

While Wabash’s administrators and their allies have been putting in significant work to protect Wabash from the endowment tax by meeting with government officials and advocating for the College to committees and agencies, the future remains cloudy.

“Given the high level of uncertainty in Washington I think it is much too early to say how things will turn out,” said Feller. “Success in convincing policy makers that increasing the endowment tax on colleges and universities generally, or that small undergraduate colleges like Wabash should be exempted, is not assured.”

The threat of the endowment tax — and the havoc that would result from an increase to it — is one of the dangers on the minds of private higher education administrators across the country. The action will pick up as the year goes on and Congress approaches the December 31 deadline to extend the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. In the meantime, concerned administrators and their teams will continue to advocate for their schools’ survival.

BigXThaPlug headlining National Act

Continued from page 1

While the event is being held in Chadwick Court, as it was in 2023 and 2022, the layout of the venue itself will be different.

“We’re trying a new venue layout this year,” said Student Success Coordinator Vic Lindsay. “The stage will be set up on the long-end of Chadwick Court, as opposed to the short end like in years past.”

The small change is far less ambitious than the venue change proposed for National Act 2024, which was planned to take place outdoors in Mud Hollow, before being relocated to Knowing Fieldhouse at the last minute due to rainy weather. By planning to host the event inside this year, the planning committee hopes to avoid another last-minute scramble.

Something many students are

excited for is five different student opening acts, which aim to engage the Wabash community with diverse acts. Many of the groups and artists performing, such as Jeremiah Clayton ’26 and Deacon Green ’26 and The Loosey Goosey Experience, have already performed on campus in other student organized concerts.

With over 1,850 RSVPs already counted, over 550 which are Wabash students themselves, Wabash students can expect National Act to be a packed event.

“I am most excited to see the turnout from our students,” said Schroeder. “The committee has spent a lot of time on this event, and we know how important it is to the students. Our hope is to create a night that will be a permanent memory for everyone.”



PHOTO BY JAMES WALLACE ’26
Students and their guests listen to Hank Ruff open for Rodney Atkins during the National Act concert on April 13, 2024, in the Knowing Fieldhouse.

Brown named next dean of students

Continued from page 1

“Something that stood out about Dr. Brown was his high emotional intelligence and commitment to engaging with students on a personal level,” said Luis Rivera ’25, the only student member of the search committee. I think he’ll be a dean who is involved on campus, who cares about students and who leads in a kind but firm manner. We put in a lot of work as a committee, and we are all excited about President Feller’s choice and look forward to being as supportive as we can to Dr. Brown during his transition.”

“Dr. Brown brings a wealth of experience in student development

from his work at the College of Wooster, Colgate University and Dartmouth College,” said President of the College Scott Feller.

Brown will begin his tenure remotely in mid-June and then move to Crawfordsville in July to begin in-person.

“Wabash is a very special place,” said Brown. “As you know, Wabash gives an excellent education, but its context is so unusual and desirable to me. I’m excited to get to know everybody, from trustees and faculty, other administrators, alums, local folks and, of course, beginning and ending with students.”

This week at Wabash



Friday, Mar. 21

All Day | Admitted Students Weekend

Saturday, Mar. 22

6:00 p.m. | National Act 2025 @ Chadwick Court

Sunday, Mar. 23

3:00 p.m. | Faculty Recital @ Salter Hall

Monday, Mar. 24

7:45 p.m. | W.A.R. Council Substance Use Conversation @ Baxter Hall 101

Wednesday, Mar. 26

7:00 p.m. | WDPD Free Speech Discussion Series – Dr. Preston Bost @ Forest Hall

Wabash Democrats make return after year-long hiatus

OWEN VERMEULEN '28
STAFF WRITER

It is not uncommon for Wabash to see a new club come to campus, but it's not every day that we see the return of an old one. The Wabash Democrats club experienced a leap of absence from campus during the 2023-2024 year. Now, the club is looking to make its return.

"My freshman year the club was inactive," said President of the Wabash College Democrats Rodolfo Elizondo Alcalá '27. "What really pushed me was the results of the 2024 elections. I remember staying up until 4 a.m. waiting for the results, and I felt both saddened and motivated to make a change. That's where the first conversation to start the club took place."

The club's absence has created a

gap in the political representation at Wabash — with the Wabash Republicans club being the only politically affiliated group for students to engage with.

"I want Wabash to be more diverse in ideologies," said Alcalá. "I hope to create an environment where students are comfortable to express their political views and learn from others."

While Alcalá has big dreams for the long-term future of the club, he has faced challenges that any leader has when trying to resurrect an organization. However, there are steps he can take in the meantime to make a positive impact.

"My short-term goal is to recruit more members and increase engagement," said Alcalá. "I want to bring speakers to campus and make great events, but I also want

to build a strong community that is engaged, and a safe space to discuss important issues. At the end of the day, people join clubs to meet new people and that is my main goal. Moving forward, we plan to host different events that keep members engaged and encourage Wabash students to interact with and learn from the club."

Members of the Democratic Party aren't the only ones on campus happy to see the club make their return — Republicans are as well.

"It's good to see them back on campus," said President of the Wabash Republicans Club Owen Miller '27. "They offer students a great opportunity to become more informed with politics and engage with different perspectives — just

as we do. Hopefully, discussions on campus remain respectful, and what students learn contributes to productive conversations."

Alcalá and other members of the Wabash College Democrats hope to work with the Wabash Republicans Club in future events.

"The Wabash College Democrats and Republicans have collaborated in the past for voter registration events," said Alcalá. "But we can take it further from there. We should have debates and deliberations between both groups and share ideas."

Miller and Wabash Republicans have brainstormed ways to further political conversations on campus in a respectful manner.

"I think if we did a monitored open mic event where students can peacefully debate politics, current

world events and so on, then that would benefit the campus," said Miller.

Both the Wabash Democrats and Republicans want the student body to become better educated on political issues, as well as have civil conversations about them.

"The goal of college is to create a space where students can have meaningful conversations," said Alcalá. "I hope this organization will continue and make a long-standing impact at Wabash."


With Wabash College Democrats making its return to campus, leadership will be working diligently to ensure that it will stay. In the meantime, students have the opportunity to engage with diverse political beliefs — something that should not be taken for granted.

WABASH COLLEGE SPHINX CLUB PRESENTS

RALPH'S

MOTHER

@ PHI KAPPA PSI



3:00
--
5:30

DARTY

W/ DJ CONNOR CRAIG
& FRIENDS

5:30
--
6:30

LOOSEY GOOSEY
EXPERIENCE

6:30
--
7:00

LOS PEQUENOS
GIGANTES

7:00
--
8:00

WALLY'S CREEK

8:00
--
9:00

WAM

POWERED BY RED BULL

APRIL 12



PHOTO BY JAMES WALLACE '26

Student Body President Anthony Donahue '25, Vice President Jonah Billups '25 and Gavinn Alstott '25 talk at a collaborative event between the Republican Club and the Cigar & Pipe Club on April 17, 2024 at Phi Gamma Delta. The event was meant to spark discourse in a low pressure environment.



PHOTO BY JAMES WALLACE '26

Hunter Wray '25 and Professor of Spanish V. Dan Rogers smile at a collaborative event between the Republican Club and the Cigar & Pipe Club on April 17, 2024 at Phi Gamma Delta.



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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.

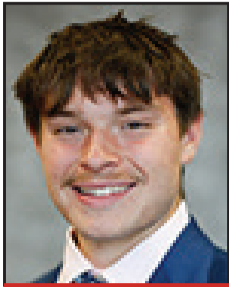
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The Bachelor is a member of the Hoosier State and Indiana Collegiate Press Associations (HSPA and ICPA).

The American two party system and its discontents



John Silas Mills '27
Reply to this opinion at
jsmills27@wabash.edu

As the 2024 presidential elections are still in the recent past, many of us had our first opportunities to be involved in the future of our country and, while several groups of people were certain in their political affiliation, there are a plethora of people that have expressed their discontent with the current system. In fact, in a recent Gallup News poll 62% of Americans claim that they have lost faith in the Democratic and Republican Parties, and that a third party is necessary. With these recent statistics, it would be expected that there would be political variation, but even after several years, us Americans are still stuck with the same system that leaves us unhappy.

The two party system isn't necessarily all bad—hence why our Founding Fathers took the initiative of employing it. The vision was intended to promote political stability through the minimization of extremist parties. Moreover, a two party system is far less susceptible to the general fragility and fragmentation that can be prevalent within the multi-party or coalition form of government. This can be incredibly beneficial to promote legislation development as there is likely to be more moderation and a platform that promotes efficient discourse.

We can see the benefits of the two party system especially being successful in times of crises, as seen through the extreme unity of Democrats and Republicans during the time of 9/11 and the Iraq war. On top of all these, America specifically has an incredibly strong checks and balances system which enforces accountability from the dominant party and allows for alternatives and change to be achieved if those in the opposition party are

strong enough in the presentation of their alternative vision.

While all of these positives are noteworthy, it is important to acknowledge that there are some fairly significant drawbacks as well. Remember how I referenced the minimization of extremist parties? In theory, it works well, yet we can see it significantly minimizes the political diversity in America. This refers back to my prior source that highlighted the fact that very few Americans feel a complete identity with a party.

If Americans could deal with a less efficient legislative process, a coalition form of government could be very valuable in promoting diversity within the political climate. On top of minimized diversity, both parties can tirelessly appeal to voters and attempt to win over more of the centrist voting pool according to the median voter theorem. Although it can be valuable to employ a moderate mindset, some voters can grow disillusioned with the lack of choice and variation between the two large candidates. This can be seen through these moderate voters simply deciding not to choose between the lesser of two evils but rather to flat out not vote.

The two party system has done America well for hundreds of years now, yet as we are entering an era of increased diversity and representation, it may be time to revisit this archaic system. The implementation of a coalition form of government—while unpopular—would undoubtedly provide a facet for underrepresented communities and parties to gain a platform that ensures everyone has an opportunity to engage in discourse and promote change. Overall, the two party system, while tried and true, could stand to face criticism and possibly be replaced with a more accepting and alternative system.

PS: Thank you Professor Hollander for teaching me about this in PSC-121!

Editor's note: The Founding Fathers did not intend for a two party system. Factionalism was one of the main concerns in early American politics.

HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY
OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

**WHO ARE THEY REALLY
COMING TO SEE?**

Hi-five to the multiple "headlining" acts performing at Saturday's National Action. Oh! And BigX is also performing.

GROOVY BABY

Lo-five to Governor Mike Braun for getting a \$118,000 taxpayer-funded upgrade to his personal home in Jasper (including a helipad). We can't wait to see the "Volcano Lair Contribution" on our state tax forms next year.

**FIDDLING WHILE ROME
BURNS**

Lo-five to Gavin Newsom for funding a \$100,000 bronze bust of himself in the San Francisco City Hall. Between that and Tim Walz's stand-up comedy tour, the Dems seem to be doing just fine.

LOVE THY PLEDGES

Lo-five to University of Central Florida's chapter of Sigma Chi for hitting pledges with their cars. This makes eating crayons look like nothing!

ONWARD AND UPWARD

Hi-five to Bachelor advisor Allie Northcutt for securing a communications generalist position at IUI Neuroscience. We'll miss you Allie, thank you for everything.

The power of choice



Christopher Board '27
Reply to this opinion at
caboard27@wabash.edu

The student body of Wabash College is both burdened and enlightened by the power of choice. The choice to follow the Gentleman's Rule, or the choice to break it. The choice to respond when you see the rule broken, or the choice to remain unspoken. Calling out peers on their actions is nothing short of daunting, but when we can cross that gap, our campus grows stronger. When the flags were taken off the mall last fall semester, a student made the difficult choice of reporting what they saw, and our campus is better off for it.

This does not mean your choice to protect your brothers has to come on a large heroic stage. Calling out people for making jokes about marginalized groups, creating systems in organizations to decrease the use of slurs or even just monitoring your own words are all conscious decisions students can make to form a more inclusive Wabash campus. Wabash prides itself on brotherhood. It constantly shows it off in the college magazine, press releases and Instagram posts. What those posts don't highlight are the microaggressions minorities face, the lack of institutionalized cultural work and the poor black student retention rate. While it is difficult for the student body to directly influence some of this, everyday we are faced with choices that make this infamous Wabash brotherhood accessible to all.

Free will is a funny thing. We have absolute choice to do what we believe to be morally correct. Although that

definition varies from person to person, I would find it hard to believe that anyone's morality includes discrimination. After the flags were stolen, I searched my brain for days trying to figure out a motive. Why would anyone on campus want part of their brotherhood to feel like they don't belong? Why did these people use their freedom of choice to commit such an act?

Wabash runs on choice. The Student Senate has free will over the money allocated to clubs, fraternities and organizations are all fairly self-run, and clubs can put on essentially any events they want within certain parameters. There is immense possibility for joy and happiness in such an abundance of choice, and yet some people misuse it. In my opinion, Wabash, you wake up everyday with the choice to make people feel like they belong here. If you share the same love for this place that I do, you would make sure everyone gets the chance to share in that feeling.



James Wallace '26 speaks with President Scott Feller at the flag replanting on October 21, 2024.



The Bachelor

Request for artists

Interested in featuring your art in the Bachelor?
We are looking for new artists to be consistently featured in the Opinions section!

Are you interested in making comics? Do you want your art to be featured in *The Bachelor*?

Contact pcreynol25@wabash.edu
or ssbenedi25@wabash.edu

Looking for inspiration? Here is a beautiful 2023 Homecoming comic from Preston Parker '26.

'If the GDI's can do it'



Just ask

Julia Phipps

Reply to this opinion at
phippsj@wabash.edu

need to borrow a speaker, just ask. If you need props or costumes for a project, just ask! Find a professor or admin (like me!) and ask for permission. It might take a little longer to obtain the thing you want to use, but that’s why you need to plan ahead.

A gentleman wouldn’t walk into the library and take a book without checking it out at the desk. A gentleman would borrow items with permission. A Wabash man would just ask.



PHOTO BY JULIA PHIPPS

The Fine Arts Center has been missing this “Mackie Speaker” since February 14. Chairs and couches have also been taken in recent semesters.

There has been a rash of items being “borrowed” from different places on campus, especially from the Fine Arts Center, without permission. Recently, two students with no business in the building were found heading to props storage to borrow props for a student film – not a class project – because their fraternity brother said it would be ok. Two speakers were borrowed for a party without talking to anyone in Fine Arts. The stolen couch from the lobby has never been found.

Borrowing without permission is a bad synonym for stealing. The more that students borrow things from buildings on campus, the less that faculty and staff will be willing to let someone with legitimate need borrow something in the future.

Don’t assume that you are good to borrow something because your friend, or roommate or fraternity brother told you that it would be fine. If the person who owns the thing you want to use doesn’t know that you’ve borrowed it, it is not fine.

Faculty and staff want you to use the resources we have on campus. If you

Leeper’s lunch: Succulent sandwiches at Smokin Melts

Jackson Leeper ’25

Reply to this opinion at
jcleeper25@wabash.edu



What’s up, bozos? It’s your guy, Jackson Leeper, back at it with another review. I hope you all had a great spring break, munching on home-cooked meals. I was fortunate enough to go to Chicago and fill up on all the great foods: Italian beef, Chicago dog and deep dish pizza. I also went to Chinatown and had some of the best chinese food in a hole-in-a-wall restaurant. Chicago has some amazing food. Anyway, enough of my spring break. Let’s get into this week’s review.

I happened to get a tip from a pledge brother who saw a barbecue food truck, which I instantly tracked down to find its location and the menu. Bad news: not a barbecue truck. Good news: it serves melts and griddled sandwiches! They do have barbecue sandwiches so I did not beat my pledge brother for false information.

Now, fair warning, grilled cheese and similar sandwiches are one of my favorite foods so there might be some bias to the score. After looking at the menu, I was excited. It has succulent sandwiches, breakfast and lunch as well as cinnamon rolls of different flavors. I unfortunately had to move around my lineup as they move around but I was able to visit this week.

The place is called Smokin Melts and Rollin Dough. They usually are parked by The Home Depot on the weekends but it could change. You find their schedule on their Facebook page. I rolled up to the truck and placed my big back order. I got three things: the brisket melt, the grilled cheese and their original cinnamon roll.

That came out around \$25, which I was fairly pleased with, considering the amount of money I spent over break (Student Senate, give me money so I can make food reviews).

I started with their grilled cheese, which is sharp white cheddar, gruyere and smoked gouda on sourdough country white. I bit into that sandwich and my mind went, “nine.” Definitely one of the best grilled cheeses I’ve ever had. It was toasted beautifully and the cheese combination was excellent.

Next, I had the brisket melt, which comes with brisket, bacon, three-cheese (I’m assuming it’s the same as grilled cheese) and a choice of blue cheese or a sauce. They have a list of different sauces and I chose mild barbecue. Not gonna lie, I was caught off-guard eating that sandwich. Brisket was moist and juicy and the bacon wasn’t puny little strips. These were country boy thick strips of bacon. Again, toasted beautifully and the cheese was melted.

The sauce added a nice smoky flavor but wasn’t overpowering. Lastly, I had the cinnamon roll. It was still warm in the container which was a good sign. I smashed that roll as it was one of the best cinnamon rolls I’ve ever had (and I’m not a big sweets person). After eating my food and looking at the carnage I made on the table, I was perplexed as to why no one is talking about this place.

This place blew the buttons of my pants. And the crazy thing is that they have other items that might be just as good! They even have special items (this month was a Cuban sandwich), so I’m going back to clear their inventory. Having this amazing experience, I give Smokin Melts and Rollin Dough 9.3/10 burbers (knowers will know). If you EVER want a nice warm sandwich or a great cinnamon roll, this needs to be your number one. Come check out next week as I try a place that isn’t normally my thing!

Wally’s wall: Double header

The Prompt:

Where did you go for Spring Break? Any fun (family-friendly) stories to share?

And...

What are your March Madness predictions? Who is your championship pick and why?

Evan Furuness ’26

I went to a national park in Kentucky and stayed in a cabin for spring break, I also got to watch my buddy fall out of his kayak 3 times!

Taylor Lorsung ’25

During spring break, I participated in an immersion course focused on Greek and Roman Science in Spain, where we explored various forms of architecture, including bridges, aqueducts, cisterns, roads, and Roman cities. This experience significantly broadened my understanding of the cultural differences between Spain and the United States. On our final night in Spain, a group of us visited a local Taco Bell, where we discovered they do not offer hot sauce or Baja Blast.

Haiden Diemer-McKinney ’26

I like Florida to take down Duke to win the national championship. Although it may seem like chalk, these are the two teams that have separated themselves as of recent. Duke may have been the more consistent team throughout the season, but Florida is the hottest team in the country, are peaking at the right time and have a higher ceiling than the Blue Devils in my opinion. Additionally, Florida’s path to get to the national championship will be much more challenging than Duke’s, meaning they’ll be more battle tested and ready for a fight. However, I’d have no problem with dark horses and Cinderella’s making the Final Four, as that what makes the month of March so special!

Sean Granger ’25

My March Madness prediction? St. John’s Red Storm. With Rick Pitino at the helm, basketball’s very own Godfather (like Luka DiFilippo), the team is made for March. Pitino’s experience in March and sheer presence will have opponents folding like Fredo Corleone.

Aidan Walker ’25

Don’t sleep on the Akron Zips.



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Review: ‘Mickey 17’ is comically refreshing



COURTESY OF INTERNET MOVIE DATABASE

BEN WALLACE '25
STAFF WRITER

“Mickey 17” is a rare bright spot among this year’s lackluster early releases. Originally set for a 2024 debut, the film faced multiple delays before finally landing in March 2025. Had it premiered last year, it likely would have been overshadowed by “Dune: Part Two.” Unfortunately, and surprisingly, even with minimal competition at the box office, it is still underperforming.

“Mickey 17” marks Director Bong Joon Ho’s first film since “Parasite,” which was highly praised by both critics and audiences and won multiple Academy Awards, setting high expectations for many viewers. In my opinion, it differs significantly from “Parasite,” which leans heavily into drama, whereas “Mickey 17” takes a more comedy-centric approach. However, even with these genre differences, I was expecting audiences to turn out for the master filmmaker that Bong Joon Ho is.

The film is an original science fiction story centered around space migration and the experimental technology of body printing. Mickey is the only “expendable,” having signed away his body to be reprinted whenever he dies, whether for testing or extreme missions. The conflict arises when the crew believes Mickey has died and prints a replacement, only for Mickey number 17 to return, creating a tense and unexpected dilemma.

Mickey, played by Robert Pattinson, is an incredibly lovable character. The film opens by showcasing all his previous deaths, leading up to Mickey number 17. This sequence is easily my favorite part of the movie; it’s the funniest, and each death is uniquely crafted.

The middle of the film, where the conflict between the two Mickeys unfolds, is also fantastic. We’re introduced to a new species inhabiting the planet they’ve traveled to, tensions rise and we gain deeper insight into the overarching plan of their leader, Kenneth Marshall, played by Mark Ruffalo.

While I felt the ending dragged on slightly and could have been trimmed, it didn’t detract from the overall viewing experience. The film remained engaging throughout.

Every performance in this film was spot on. Robert Pattinson continues to prove he’s one of the best actors working today. His ability to portray different personalities of the same character, without any drastic visual changes, makes it effortless to distinguish between them. His performance alone is a major highlight.

Mark Ruffalo and Toni Collette, who played the callous Ylfa, also stood out, delivering excellent performances as a husband-and-wife duo. Their dynamic added depth to the film, making their characters feel even more compelling.

Like every Bong Joon Ho film, “Mickey 17” delivers its commentary with unmistakable bluntness. Mark Ruffalo’s character, Kenneth Marshall, is clearly meant to be a Trump caricature, explicitly stated in the film as having lost the previous two elections, which, at the original release date, could have been plausible. The movie also serves as a sharp critique of imperialism and humanity’s treatment of animals, drawing strong parallels to Bong’s earlier film “Okja.” While heavy-handed messaging in films can often feel forced, Bong’s mastery of storytelling ensures that every element of his commentary lands effectively.

The movie was fantastic, and I highly recommend everyone go see it. “Mickey 17” is the kind of fresh, original sci-fi film that audiences have been craving in an era dominated by reboots and remakes. It’s surprising how little attention it’s getting, especially considering its unique concept and strong execution.

The film also has a short theatrical run, hitting digital platforms as soon as March 25. With its stunning visuals, this is a movie that truly deserves to be seen on the big screen. Given its limited time in theaters, it’s absolutely worth making the trip before it’s gone.

FINAL VERDICT:
4/5 WALLYS



What to expect from BigXthaPlug

A deeper dive into the rapper's discography

JETT BROWNLEE '25
GUEST WRITER

Over the past few years, BigXthaPlug (BigX) has become one of the South’s hottest rap artists. And with BigX scheduled to headline National Act this Saturday, there is no better time to look at some of his hottest hits that launched his career to the national level and look at how I, anything but a rap connoisseur, view his work.

BigX’s style can be characterized as “In-The-Pocket,” melodic and filled with wordplay. He’s known for his liberal sampling, and a unique fusion between trap and Southern rap beats that both draw influence from his childhood and the Dallas rap community. BigX’s music has commented on a wide range of topics from his extravagant lifestyle, Southern heritage and personal troubles. To start off this review, I think no song is more fitting to examine than one of BigX’s biggest hits, “Texas.”

“Texas” can be characterized as BigX’s love letter to his home state. His use of a banjo sample along with a soulful organ section really sets the tone for the next two minutes and 26 seconds. Throughout the duration of the track, the rapper gives love to the closer members of his community and then progresses to include other notable figures that emerged from the state, and he does so with lyrical ease. His flow throughout the track can be characterized by his determination to fit each lyrical syllable on a sixteenth note. While the track accompanying his voice could be characterized as slow, BigX’s syllabic structure builds energy and tempts the listener to nod along. While I was not too fond of this track during the first few listens, I have started to really enjoy it. The juxtaposition

between the slow beat and the fast rhyme scheme pulls me in and generally speaking, who doesn’t love Texas? This is definitely one I expect to be played this weekend as it would be BigX-blasphemy if it wasn’t. The second track that drew me in was “Levels.”

“Levels” samples 21st Century’s “Remember the Rain” and really creates an ominous tone which is rightly echoed in the albeit violent lyrics brought by BigX. Instead of an ode to Texas, this song is more of BigX’s ode to himself. Although it’s not too creative, this song is more in line with traditional rap and is more about how BigX separates himself from the competition through his violence and extravagance. His flow here is quick. However, the editing of the track’s vocals make him sound as if his lines budge-up and bleed into each other. It appears as though the lyrics were edited in a way that conforming BigX’s voice to the rhythm was prioritized over creating an illusion of a live recording most other genres strive for. Despite this, I actually quite like this editing style for BigX’s tracks. It almost feels more natural, as if this song was a big-budget underground find. It is another track I hope to hear this weekend as the opening samples really hype you up as you listen to it.

In general, I’ve found a new love for BigX over the course of this review. His lyrics and wordplay are smart, and his beats are well constructed. Some other notable tracks that weren’t featured in this review but represent BigX as an artist well include: “Mhmm,” “The Largest,” “Back On My BS” and “Mr. Trouble.” Hopefully his concert this weekend lives up to the same standards that are present in his recorded hits. If so, it’s unlikely you will leave Chadwick disappointed.



COURTESY OF ROLLING STONE

‘Themeless #6’
Crossword by Logan Weilbaker '25

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17										18				
19					20					21				
				22				23						
24	25	26				27		28				29	30	31
32						33		34			35	36		
37					38			39			40			
41								42			43		44	
45					46	47				48		49		
				50				51		52				
53	54	55						56				57	58	59
60								61				62		
63								64						
65								66				67		



Scan for
solution!

- ACROSS
- 1. Biblical gift bearer
 - 6. LAX hrs.
 - 9. Place to get permed
 - 14. Queen with "-an" era
 - 16. Tick off
 - 17. Speaker at many a corporate retreat
 - 18. Impels
 - 19. Timetable abbreviation
 - 20. Check-ups
 - 22. Truckload
 - 23. Pan-frying instruction
 - 24. Given guarantee
 - 28. Merch table merch
 - 29. Bug, in a way
 - 32. Length of a bridge
 - 33. Order in the court
 - 35. Horned beast, for short
 - 37. Couldn't stomach
 - 39. Piece
 - 40. Final Four games
 - 41. Get the lead out?
 - 42. At least once
 - 44. Corona topper
 - 45. Rep's counterpart
 - 46. Green iPhone texts: Abbr.
 - 48. Gets off the fence, say
 - 50. Governor's domain
 - 52. Affliction with a chicken variety
 - 53. Character who leaves a hole wherever it goes, in kid lit
 - 57. Partner of shock
 - 60. Better way to be wanted, perhaps
 - 61. Came into one's own
 - 63. Ointment targets
 - 64. Engaged
 - 65. Baby sitters, often
 - 66. Repair shop fig.
 - 67. Egg-rich dessert

- DOWN
- 1. "I am become ____" (Elon Musk quote, really)
 - 2. Oodles
 - 3. "Bhagavad ____"
 - 4. Action film gun
 - 5. Delivery person?
 - 6. Shelter adoptees
 - 7. Comes to a standstill
 - 8. Shook a fist at, e.g.
 - 9. Doesn't run smoothly
 - 10. Eagle's nest
 - 11. Building block brand
 - 12. Pizzeria appliance
 - 13. Monster's loch
 - 15. Website ad, perhaps
 - 21. Kind of card or stick
 - 22. iPod downloads
 - 24. Campfire remnants
 - 25. Bowling feat
 - 26. Tempter
 - 27. Edible
 - 29. Lacking courage
 - 30. Manga cousin
 - 31. Models
 - 34. Explorer on the road, e.g.
 - 36. DNA shape
 - 38. Unwind
 - 43. Outdated food?
 - 47. "I'm the ____" (repeated "Dora" lyric)
 - 49. Wardrobe staple in many a period piece
 - 50. "Deadly" David Fincher movie
 - 51. New York island
 - 53. Give a part
 - 54. Certain sunburn treatment
 - 55. Goodyear product
 - 56. In need of a 47-Down
 - 57. Arabic name meaning "prince"
 - 58. Left
 - 59. Sharp part of a razor
 - 62. Sean's mom Yoko

Senior spotlight: Justin Santiago

Quiet diligence on the field and in the classroom

ASHTON MOORE '25
STAFF WRITER

Justin Santiago '25 is a veritable Swiss Army Knife of a Wabash man. Few people can claim to be incredibly successful as both an academic and athlete, but Santiago manages both. He is a leader on the cross country team while also being one of the best financial economics majors on campus, but you wouldn't hear it from him.

Justin refrains from talking himself up, but those who know him sing his praises day and night. Maybe some of this is because they know Santiago, who is self-admittedly “naturally reserved” and prefers to focus on his work, Professor of Economics Peter Mikek, who has taught Santiago in several classes, is one of those who speaks highly of him. He expressed that Santiago had characteristics that Wabash men should emulate.

“He has plenty to be confident about, but he is very humble,” Said Mikek. “You can see very strong maturity and intellect that comes through in his classes.”

In spite of his abilities as a student, Santiago brings more to the classroom than a sharp mind. He works hard and remains quiet, doing what he needs to do, time and time again. Although, that isn't to say that he keeps to himself when his peers need help.

“I had a student who had some troubles in class, and he was talking to me in my office,” said Mikek. “I asked, ‘How can I help you?’ and he replied, ‘I’m okay, Justin’s helping me.’” said Mikek. “I just hired him to prepare some exercises for future students.”

Sometimes a student-athlete will sacrifice academic performance for athletic results, or vice-versa. Some, however, actually find that they get into a rhythm, pouring themselves into both, and finding respite from one in the other. Finding this rhythm isn't easy, but Santiago is the rare kind of student-athlete who performs better the more packed his schedule is.



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Justin Santiago '25 poses in the underbelly of Little Giant Stadium. Santiago excelled on the cross country course and in the classroom during his four years at Wabash. After graduation Santiago will join Eli Lilly and Company as a Finance Associate.

“It definitely took time at first to learn how to balance and manage my time, but going back to high school, I found that I did better academically in the semesters where I was running more, as opposed to the ones where I was injured,” said Santiago. “I think being an athlete forces you to structure your time in a way that is more responsible and keeps you accountable.”

The balance has been worth it for Justin, a member of the cross country team that won conference last year. And the trip to that conference victory, a moment he highlights as one of the most special experiences during his time at Wabash, was only made more special by the pitfalls that preceded it. The cross country team finished seventh in conference during Justin's sophomore year, but he believes it was necessary to make the victory the year after not only sweeter, but possible in the first place.

“We were a better team than that,” said Santiago. “At that point, we really had to make a decision. Are we going to buy in and really turn this around, or be OK but not very good? We came back and everyone was healthy and in shape. We were picked fifth in the preseason conference poll and we didn't get first place votes, but we still felt like we knew we could win, we just had to execute. That was super gratifying.”

Santiago isn't just a member of the cross country team, but a leader on it, too. However, this has not come naturally to him, and he credits Wabash with providing him with opportunities to become a better leader. Santiago has moved into leadership roles and taken hold of them when he's gotten the chance through Athletes in Action, a group that he revived on Wabash's campus after it went stagnant in past years.

“Freshman year I was pretty quiet and reserved,” said Santiago. “Now, I'm pretty busy all the time in all sorts of extracurriculars and with my team. I'm in leadership positions and



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Justin Santiago '25 sets himself on Wabash College's Huntsman Outdoor Track. Santiago spoke fondly about balancing athletics and academics, and stressed how a busier schedule keeps him accountable for all his responsibilities.

I have the opportunity to lead meetings. Had you told me freshman year that this is what my senior year would look like, I'd be pretty shocked. It's cool how Wabash pushes you to become a leader, even when you don't necessarily see it in yourself.”

As Santiago approaches the end of his time at Wabash, he seems endlessly thankful, yet unwilling to take the credit that he perhaps deserves. He doesn't just “lead meetings,” he has “the opportunity to lead meetings.” He credits the opportunities he's been given, thrives and remains humble throughout. It is a combination of character traits that will serve him well after Wabash.

It's easy to say that Santiago lets the results speak for themselves, but that would imply that he wants the glory, which isn't the case. He prefers the simple interactions and small moments as opposed to large, grandiose moments of recognition. He attributes his growth to small bits of progress, day by day, through fleeting moments of discomfort. Through his teammates on the cross country team, his roommates and his professors, Santiago has felt comfortable to grow and push himself, crediting his successes as much to his peers as to himself.

Businger '25: Your March Madness manual

Here's all you need to know before as the Big Dance kicks off

GAGE BUSINGER '25
GUEST WRITER

It is officially the best time of the year to be a college basketball fan. Whether you have been watching the sport since the beginning of November like myself, or just now catching up with the storylines of March, I think I speak for everyone when I say not much is more exciting than the NCAA Tournament. In this edition of “bracketology,” I will be diving into some of my first and second round predictions, players I am most looking forward to seeing compete and some games that will be must-see TV.

I hope by the time everyone reads this Friday morning their brackets are 100% correct. Unfortunately, I am here to tell you that is extremely unlikely to happen. Most people who fill out brackets are in bracket pools where either money or bragging rights are on the line.

My recommendation for these people is to make their bold upset picks carefully. How do you do this? First, pinpoint higher seeds that you have winning the first round and then losing in the round of 32. Once you have done this, do some research on the higher-seeded team that they play in the first round (usually a mid-major). If you like that team's mascot, their style of play or their team colors, go ahead and pick them! The worst that can happen is you miss out on a team that you have losing in the second round anyway. The best thing that can happen is you look like a genius and you get a correct pick that most others in your pool likely won't get.

Here are some of my favorite upset picks.

(12) Liberty over (5) Oregon. I love Liberty because they are the fifth-best 3-point shooting team in the nation. (11) Drake over (6) Missouri. I like the Bulldogs because they defeated Vanderbilt and Kansas State early in the season and finished their schedule with a 30-3 record. (13) Akron over (4) Arizona. I'll be honest here, I am just a really big fan of the Akron Zips. (12) UC San Diego over (5) Michigan. UC San Diego is known for creating turnovers and Michigan is one of the more turnover-prone teams in the country. (11) VCU over (6) BYU. VCU is a top-25 defensive team in the nation and they might frustrate BYU with their slow pace of play. An-



PHOTO COURTESY OF WWW.ALAMODOME.COM

San Antonio's Alamodome will serve as the host facility for the 2025 Final Four. Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis will host the 2026 edition.

other reason why I picked all of these upsets is I don't see the loser advancing any further than the second round. Some longshot upsets I can envision happening are (14) Troy over (3) Kentucky, (14) Lipscomb over (3) Iowa St, and (15) Wofford over (2) Tennessee.

Must-Watch First Round Games

(8) Louisville vs. (9) Creighton. Both of these teams came runner-up in their respective conference tournaments and have a lot of talent on their teams. I expect an extremely close game between the Cardinals and Blue Jays.

(11) North Carolina vs. (6) Ole Miss. North Carolina squeaked into the NCAA Tournament in a somewhat controversial fashion after a disappointing season for their standards. The Tarheels beat the brakes off of San Diego State in their First Four game on Tuesday, so I expect them to ride this wave of momentum and potentially knock off the Ole Miss Rebels.

(8) Uconn vs. (9) Oklahoma. This game is going to feature two tremendous freshmen stars who both made all-conference teams in the Big

East and SEC. Uconn freshman Liam McNeeley averages 14.5 points per contest and will try to lead the Huskies over Oklahoma. The Sooners' freshman breakout star is Jeremiah Fears. Fears averages 17 a game and will try to will his team over the back-to-back national champs.

(7) Kansas vs. (10) Arkansas. Kansas coach Bill Self and Arkansas coach John Calipari both have national championships and multiple Final Fours under their belts. What makes this matchup intriguing is both teams have the talent and coaching to really challenge two-seeded St. John's in the second round.

(4) Arizona vs. (13) Akron. If you like points, this is the game to watch. Arizona averages over 81 points per game while Akron averages 84. Akron has only lost one game in 2025 and if the Zips get hot from three, Arizona could find themselves in trouble.

(4) Purdue vs. (13) High Point. Purdue has proven to be upset-prone and the Edey-less Boilermakers are facing off against one of the hottest mid-major teams in the sport. I expect

Purdue to end up winning, but this one should be a nail-biter.

Best Players By Region

South:

Johni Broome (Auburn): 18.9 PPG and 10.6 RPG, SEC Player of the Year.

Curtis Jones (Iowa State): 17 PPG, All-Big 12 1st Team.

Jacob Ognacevic (Lipscomb): 20.1 PPG, Atlantic Sun Player of the Year.

Donovan Dent (New Mexico): 20.6 PPG, Mountain West Player of the Year.

West:

Walter Clayton Jr. (Florida): 17.5 PPG, All-SEC 1st Team.

PJ Haggerty (Memphis): 21.8 PPG, American Athletic Player of the Year.

Bennet Stirtz (Drake): 19.1 PPG, Missouri Valley Player of the Year.

JT Toppin (Texas Tech): 18.1 PPG, 9.2 RPG, Big 12 Player of the Year.

Midwest:

LJ Cryer (Houston): 15.2 PPG, All-Big 12 First Team.

Chase Hunter (Clemson): 16.4 PPG, All-ACC First Team.

Braden Smith (Purdue): 16.1 PPG, 8.7 APG, Big Ten Player of the Year.

Tre Johnson (Texas): 19.8 PPG, All-SEC 2nd Team.

East:

Cooper Flagg (Duke): 18.9 PPG, ACC Player of the Year.

Josh Hubbard (Mississippi St): 18.7 PPG, All-SEC Second Team.

John Tonje (Wisconsin): 19.2 PPG, All-Big Ten First Team.

Mark Sears (Alabama): 18.7 PPG, All-SEC First Team.

My Final Four and National Champion

Usually, it's a bad omen to pick three one-seeds in your Final Four, but this year I couldn't resist because the top teams are historically good. I have (1) Florida, (1) Duke, (1) Houston, and (2) Michigan State in my Final Four. I think Florida will cut down the nets in San Antonio after defeating Duke in the championship game.

THE BACHELOR | BACHELOR.WABASH.EDU

Golf plays on legendary grass in North Carolina

SAM BENEDICT '25
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For the first time during the 2025 season, the Wabash golf team found themselves on the links in a competitive setting. However, the team's performance showed there is room for improvement moving forward.

After the opening tournament, set for the end of February, was cancelled due to weather, the team's first opportunity to compete outside came on March 9 and 10 at the Hampden-Sydney College Tiger Invitational at the Country Club of Whispering Pines in Whispering Pines, North Carolina. The team finished ninth overall out of 16 teams.

"I think the team was very disappointed in the way that we played, but not discouraged," said Lewis Dellinger '25. "We're disappointed, but not discouraged because it's realistically our first 18 holes outside where it wasn't 35 degrees in the wind and it was our first time chipping on real grass."

Although the team's performance was disappointing, Dellinger put together rounds of 76 and 77 to finish tied for 22nd place individually. Sean Bledsoe '26 tied for 44th individually with Lane Notter '28, Robert Pruzin '25 and Matt Lesniak '25 rounding out the scoring for the Little Giants.

"I am happy that I shot what I shot and helped out the team for two days in a row, but at the same time, I know that I can play so much better," said Dellinger.

Although the outcome of the tournament was not what the team had hoped, the trip was still a success.

"When I took over the program, the team would have been throwing clubs, acting poorly on the golf course and not representing Wabash well due to their poor play," said Head Coach Justin Kopp '21. "However, every single player fought until the end of the round with a good attitude and acted like Wabash men through and through. I'm very proud of them for that. Now it's about learning how to take our much improved mental game to the next level and make it a weapon for us."

The trip to North Carolina didn't solely focus on the team's performance on the course. On top of playing in the tournament, the team was provided the opportunity to play at Pinehurst #2, one of the premier golf courses in the world, as a result of generosity from an alumnus. Furthermore, the team had dinners and free-time together — allowing them to grow closer as a unit.

"The experience at Pinehurst #2 and the rest of the pristine courses that we played on spring break proved to be an absolutely incredible experience," said Kopp. "We are so blessed at Wabash to have generous alumni to help students experience opportunities like we did this spring break. The group of guys who got



PHOTO BY SEAN BLEDOSE '26

Wabash golf traveled to North Carolina where they played at the Pinehurst Resort — home to famed golf course "Pinehurst #2." The team experienced a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to play the course, which hosted the 2024 U.S. Open.



PHOTO BY SEAN BLEDOSE '26

Lewis Dellinger '25 tees off at the Hampden-Sydney College Tiger Open in North Carolina.

to play those courses and go on a once in a lifetime trip like that are all so grateful but also better men because of the experience. The group got closer and meshed very well. Everyone on the trip agreed that the team chemistry felt higher than ever due to the experiences they all just shared together whether it be playing cards in the back of the van, hanging out in the hotel rooms

at night, or playing golf together. Those are memories the team will remember forever."

As the team prepares to enter the meat of their schedule with three April tournaments before the North Coast Athletic Conference Championship in May, they've identified specific areas of growth to focus on in practice.

"Eighty-five percent of shots in golf are from inside of 150

yards so that's where we will spend ~85% of our time practicing," said Kopp. "Additionally, I want guys to get more creative and feel more athletic on the golf course. I don't want us to feel like robots and practice to become robots because then when we get under pressure or if we can't practice for a week due to rain or snow, we lose our confi-

dence. We need to trust in our athletic abilities and know that we can still score without our best stuff out there on a day-to-day basis. That's how golf is, no one can perfect the game."

A limiting factor for the team is the difficulty of course that the team has to practice on. Typically, the Little Giants will use the Crawfordsville Country Club (CCC) as their practice course. However, the course offers difficulty in some respects, but easier areas in others — and does not usually match the level of difficulty of tournament courses. Furthermore, playing on the same course every day becomes repetitive and boring.

"Instead of going out to the CCC, we're going to go out to Trophy Club or Purdue's golf course and be able to work on short game or even just playing harder golf courses, so that when we go to tournaments on a nice golf course, we're not really shell shocked because we've been playing a golf course that isn't as good," said Lesniak. "Another thing that we're going to implement is doing on-course out of bounds (OB) at the CCC, because as a team, we struggled with tee shots this week."

The team will have a chance to put their practice to the test on April 4 and April 5 when they play in the Illinois Wesleyan University Invitational.



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Behind the rankings: An inside look at Inside Hitter

NATE JOVEN '26
STAFF WRITER

A turbulent spring break stretch that included three tough losses saw the Little Giants volleyball team emerge with more questions than answers about where they stand in the national rankings. As of March 17, the Little Giants are currently rated 42nd in the country among NCAA Division III men's volleyball teams, according to rankings from Inside Hitter. The American Volleyball Coaches Association offers a weekly coaches poll, but this poll – which only includes the top 20 teams – does not produce a systematic rating.

Inside Hitter offers an independent yet reputable ranking for all DIII men's volleyball teams. Fascinated by a website that ranked high school hockey, the Inside Hitter website began when its founder decided to develop his own ranking model. While the website began covering both hockey and volleyball, Inside Hitter turned its focus solely to volleyball in 2020.

"With the world searching for something positive during a pandemic, we wanted a safe place for our fans to visit that could provide an upbeat take on their favorite sport both in high school and at the college level," said a spokesperson from Inside Hitter. "Players appeared desperate for some good news in a world that was filled with anxiety and unprecedented chaos. Inside Hitter was born at that time."

Inside Hitter exists as the go-to destination for all information regarding men's volleyball at the DIII level. It sets a high standard for sports coverage by offering transparency and timeliness. Since its inception, providing a constructive, good-natured experience – two traits at the core of Inside Hitter's mission.

"Back in the early 2000s, many forum websites existed where anonymous participants could trash talk players or coaches. At Inside Hitter, we thought it would be a good idea to counter those websites with an informative, positive and encouraging website for players and fans to visit," said the spokesperson.

Today Inside Hitter's presence has grown substantially. In each year of the company's existence, its viewership has doubled. When volleyball is in season, it averages 50,000 views across its different platforms per month.

In their preseason rankings, Inside Hitter rated Wabash as the 46th-best team. The Lit-

tle Giants made their presence known early in the season, jumping up to the 23rd spot in the rankings on February 12. The moment did not last as the recent string of losses dropped Wabash back to 42nd on March 17. Nonetheless, Wabash remains intent on playing their best season to date.

"Wabash has totally outperformed our pre-season assessment," said the Inside Hitter. "The team's success has been a wonderful surprise for the players and fans. The team has personality and talent and is fun to watch."

"Over the last two seasons, the team seems renewed under Coach Ashaun Baker," said Inside Hitter. "Piotr Wolan '28, Zev Wolverton '27 and Bawibawi Thang '27 are sporting .974, .974 and .961 receive percentages respectively which is just outstanding. If this team can stay more consistent in road matches, the sky is the limit in their conference tournament."

Wabash will attempt to climb the rankings yet again when they travel to Missouri on Friday March 21 to face off against Westminster College then Maryville University the following day. These matches will be Wabash's final chance to find success on the road in the regular season. When they return, the Little Giants will play a string of four home matches, all against conference opponents.

"The Little Giants have not lost a home match all season, and have had some signature wins over Benedictine, Westminster and UW-Stevens Point," said Inside Hitter. "The recent skid has revealed losses to some high quality and ranked opponents such as Dominican, Aurora and Wittenberg. Taking Trine to five sets is an accomplishment as that program is now in the top 25 in the country."

Wabash has done well to put itself in contention for a spot in the MCVL conference tournament. As they defend their home court, the Little Giants will benefit from the signature energy of the Chadwick Crazies to give them the edge against tough conference opponents.

"Wabash will need to dig in and come up with some great performances against Mount Union and Baldwin Wallace at the end of this month," said the Inside Hitter. "These will be critical MCVL matches for their conference tournament seeding."

Rugby takes on the Hoosier State's best at Taylor

WILL DUNCAN '27
STAFF WRITER

After just two tournaments, the Wabash rugby team is yet again turning heads and solidifying themselves within the rugby world. With a mix of returning veterans, young talent and a savvy head coach, Wabash looks to continue to prove why they deserve respect.

In their first tournament of the year, the team played at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan, where they walked out with a respectable 3-1 record. In the three victories, Wabash let up a total of zero tries. The team's wins came against Hillsdale College, Case Western Reserve University and Baldwin Wallace University, along with a close loss to Cedarville University.

Though the team got off to a hot start, the temperature did not agree.

"I think it was about one degree [Fahrenheit] when we got there," said Rugby Captain and President James Wallace '26.

Though the team played exceptionally well, they were denied access to a play-in game to face off against John Carroll University in the championship.

"The organizers seemed to be confused," said Wallace '26. "There was allegedly some miscommunication between staff members on if we were going to be granted that play-in opportunity, along with the other team being too cold to play."

Head Coach Kelly Romano expressed her pride in how the team played in their first action of the year.

"I have a team of starters," said Romano. "I have an exceptional team with men who have deep rugby IQ, athleticism and an amazing team spirit."

With their minds set on a tournament victory, Wabash traveled to Taylor University over spring break to continue to make a name for themselves. The team started by beating Hillsdale once again, followed by losses to both Taylor and Cedarville. In the championship match, Wabash was once again matched up with Cedarville, falling to them a second time.

"There were a couple reasons for [our losses]," said Wallace. "Two of our games were scheduled to where there was minimal time for a break to recover. We also only had [about half] of our guys, so we were missing some of that needed energy."

Romano also noticed that the shortcomings of the team seemed to be linked to the missing members of the roster.

"The team has worked extremely hard in creating a brotherhood throughout the team," said Romano. "When only half of your team is there, it just doesn't feel the same."

Not only was the team lacking morale, but it was also lacking depth. With only half of the team able to travel to Taylor, lack of endurance became a big part of why Wabash

suffered three losses.

"We took this tournament as having to lose to figure out what it takes to win," said Wallace.

Wabash rugby has solidified its identity as being one unit. With team bonding and chemistry building at the top of the team's priority, it's a hard feat to beat this rugby team at its full capacity.

A standout team that looks ahead to the next tournament, which is known as an automatic qualifier (auto-qual), meaning that a win will give them a bid to Nationals – held in Washington, D.C. every year. However, this wasn't always the only way to enter the national championship. With National Collegiate Rugby (NCR) recently changing the format of the tournament, it has caused the rugby team to hone in on winning the Notre Dame Irish Invitational, which they will play on March 29, 2025.

"In the past, you could win a conference championship or an auto qualifier to get into Nationals," Wallace said. "However, this year, with conference tournaments being taken out, you can now only gain entry from winning an auto qualifier (like the Notre Dame Irish Invitational) or based on speculation of your resume."

With automatic qualification tournaments rarely taking place, it now becomes all the more important Wabash walks away victorious.

"Winning this tournament means we don't have to worry about pitching our case to anyone about why we deserve to be in. We'd rather show [why we're deserving] by winning this tournament," said Wallace.

With the teams' overall record sitting at 6-4, their sights are now fully set on coming in first in the upcoming tournament. The players have been working diligently on fine-tuning any imperfections the team may have.

"The team is working really hard on their catch passes," said Romano. "They're fine-tuning their defense and foundational skills, which will then set them up for scoring opportunities."

Wabash rugby has built a foundation on being a hard-nosed, rough, aggressive defensive team. Their mindset being that they will out-hit, out-work and out-hustle any team they face.

"We have a team of athletes who are not afraid of contact," Coach Romano said. "They know what they need to do in order to tackle, get the rock and put up goose eggs."

With brotherhood at an all-time high, along with the player's skills constantly improving, the rugby team looks to continue to make a statement.

"I think what both the rugby and Wabash community should know is that Wabash rugby understands who we are," said Wallace. "Sooner or later, everyone else is going to have to figure it out."

This week in sports: spring break edition

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

Coast to coast, national championship to national championship – Wabash athletes were busy over spring break. Here's everything you missed.

Track & Field: New York

The Empire State saw Will Neubaur '25 claim his title as an All-American. Held in Rochester, the 2025 Indoor National Championships was a chance for two Little Giants to shine.

Brayden Curnutt '25 earned second-team All-American status with a 15th-place finish in the 5,000-meter race. He ran a 14:34.46.

Neubaur finished eighth in the 800-meter race with a blistering 153.48

With the indoor season complete, Wabash track & field will begin the outdoor season at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology on Saturday, March 22.

Wrestling: Rhode Island

Five wrestlers traveled to the Northeast for the 2025 Division III National Championship.

Chase Baczek '25 completed his All-American career with a third-place finish in the 197-pound weight class. The senior won three-consecutive bouts before falling to the top-seeded Massoma Endene of Wartburg College. With a 12-0 major decision in his match in the consolation bracket, Baczek moved into the third-place match where he won a 5-0 decision.

James Day '26 finished fourth at 133 pounds, securing All-American status for the second year running. He won three rounds in the consolation bracket before falling to the eventual champion Jaden Hinsten of Baldwin Wallace University in a 17-1 tech fall.

Daniel Uribe '25 won a pair of victories in the 149-pound consolation bracket.

Mawuli Nevis '25 fell to fifth-seeded Andrew Supers of Baldwin Wallace University in a 6-3 decision, before being defeated in the consolation bracket to end his tournament run.

The 285-pound Titus Waters '27 went 0-2 in his own bracket.

As a team, Wabash finished 12th in the tournament, continuing its streak of top-20 finishes.

Rugby:

The scrumming squad stayed in the Hoosier state for a tournament hosted by Taylor University. With a limited roster, the team was still able to advance to the championship round of the tournament.

Wabash stomped Hillsdale College 36-5 in the first match. However they weren't able to overcome their next three opponents. Taylor University won 22-7. In their next two matches, Wabash fell to Cedarville University twice losing 17-7.

The second match against Cedarville was the championship match of the tournament. With a 17-0 loss, the Little Giants finished as the tournament runner up.

Golf: North Carolina

The Little Giants finished ninth out of 16 teams at the Hampden-Sydney College Tiger Invitational held at the Country Club of Whispering Pines in Whispering Pines, North Carolina.

Lewis Dellinger '25 shot 153 over two rounds to finish 22nd, the best performance for the Little Giants. Sean Bledsoe '26 shot 158, Lane Notter '28 shot 161 and Robert Pruzin '25 shot 167. Matthew Lesniak '25 cut six strokes off of his first day total to shoot an 84 in day two of competition, finishing with a two-day total of 174.

The team's next outing will be against the

Illinois Wesleyan University Invitational beginning on April 4.

Baseball: Florida

Going .500, Wabash went 3-3 in Florida. They lost to Penn State Behrend 5-8, before picking up three-straight wins against the University of North Western, Wheaton College and Washington College. Wabah would then fall to Marywood University and the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

The team was also the first to get back in action after break, playing their home opener against Eureka College on Tuesday, March 18 at Goodrich Ballpark. Wabash defeated the Red Devils 8-1.

Grant Stratton '25 earned the win for pitching seven shutout innings.

Baseball will continue their season, playing three games against Illinois Wesleyan University from March 22-23.

Lacrosse: Virginia

Virgina Beach hosted a red-hot lacrosse team from Crawfordsville. Wabash won all three of their Spring Break matches, beating Greensboro College 17-3, Curry College 14-10 and Virginia Wesleyan University 9-2.

Charlie Rafalko '28 led the way with seven goals over three games. Twelve different Little Giants found the back of the net in Virginia. Meanwhile Colin Krekeler '27 made 28 saves while giving up only 15 goals.

Wabash will begin its North Coast Athletic Conference season against Kenyon on March 22.

Tennis: California

Tennis spent the week battling Mother Nature and high-powered programs. The team was only able to complete two of their four scheduled matches over break. In Pasadena, they lost 1-6 to 34th-ranked California Institute of Technology.

At 1-doubles, Cole Shifferly '26 and Augusto Ghidini '26 won 7-5. In 4-singles Ghidini took his match well into overtime, winning 11-9 in a third-set tiebreaker. Both Murilo Guiarnari '28 at 2-singles and Maksymillian Domanski '28 at 3-singles fell in third-set tiebreakers.

In Redlands, California, Wabash fell 4-0 to Haverford College. The match was called after Haveford reached the four points necessary to win the match, leaving three Little Giants unable to finish matches that went into the third sets.

The scheduled matches against the 12th-ranked Washington University in St. Louis and the 20th-ranked University of Redlands were both rained out.

Volleyball: Michigan

Wabash volleyball only traveled for one match over the week, playing two Midwest Collegiate Volleyball League matches. They began their break in Indiana with a five-set loss to conference opponent Trine University.

In Michigan they bounced back against MCVL opponent Calvin. Wabash took the first two sets, before Calvin responded by taking the third and fourth. But the Little Giants would rally to win 16-14 in the fifth set.

Will Beikes '25 recorded 36 of the team's 48 assists, while Bawibawi Thang '27 led the team in kills with 14.

The team will continue their season with matches against Westminster College and Maryville University on March 21 and March 22, respectively.

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Little Giants split spring break schedule, win home opener at Goodrich Ballpark

TY MURPHY '27
FEATURES EDITOR

Spring Break is an important time at levels of baseball. From Division III to the MLB, the Sunshine State is the destination for all things baseball in March. The Wabash baseball team is about a quarter through their season, and just like the temperature, things are starting to heat up. Over the spring break the team went to Florida for more than just the beach. They went to Floridato compete, and compete they did.

“It’s a good way for us to get into some good weather, play a lot of games in a short amount of time and dig into our bullpen a little bit,” said Head Coach Jake Martin ’03. “We answered some questions about depth and who’s going to be in what roles.”

The team started off their warm weather campaign well with a 3-1 record, beating Washington College, Wheaton College and the University of Northwestern. Despite these wins the team did not finish how they had expected in their next two games.

“We dropped a really tough one against Marywood, went into the ninth with a one run lead, and lost that game,” said Martin. “And that kind of spilled over into a tough Saturday getaway day against a really feisty team in the United States Merchant Marine Academy. They were a tough team and put it to us on our last day which was a tough way to finish.”

Even though the trip did not end how they wanted it to, they would get their revenge quickly with a home game in Goodrich Ballpark against Eureka College on March 18. And the team shone with an 8-1 victory over the Red Devils. On the mound pitcher Grant Stratton ’25 led the team as he struck out five batters and gave up no runs while freshman pitcher Jarrod Kirsch ’28 held the lead with a single strikeout. Infielder Camden Scheidt ’25 led the team at



Shortstop Ben Henke '26 makes the throw back to first to complete a double play in Wabash's game against Eureka College on March 19, 2025, at Goodrich Ballpark.

PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

bat with a double, two walks and a run batted in while outfielder Will Phillips ’28 contributed with a noteworthy double as he went 2-5 on the day.

“I think the game was proof of our guys buying into a process that seems to be paying off early on,” said Martin. “They are supportive of one another, they’re a confident

group, and we look to ride their confidence throughout the middle of the season.”

What made the win a little better was that it came in front of an enthusiastic home crowd. A factor that is always beneficial to a Little Giant team.

“As an outfielder, it’s another aspect of the game that you have

to be thinking about, is the people behind you while focusing on the game,” said Phillips. “Players will let that get to them, and our fans are really good at causing opposing teams to make errors.”

Of course, it’s more than just a home crowd that has really elevated this team. With a stellar pitching staff, strikeouts have been

coming easy this year.

The action does not stop here though. On March 22 baseball will take on the Illinois Wesleyan University Titans at Goodrich Park in a double header before travelling to Bloomington, Illinois on March 23 to take on the Titans once more.

“It’s a good way for us to get into some good weather, play a lot of games in a short amount of time and dig into our bullpen a little bit.”

-Head Baseball Coach Jake Martin '03

“They always are a good team in a really tough league, and they’re a veteran group,” said Martin. “It’ll be a tough game. We’ve had their number over the last few years, but they always come in and make it a tough series. That will absolutely be a good test for us.”

After a fierce outing against the Titans the baseball team will be ready for their North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) play. With strong goals for the season, they hope to get hot and make a strong case for why they are a top team in the NCAC.

Eureka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	6	4
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	R	H	E
Wabash	0	0	0	2	0	0	5	1	x	8	7	0

Tennis faces ranked foes and weather woes in California

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

Rainy California was the backdrop for the tennis team’s spring break. Wabash had four matches planned for the week, but poor weather led to two being canceled.

“It’s always unfortunate when you go out there with the expectation to play four matches and only get in two,” said Head Tennis Coach Daniel Bickett. “But I was pleased with how we competed in both matches. I think we made the most of both of those opportunities.”

Unlike previous years, where Wabash traveled to Florida for spring break, the Little Giants went to California to face some of the top ranked teams in the country. The experience facing ranked opponents marks the next step in program growth, as both veteran and younger players get used to playing against the best teams in Division III.

As part of the trip, the team was able to stop at the Indian Wells Open on Thursday, March 13. The team watched Francisco Cerundolo play the third-ranked player in the world, Carlos Alcaraz.

“The trip to California was very fun,” said Koeneman. “The weather was bad all week so we didn’t get to play as much as we wanted, but the team bonding was immaculate. I think we as a team were already very close, but now I feel more connected to this team than any other team before.”



Eric Tien '27 chases down a backhand slice against Caltech on March 10, 2025 in Pasadena, California.

COURTESY OF CALTECH SPORTS INFORMATION DIRECTOR BRIAN MELLBLOM



The Little Giants attended the Indian Wells Open where they watched Francisco Cerundolo play the third-ranked player in the world, Carlos Alcaraz in the quarterfinal round at the main court.

COURTESY OF ATP TOUR

a rain delay, the match was called after Haveford reached the four points necessary to win the match.

Wabash lost all three doubles matches. In singles, three Little Giants were unable to finish matches that went into the third sets, be-

cause the match ended when Haerford reached four points.

Both matches were examples of a few points here and there making a major difference. With so many tiebreakers and 7-5 matches, the team showed that they

were a handful of points away from beating a ranked opponent.

“[We need to be] figuring out where those one to two extra points that we can snag are to maybe flip some of those first

sets and then turn that second-set victory into a straight-set one,” said Bickett. “In both the matches out there, we really had a good sense of competitiveness and a lot of good fight — not letting some of the random things that pop up in a tennis match affect us too much.”

The two matches marked the return of Ghidini to singles, as he spent most of the season playing limited matches to stay healthy.

“[Ghidini] has made a big impact, both in singles and doubles in his first two years,” said Bickett. “And to get him back against CalTech, that was definitely a welcome sight to see. He adds further options as we’re going throughout the season in terms of how we want to play teams and how we want to match up against them.”

“I think we as a team were already very close, but now I feel more connected to this team than any other team before.”

-Ethan Koeneman '26

With spring break behind them, Wabash tennis will enter the second half of their season where they will begin to play outdoor matches and face conference opponents.

“The rest of the season is going to be a special time,” said Koeneman. “I am most excited for the conference and the DePauw match. We have the opportunity to do something really special as a group this year, and I’m looking forward to proving everyone wrong in conference and show just how good we really are.”

Wallace: Celebrating the old, anticipating the new

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

All good things must come to an end. In the semifinal round of the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Tournament, the Little Giants' three-year streak as NCAC Champions was broken. Wabash fell to the Wooster Fighting Scots 73-57.

The Scarlet & White were done in by their uncharacteristic 14 turnovers — totaling 21 points for Wooster — and 6-13 three-point shooting for the Fighting Scots in the second half.

"You can't really talk about Wabash against Wooster this year without giving Wooster a ton of credit," said Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett. "Their better players ... played better than they had played against us in years."

It was Vinny Buccilla '25 in his final game who led Wabash with 19 points.

Noah Hupmann '25 pulled in 13 rebounds and held Wooster's starting center, fifth-year senior Nick Everett, scoreless and forcing him to watch most of the game from the bench.

Rich Brooks '26 and Josh

Whack '26 each found a hot streak during the game. They went for 11 and 13 points, respectively. But while their runs were vital to keeping the team in the game, they couldn't outpace the Fighting Scots.

After the win, Wooster advanced to the NCAC Final where they lost 68-79 to Denison.

Along with breaking the program's championship streak, the conclusion of the 2024-2025 basketball season marks the end of an era in Wabash basketball.

There's no question, Wabash fans have been spoiled for four years.

The team went 86-30 (62-13 NCAC) over four seasons. On the way, the Little Giants claimed three-straight NCAC Tournament Titles (2022-2024), two regular season titles (2022, 2024) and an NCAA

VINNY BUCCILLA '25

Games played (2nd) - 114
3-pt field goals (7th) - 162
Points scored (19th) - 1199



Sectional Championship (2022).

Over that same period, Wabash outscored opponents by a combined 9055-8154.

The Little Giants kicked off a new basketball rivalry with Wooster — a team that is one of the winningest programs in Division III basketball. The Scarlet & White went 9-3 against the Fighting Scots, beating them in the NCAC Tournament Final three out of four years.

The graduation of Buccilla — the last player remaining from the Final Four roster — and of Hupmann — the NCAC defensive player of the year and Division III blocks leader — will mean a significant shift in the program.

"He [Buccilla] is going to go down as one of the best guards in the history of Wabash basketball," said Brumett. "The thing that is unique about

Vinny is that he was our top recruit, and he lived up to it."

"Noah [Hupmann] really led us from being a team that everyone knew was an offensive group to one of the best defensive teams in the country," said Brumett. "His teammates really leaned into his defensive greatness, and we were all able to reap the benefits."

The Little Giants have looked forward to one generationally-talented player after another — from Wabash's greatest all-time scorer Jack Davidson '22, to Ahmoni Jones '24 who sits top 10 in multiple stat categories, to one of the program's winningest players in Buccilla and to Hupmann who is the most notable defender Wabash has ever seen.

It's true an era of Wabash dominance is over, but another generation of Wabash men will be ready to lace up next year. Wabash has never been happy to rest on its

TYLER WATSON '22

3-pts made (5th) - 180
Assists (5th) - 288
Points scored (15th) - 1356



PHOTO BY JAKE PAIGE '23

Wabash basketball celebrates its win over Illinois Wesleyan University to advance to the NCAA DIII Final Four on March 11, 2022. The 2021-2022 team finished the season with a record of 28-4.



JACK DAVIDSON '22

Points scored (1st) - 2464
Points per game (1st) - 22.4
FT made (1st) - 718
3-pt goals (2nd) - 324
assists (2nd) - 377
Games started (1st) - 110

AHMONI JONES '24

Games played (1st) - 118
3-pt field goals (4th) - 182
Rebounds (5th) - 684
Points scored (8th) - 1525



NOAH HUPMANN '25

Blocks per game (1st) - 3.2
Blocks (2nd) - 170

laurels and a winning tradition has never been a stand in for a winning future.

"If you don't win the national championship, there's always another step that you're hoping or striving for," said Brumett.

To leave their mark, Wabash men will have to continue to find their own way and build their own identities.

Every year at the start of the season, it has been very clear who would lead the team in scoring, and it's been incredible. Things will be a little different next season. Although the roster has multiple excellent players, there is no 'the guy' to look out for.

Wabash's 2025-2026 campaign will be a test of teamwork as their best scorers — seniors Brooks, Whack and Gavin Shipert '26 — alongside up-and-coming scorers in Nate Matelic '27 and Rob Sorenson '28 will all be on the hook to lead the team through the season.

The thought of four to five players vying for the role of lead scorer next season couldn't be more exciting.

Familiar opponents in Wooster and Denison graduate several excellent players, but high-level programs always find a way to be competitive.

Adding to the allure of the new generation of Wabash basketball is the addition of a new opponent to the NCAC in John Carroll University. The Blue Streaks went 22-6 this season and will continue to elevate the level of play in the conference.

"[Denison has] a lot of really good returning players," said Brumett. "I would be really surprised if they take a step backwards. Wooster is never going to fall too far. And then obviously we're adding John Carroll. That's a historic move. We want to continue to win the league, but the competition at the top is going to be as good as ever."

Wabash basketball has been at an all-time high. Great players have come and gone, but the fun isn't over yet. A whole generation of players are ready to start the work anew next season.

And with other NCAC powerhouses graduating their own top players and finding their own next man up, Chadwick can look forward to new faces, new identities and the same old Wabash basketball.

For four years Wabash players have stepped up to elevate the program. Now there's just one question left — who's next?

ALL AMERICANS

Four Little Giants earn All-American honors at nationals



COURTESY OF D3PHOTOGRAPHY
Brayden Curnutt '25 finished 15th in the 5,000-meter race at the Division III National Championships hosted from March 12-13 in Rochester, New Yorks.

Continued from page 1

"It's a big deal," said Assistant Track Coach Tyler McCreary. "The track and cross country programs have been so great, and have such tradition. To see the Wabash uniform out there on the track and not just to get to the meet but to get there and be highly competitive really meant a lot to us. We're excited to continue to build off of that."

Against the top competition in Division III, both runners earned All-American honors in their respective events.

"The atmosphere was intense," said Neubauer. "Everyone at that meet was good, and no one can fake that."

Neubauer earned his berth to nationals at the Wartburg College Qualifier, a last-chance meet where runners who hadn't qualified yet could race to try and make the cut. Despite finishing first in almost every 800-meter race this season, he was still just short of qualifying. Neubauer finished in 1:51.30, winning the race to earn a ticket to nationals.

In New York, the senior concluded his dominant indoor season with an eighth-place finish in the 800-meter race – adding his name to the long list of Little Giant runners to become All-Americans. His final time was 1:53.48.

"He deserves all of this," said McCreary. "Will has been one of the best runners in the region and in the country for the last couple years. In the 800-meter race, he's just missed the national championship by a few spots the last couple times. And for him to get into the meet this year decisively – the way he did – and then to walk into his first NCAA championship and to make the final was a big deal."

"I've had the desire to achieve All-American status for most of my career," said Neubauer. "But last year, things really clicked for me and I've been riding that wave since."

Curnutt earned second-team All-American status with a 15th-place finish in the 5,000-meter race. He ran a 14:34.46. Curnutt continues one of the best years for any Wabash runner. Since winning both the conference and regional meets and earning All-American status in cross country, the senior has been traveling to the most competitive meets in the Midwest to prepare for nationals.

"I knew all season where I was on the national list," said Curnutt. "I knew it was going to be close when the final week of the year was underway. Going into the meet, I knew exactly where I was seeded and anything improving that seed would be a decent day."

"Overall, I think it calmed my nerves a little bit knowing that I've already toed the line against the guys in the 5k, not only in cross country but also previous meets that Coach [McCreary] and I travelled to this indoor season," Curnutt added. "With it being my second national championship, it was validating knowing that cross country and the previous meets across the year all helped me get to that meet."

Unique to other sports, track doesn't end at nationals – at least not indoor nationals. Wabash will begin the second half of their season at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology on Saturday, March 22. Neubauer and Curnutt along with the rest of the Wabash roster will begin their efforts again, this time preparing for the outdoor nationals in late May.

"It's certainly unique," said McCreary. "You have that physical and emotional build up to the conference championship and then the NCAA Championships. You have to be able to readjust. You can't reach that high and then take a deep breath and then relax for the summer. It's like, no, you got to gear up and do that all over again."



COURTESY OF JIMMY NAPERSTK, KODIAK CREATIVE
James Day wrestles in the NCAA Division III National Tournament held from March 12-13 in Rhode Island. Day finished fourth in the 133-pound weight class.

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Facing a very competitive schedule where they would face off against multiple top-ranked teams throughout the year, the team did not back down and went into the postseason ready to prove that they belonged in the top team conversation.

Five Little Giant wrestlers punched their ticket to the national tournament this year, after they each placed in the top three of their weight class at the regional – returning All-American James Day '26 at 133 pounds, Daniel Uribe '25 at 149 pounds, Mawuli Nevis '25 at 165 pounds, two-time All-American Chase Baczek '26 at 197 pounds and Titus Waters '27 at 285 pounds.

The team finished 12th in the tournament, improving from the previous year's 20th-place finish.

"I think we're heading in the right direction," said Assistant Wrestling Coach Max Bishop '22. "We're returning two of those guys that were at the national tournament this past weekend, and I'm sure they'll be looking to improve on what they've done this year."

The Wabash wrestling program is no stranger to sending wrestlers to the national podium. For the last decade, the team has seen several top-20 and top-10 finishes as a team, building a strong history of dominance and placement at the national tournament. But with this success comes the pressure to continue the trend.

"Wabash has a rich history of success within the wrestling program," said Bishop. "It is a goal to get back to the national tournament, to stay within the top 15 and even crack the top 10."

Day and Baczek both contributed

to the strong finish, placing in the top eight and earning All-American honors again. Day finished in fourth place at 133 pounds, battling back after a loss in the quarter-finals. Going into the tournament as the eighth seed, it would be a tough road to the podium. After receiving a first round bye, Day was set to take on his opponent from Augsburg. In a close, hard fought match, Day came out with a 5-3 decision win, advancing him to the quarter finals.

After falling to the number one seed in the bracket, Day had a chance to wrestle for third place. Dominating his next three matches, including a win over the three seed in the bracket, Day secured his fourth place finish after falling to the five seed.

Excited about making it onto the podium for a second time, Day is also optimistic for what the future holds for him. With one season left, he believes he can continue to improve and climb even further.

"It's always a really good feeling when you're able to make the podium," said Day. "I feel like there's a lot of room for growth, and with that I think it's pretty exciting looking forward to next year to hopefully finish even better."

Baczek finished in third place, immortalizing his name once again. Losing in the semifinal round, Baczek battled back to secure third place, capping off his collegiate career.

In his first match, Baczek – the five seed – cruised to a 9-0 major decision win, advancing him to the second round where he went on to dominate win by technical fall. After winning in his quarter-final match, Baczek lost to his tourna-

ment's one seed – and eventual national champion. In his next two matches, he would wrestle the seven and six seeds, beating both to claim third place.

Having qualified for nationals four times – and being a three-time All-American – Baczek reflects on his past visits to the national tournament and how this year stands apart from the others.

"I definitely peaked at the right time," said Baczek. "I think I put it all together right when I needed to, and performed the best I could. Considering that it was the first win in the first round that I've had all four years I've qualified and the highest I've placed, I think that was definitely my best. I felt my best, looked my best and performed my best."

While being an All-American is one of the highest achievements you can earn in college wrestling, Baczek believes being an All-American means more.

"It means being a leader," said Baczek. "Whether you're just leading by example or it means representing what our program preaches in the training room. I think it culminates all of your training previously, before college and in college, and putting it all on display."

After a hard-fought season with a tough schedule and strong finish, Wabash performed well on the national stage. With five individual qualifiers, two All-Americans, and a 12th-place team finish, the Little Giants had a successful end to the season, and have a lot to look forward to next year.

Diemer-McKinney: Lacrosse goes undefeated in Virginia

Haiden Diemer-McKinney '26
STAFF WRITER

The Wabash lacrosse team made the most of its spring break trip to Virginia Beach, turning the week into a statement of dominance. The Little Giants rolled through all three of their matchups against East Coast competition, securing victories in convincing fashion.

While the upperclassmen provided their consistent high-level play, the emergence of several underclassmen was the biggest takeaway from the week. With key contributions from younger players, Wabash showcased its depth, proving this year's squad is ready to build on last season's success and compete at a high level once again.

In its first matchup against Greensboro College on Monday, March 10, Wabash ran up the scoreboard early and didn't look back. The Little Giants jumped to a 9-0 lead at halftime, then continued to outshoot Greensboro 56 to 22 and secure a 17-3 victory.

On Wednesday, March 12, the Little Giants challenged Curry College in a more competitive matchup. Although Curry shot out to a 4-2 lead in the first period, Wabash slowly chipped away to reclaim control of the game. With every punch Curry threw, Wabash had an answer, led by Sam Santiago '26 who scored the first two goals of the second period to tie the game and claimed another goal to extend the lead to 8-5 in the third period. With a 9-2 scoring advantage in the middle two periods, the Little Giants secured the win, 14-10.



PHOTO BY JACK MILLER '27
The Wabash lacrosse team carries the Stars and Stripes to their pregame warmups against Curry College on March 12, 2025, at the Virginia Beach Sportsplex.

"Our mindset was to keep the ball as much as we can, get the right looks on offense and score when there were opportunities," said Santiago. "Because our defense played a lot of long possessions, we wanted to make quick and efficient plays when we gained possession of the ball so Curry's defense couldn't get organized."

This strategy of early offense was

prevalent in Wabash's last matchup against Virginia Wesleyan University on Friday, March 14. With hat tricks from Charlie Rafalko '28, Will Sorg '27 and a convincing 4-1 advantage in the third period, the Little Giants cruised to a 9-2 victory to finish perfect on the week.

A key takeaway from this stretch was the performances from underclassmen, notably Charlie Rafalko

who accumulated seven scores in the three games. After two three-goal performances, Rafalko now has 18 goals on the season, just two behind the team leader in the stat, Quinn Fitzgerald '25, who earned third team all-conference honors last season.

"I only have my teammates to thank for the success I've recently had," said Rafalko. "I couldn't

have the opportunity to score without my teammates helping me get in the right position, or achieve an assist with them being in the right position."

With their dominant spring break performance in the books, the Little Giants now turn their attention to North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) play, where the competition will only strengthen. The NCAC currently has seven of the eight teams sitting at or above .500, with Kenyon College and Oberlin College perfect on the year. Standing at 6-2 and fourth in the conference, their early-season success serves as both a confidence boost and a reminder that every game will be a fight.

"It's a tough conference, but we can't be scared because we've got nothing to lose against these teams," said Santiago. "If we run our offense how we're supposed to, hold the ball for decent possessions and not let our opponent's offense take control, we have a shot to win each time we step on the field."

"I believe that Coach Burke knows exactly what he is doing and will put us in positions to succeed and help the team in the best way," said Rafalko. "I trust Coach Burke fully and believe that he is leading this program in the right direction."

The NCAC portion of the schedule begins with a home contest against the undefeated Owls of Kenyon College on Saturday, March 22 at Fischer Field.