

Break the ICE or is ICE in the veins?

Nation divided in the wake of ICE activity in Minneapolis leaving to U.S citizens dead and countless in detainment



COURTESY OF ACLU

Tensions Rise across the country as people protest ICE agents and officials as result of ICE activity in Minneapolis and the deaths of Alex Pretti and Renee Good.

OWEN VERMEULEN '28
NEWS EDITOR

The Trump administration has made aggressive moves on the issue of immigration to start 2026. As a result, tension nation wide has reached a fever pitch. Recent events in Minneapolis involving U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have many worried that their rights are being tested in unprecedented fashion. ICE was established by the Homeland Security Act in 2002 as a response to the September 11, 2001 attacks. Since its establishment, ICE has been devoted to the removal of undocumented immigrants that have made their residence inside U.S. borders. Both Democrats and Republicans have made use of ICE, with former President Barack Obama being labeled “the deporter-in-chief” during his time in office. President Donald Trump, during his first presidential campaign in 2015, focused on immigration to an unprecedented degree. When Trump took office, he used executive orders and political allies to pressure local and state agencies to cooperate with ICE.

“I think people are scared about the lengths that this government is willing to go in this fight against [Trump’s] boogeyman of the day.”

- Professor of Politcal Science Ethan Hollander

Despite former President Joe Biden promising to reduce the number of undocumented immigrant detentions and narrow enforcement priorities when he took office in 2020, immigration policy tightened. Immigration detentions increased 140% from the start of his term to the end. Detention rates skyrocketed to nearly 40,000 per day. When President Trump won back the Oval Office in the 2024 election, he intended to pick up where he left off. In just the first year, the number of detentions have gone up by 75%. For years, ICE’s budget hovered around \$10 billion until President Trump passed the “Big Beautiful Bill” which gave ICE an \$85 billion dollar budget, which makes them the highest funded U.S. law enforcement agency. For reference, the federal government spends \$79 billion on primary and secondary education annually according to New America. In 2025, 32 people died while in ICE custody, the highest number since 2004. To start 2026, ICE was deployed in large metropolitan areas across the

country such as Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Houston, Dallas and Minneapolis. During ICE’s operations in these cities eight people have died at their hands, either killed by federal agents or died while in custody. However, the death of two citizens seems to be attracting the most attention. Renee Good, a U.S. born citizen, was shot by an ICE agent 3 times in the head, arm and chest on January 7, after dropping her 6-year-old son off at school. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, claimed that she tried to weaponize her car. After being shot, ICE agents refused to allow civilian medical attention that was on scene to try and stabilize her. Alex Pretti, a nurse in Minneapolis, was attempting to direct traffic when an ICE agent knocked a woman down. Pretti then attempted to help her up when ICE agents approached and used pepper spray on him, after which tackling him to the ground. After confiscating Pretti’s legally registered firearm, ICE agents proceeded to shoot Pretti 10 times. Both Good and Pretti were labeled domestic terrorists by top officials in the Trump Administration.

These events have shocked many. With such uncertainty in what might unfold, people can’t help but wonder who will be next. “I think people are scared about the lengths that this government is willing to go in this fight against [Trump’s] boogeyman of the day,” said Associate Professor of Political Science Ethan Hollander. “It’s not unusual for a president to have local populations that he doesn’t like, but it’s unprecedented that the president would go to these extremes in his fight against these groups.”

Beyond the death and bloodshed that has come to the streets of our nation, there has been discourse across the country on whether the actions of the Trump administration are justified. This tension has left many too afraid to speak out, especially foreign born citizens.

“The tension in the country doesn’t feel right,” said Hollander. “It’s hard to question anybody’s anxiety over the

situation.”

The issues with ICE may seem as though they are a part of a dystopian world far away from us, but in reality, they could be on our doorstep at any time. “We’re lucky that Crawfordsville has not been hit by the horrid actions that ICE is committing elsewhere,” said Associate Professor of History Neo Pliego Campos. “But we must recognize that we could be next in one moment.”

That moment may be upon us sooner than we think. Indiana lawmakers are currently trying to pass Senate Bill 76 which would require local governments and public institutions to comply with ICE detainment requests.

“It’s worrisome considering how vocal two Wabash alumni are at the state level, Governor Mike Braun ’76 and Attorney General Todd Rokita ’92,” said Campos. “They really want to make sure that state, county and local police have everything they need to work with ICE and it’s worrisome considering what we’ve seen ICE do elsewhere.”

The deaths of Alex Pretti and Renee Good have sparked outrage across the country. With the threat of Indiana cooperating with ICE looming, hundreds of Indianapolis students staged a walkout, with Brownsburg, Carmel and Noblesville high schoolers all participating. Many are calling for action to curb ICE’s unlimited authority and bring back order.

“ICE is a relatively new organization within our government,” said Campos. “It was created in a post 9/11 world. Maybe it’s an obsolete institution by this point. The way we think about terrorism, the way we think about migration is different than 20 years ago. We should consider the idea of abolishing ICE.”

There is still so much uncertainty about how this will resolve and what the long lasting impact will be. One thing is certain, the loss of life is reprehensible and there is still a lot to be done before a peaceful resolution.



COURTESY OF JOURNAL & COURIER

Laffayette Jeff students join other Indiana schools in walkout to protest ICE.

Bigger than budgets

Student Senate check in



PHOTO BY DAGIM HUNTINGTON '28

Student Senate meet on February 2, in the Goodrich Seminar Room to discuss AFC recommendations for the semester.

NATHAN ELLENBERGER '26
MANAGING EDITOR

Comprehensive exams have been taken, classes have started and bustling student activity is slowly lighting up the Wabash that has remained dormant since mid-December. Helping guide the influx of events and new organizations is the trusty Student Senate, the 110th in Wabash history.

The Spring 2026 semester marks several milestones for the student government at Wabash. First, Student Body President Austin Pickett '26 and his cabinet are halfway through their term, seeking to capitalize on the success and growth found in the fall by delivering quality events that will warm up a cold and dreary campus. Second, newly sworn-in Student Senate Chairman Jackson Ray '28 is taking the reins in the Goodrich room, helping to navigate any procedural hangups Student Senate faces. The principle uniting all members of the Government, however, is a commitment to community and campus unity.

“My biggest goals are campus unity and brotherhood,” said Pickett. “We really want to bring the campus together, get people out of their rooms and bridge gaps within the community.”

As stewards of the budget for student activities, the Student Senate seeks to fulfill most clubs’ requests. With over \$100,000 in the budget coming into the semester and an estimated \$60,000 already allocated, around \$40,000 remains to be used on

events that can unify Wabash. Student Body Treasurer Declan Chhay-Vickers '26, in concert with the Audit and Finance Committee (AFC), emphasizes meeting specific clubs’ financial needs while leaving room for events that all corners of campus can engage with.

“I want to make this semester as jam-packed with experiences as I can,” said Chhay-Vickers. “With the culture of Wabash, COVID-19 really hurt, so it’s been a long, slow and hard build back up.”

A big chunk of the budget, which runs over \$300,000 annually, is National Act, which was announced this week to be performed by Nardo Wick on March 28 in Knowing Fieldhouse. The concert’s cost of \$60,000 is constitutionally required to be allocated, with much of that money reserved for staging and logistics.

“It’s really great whenever you can get an artist here. We have 60,000 total dollars that get allocated, but only about 40,000 can go towards the artist, so it’s hard to make that stretch with certain artists,” said Pickett. “I’m always impressed by the artists that we are able to attract to our campus with that finance. I want to give [National Act Committee Chairman Bennett Strain '26] and the National Act committee huge props for being able to put on the event, I think it’s gonna be a lot of fun.”

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IFC philanthropy campaign targets food insecurity

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

As bitter cold temperatures continue to keep Hoosiers indoors, Wabash’s Interfraternity Council (IFC) is encouraging the Wabash community to address food security, a key determinant of health, in Montgomery County this February. Fraternity and independent men, faculty and staff can sign up to volunteer at three local charities that focus on food security: Meals on Wheels, FISH of Montgomery County and Grace & Mercy Community Food Pantry. Food security is IFC’s philanthropic focal point in February, but it is part of a larger, spring campaign that will dedicate March to tackling youth-related issues and April to environmental concerns in Montgomery County.

Volunteers can choose from a variety of hours at the different charities. Students can count their hours toward the semester-long competition IFC and the Crawfordsville to Campus Committee are holding between housing units and student organizations. The goal is to keep students engaged throughout the entirety of the spring and sustain philanthropy through the end of the academic year.

“We see participation fall off because most houses have service requirements for guys of a certain number of hours, and sometimes, once they hit those targets, they stop,” said IFC President, Kyle Foster '27. “So, the goal is to push past those service requirements and engage with the community even more.”

Spearheading IFC’s efforts are philanthropy co-chairs Jonathan Parackattu '28 and Julio Cruz-Romero '28. Both are passionate about working with communities, and they have significant experience doing so. Parackattu serves as the President of the Public Health Organization, one of the largest clubs on campus, and Cruz-Romero serves as the philanthropy chair of his fraternity, Phi Delta Theta. Both

have also worked with communities internationally through internships with Wabash’s Global Health Initiative, experiences that took them to Peru. They drew on these experiences when they identified food security, a basic building block of community health, as a priority for this spring.

“Food insecurity isn’t just ‘not having enough food’” said Cruz-Romero, in an email announcing February’s theme. “It’s families having to choose between groceries and rent, gas or medical bills. And it’s happening right here in Montgomery County.”

The need is high, especially in a time when grocery prices are outpacing wages. Consumers still have to worry about paying their rent and utilities too, especially during the frigid winter months. To many in the Wabash community who have the privilege of staying well-fed throughout the year, such pressures may seem foreign. The truth? Food insecurity is right on our doorsteps.

“40% of Montgomery County residents fall just above or at the federal poverty level,” said Parackattu. “Just from that angle — monetarily — there’s a huge need.”

Food pantries step into the gap to fill food needs and aid the community. IFC chose to work with three of the biggest pantries in the county in order to create the largest impact. The groups they chose to work with feed thousands of people in Montgomery County. Meals on Wheels feeds around 60 homebound seniors every week. Grace & Mercy Community Food Pantry fed some 20,000 people in 2025, and, on average, currently feed 300 people per week. FISH of Montgomery County fed 163 families during the second week of January. The lion share of what these organizations need from volunteers is sorting, packing, stacking and unloading food. Hard work, in other words, but work Parackattu believes is essential for Wabash students.

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Bigger than budgets

Student Senate Check in

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National Act is only one example of events that all Wabash students can take advantage of. With some successful, proven events like Topgolf outings and casino nights, Pickett's cabinet is hoping to bring back another event that Wabash hasn't seen in many years: an all-campus formal. All-campus formal dances were a staple of Wabash in the mid-20th century, but have since fallen to the wayside.

"I think it's a great way to bring all of Wabash together," said Chhay-Vickers. "There's not that many events where you see everybody from everywhere at Wabash together."

One obstacle to the immediate planning of a campus formal is, of course, financial. Chhay-Vickers estimated the sticker price of such a formal event in the thousands, up to \$10,000. One option several executive team members discussed was supplementing Senate's allocation with a small ticket purchase for students that want to attend. However, there are no details as of yet.

"It all depends on where we hold it," said Chhay-Vickers. "If we hold it off campus, that's another expense. If we wanted to add anything to make it special, then that would be maybe an extra expense."

However, many members of Senate are committed to student government not just as a financial bottleneck, but as a representation of student interests. As the incoming Chairman, Ray brings a wealth of experience in chairing bodies of a similar size. In high school, Ray served as the Indiana delegate for the Conference on National Affairs and chairman of its economics committee. Ray plans to leverage this experience not just to streamline Senate meetings, but to push

Senate to think bigger than budgets.

Ray's vision is a Senate that broadens the stereotypically monetary scope of Student Senate's purview, emphasizing direct interaction with College administration to represent student interests. While Senate has historically engaged with administration directly through committees like the Academic Policy Committee, Ray wants to revitalize this dimension of the Senate's mission.

"My primary goal of this term is to look at Senate not only as a rubber stamp for budgets," said Ray. "I think there's a lot of good we can do by putting pressure on administrative changes."

One aspect of this push for student influence on administration is the Morris and Wolcott Resolution that passed this Monday. The resolution targets a maintenance situation in both Morris and Wolcott halls, which are still experiencing lasting damage from flooding last September, which has disrupted the common social spaces, as well as shared laundry facilities. The Resolution is intended primarily to open channels of dialogue between administration and the student body directly.

"In September, there was an accident where both of those basements were flooded and smelled awful for a long time," said Ray. "They smell better now, but the basements, which are community living spaces, are completely destroyed. We understand that they are in the midst of a handful of construction projects right now, but that doesn't mean that you cannot maintain the residence halls we currently have."

Another effort from Student Senate is the SPAM committee, a group that is tasked with solving the recurring issue of all-campus emails. Specifically, the

SPAM committee is advocating for a push away from all-campus emails as the main advertisements for club and major-focused events and towards the Engage platform that clubs already use to plan and schedule events.

"It's been really easy for students to get a lot of their emails lost in the shuffle when they're getting constant email reminders about certain events that they may or may not be interested in," said Pickett. "Engage already has a calendar system. You'd be able to click all the clubs and organizations that you want to be notified when they're hosting something, so you can get those emails that you're interested in and avoid a flood of things that you're not interested in."

A shift towards the Engage platform and a centralized, comprehensive campus events calendar could streamline individual students' social calendars. Furthermore, Pickett hopes such a system may also help clubs and organizations plan events more effectively.

"It's hard to go and get great attendance at everything when we have two speakers that are here on a Tuesday afternoon, and then we have three different things going on in the evening," said Pickett. "Having that calendar through the Engage app would help ensure that all the organization's members can attend on those days, so we're not pulling our students in five different directions when they can't be five places at once."

Through funding impactful clubs and successful campus events, as well as advocating for change with the College administration itself, Student Senate looks forward to an active and fruitful semester. Above all, Student Senate is measuring its own success by the community it seeks to help cultivate.

U.S. and Iran meet to discuss nuclear programs and 12 Miners killed in Russian drone strike

News around the world



COURTESY OF BBC

After multiple threats made by the Trump administration U.S. and Iran meet to discuss nuclear programs.

CARTER RAMSEY '29
STAFF WRITER
Iran

After a long-lasting dispute and new threats made by US President Donald Trump, Iran and The United States are set to meet in Istanbul, Turkey today to discuss Iran's nuclear program. Steve Witkoff, the U.S. special envoy to the Middle East, and Abbas Araqchi, the Iranian Foreign Minister will meet to de-escalate fears of conflicts in the Middle East with intentions of coming to an agreement on a Nuclear deal for Iran. After a long string of anti-government protests in Tehran, the Iranian capital, took place last month as well as satellite images showing new work being done on nuclear sites in Iran, President Trump has had his focus set on the region. While nuclear talks have been stalled between the U.S. and Iran since the 12 day conflict between the two nations along with Israel, both nations are interested in finally finding a solution. Iranian sources say they plan on pausing enrichment of uranium and further development of nuclear research if certain economic sanctions were lifted but also added that military involvement near Iran should also be paused.

Ukraine
12 Miners are dead and at least eight more wounded after

a Russian drone strike on a bus Sunday. The incident took place in Ukraine's southeast region of Dnipropetrovsk. A large-scale drone attack was launched by Russia on coal mines and the private energy company DTEK. 12 Miners had just finished their shift Sunday when their bus suddenly swerved to avoid being hit by one of the attacking drones, causing the vehicle to drive into a fence. Injured civilians who began exiting the bus were soon targeted by another drone, causing Ukrainian officials to question whether the attack was directed towards military personnel or to intentionally harm civilians. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky confirmed trilateral talks between the U.S, Russia and Ukraine taking place sometime within the next week. These talks will be aimed at ending the war



COURTESY OF BBC

12 miners were killed when there bus was hit by a Russian drone strike.

Missing teen found dead and Statehouse updates

This week in regional news



COURTESY OF INDIANA CITIZEN

The Indiana State Senate passes multiple bills including SB 78 which would ban students from having personal electronics in school.

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Hailey Buzbee

The body of a missing Indiana teenager is believed to have been found in central Ohio. Hailey Buzbee, who lived in the Indianapolis suburb of Fishers and attended Hamilton Southeastern High School, was last seen by her parents on January 5. The suspect is Tyler Thomas, a 39-year-old from Columbus, Ohio. Thomas has been charged with pandering sexually oriented material involving a minor and tampering with evidence. According to court records, a search of Thomas's phone included sexually oriented videos and photos of Buzbee, some of which Thomas tried to delete. Buzbee is believed to have met Thomas through an online gaming platform and voluntarily left her home to meet him. Fishers police said a vehicle in the area at the time Buzbee left her home was traced back to Thomas. Officials spoke with Thomas within a few days of Buzbee's disappearance. Thomas reportedly told detectives he had dropped Buzbee off on the side of the road in western Ohio, but an investigation determined that was not true. Police searched Thomas' vehicle and home on January 21 and found evidence Buzbee had been there, as well as at a short-term rental in Hocking County. Thomas has not been charged with murder, according to court records in Franklin and Perry counties.

Statehouse Updates

On January 28, 2026, the Indiana State Senate passed a bill enabling the creation of a Northwest Indiana Stadium Authority, designed to finance a new stadium for the Bears. The bill, which passed with a vote of 46-2, requires further approval from the Indiana House of Representatives before it can proceed to Governor Mike Braun '76 for final approval.

Key education bills affecting students across the state are moving forward after the midway point for the 2026 legislative session in Indiana. SB 78 requires districts to either ban students from bringing personal devices, such as cell phones, tablets, laptops or smartwatches, into schools or require that devices be stored away for the entire instructional day. The bill includes exemptions for medical needs, translation services, or special education purposes. SB 88 would also expand the use of the Classic Learning Test — an alternative to the SAT and ACT that primarily uses texts from Western history and antiquity — for college admissions in the state. In another bill defining gender and sex in Indiana statutes, lawmakers inserted a provision that requires schools to designate multiple occupancy restrooms and changing rooms for use by males or females, and requires individuals to only use the restroom that matches their sex, rather than their gender identity. Another school based bill HB 1086 that would have permitted teachers and principals to display the Ten Commandments in classrooms, died in the House on Monday.

IFC philanthropy campaign targets food insecurity

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"From the federal to the local level, being a good citizen should involve giving back to your community," said Parackttu. "I think that's your responsibility as someone living here, as someone using Wabash's campus resources. We're kind of guests in Crawfordsville, and you should give back because they're basically housing you and giving you community."

IFC does not want to focus solely on what the Wabash community can do for Montgomery County, though. They are cognizant of how the greater Crawfordsville community will aid Wabash, especially its students.

"Our priority was to encourage not only brothers from fraternities,

but for the campus as a whole to be engaged more in the community," said Cruz-Romero '28. "Because it's not necessarily just about helping them, but also working with them. The Wabash community can learn from the Crawfordsville community."

With goals of sustaining philanthropy throughout the spring semester, the IFC is looking to start with a strong February. Even more than a strong showing this spring, however, the hope is that the next three months will plant a philanthropic seed in many people.

"I hope that at least a few of the Wabash community members feel the need to help for the rest of their four years, or their career, at Wabash," said Cruz-Romero.

Scan to volunteer!



2026
Leadership Breakfast

February 26, 2026
Ivy Tech Culinary Center, Indianapolis

Ty Benefiel '08

Sec. Suzanne Jaworoski

Andrew Wells '06

Honoring Dr. Rick Warner H'13
WCI Man of the Year

Register at
wabash.edu/apps/events/
LeadershipBreakfast2026

Senior spotlight: Tanner Quackenbush

ANTONIO GRANDINETTI '28
STAFF WRITER

A familiar face on campus is a statement most people would agree on. Tanner Quackenbush '26 is a senior majoring in Studio Art and minoring in Religion and Psychology. He has served as president of the Sphinx Club, as an executive member of the Rugby Club, as a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity and in his personal favorite role, making the weekly crossword for *The Bachelor*. While he was familiar with Wabash before he officially enrolled, Quackenbush experienced growth in a unique way and in high ranks. He will graduate as something he did not expect to become, with great success and, most importantly, great experiences. As his time at Wabash comes to an end, Quackenbush reflected on what he values most about his experience.

“The best part of my time at Wabash has been the deep, real conversations I’ve had with friends,” said Quackenbush. “A lot of them happened late at night, just sitting around talking about stress, failure, identity and what we actually want out of life. Those talks taught me how to listen better and be more open about what I’m feeling. It was never about arguing or being right; it was about understanding each other.”

Building close relationships shaped his experience and worldview.

“Being in a place where people feel comfortable being vulnerable has really shaped how I see the world and connect with others,” said Quackenbush.



COURTESY OF TANNER QUACKENKBUSCH '26
Tanner Quackenbush '26 attends a Wabash event.

Quackenbush followed a path similar to many of his peers when he joined the Sphinx Club, an organization known for its pots and stripes. He eventually became president, a role that brought new responsibility.



COURTESY OF TANNER QUACKENKBUSCH '26
Tanner Quackenbush '26 showcased performative art on the Wabash College campus on Friday, January 30, 2026.

Carlos Andrés Gómez takes center stage

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

A multi-hyphenated artist with experience in the written word, on the stage and on the screen, Carlos Andrés Gómez has won countless awards for his poetry and performed at venues like Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center. He is also an educator and performer, and has visited all 50 states and over 30 countries over the course of his career. Earlier this week, Special Assistant to the President for Belonging and Community, Associate Professor of English Jill Lamberton, and the Student Senate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee hosted Gómez on his fourth visit to Wabash.

Gómez is a connector who seeks to bridge individuals. This idea is at the core of how he sees himself and his work.

“Becoming President of the Sphinx Club was when it really hit me,” said Quackenbush. “All of a sudden, my decisions actually affected other people. It wasn’t just a title; people were looking to me to lead, respect tradition and make tough calls.” That responsibility also created space for personal growth. “I had to grow up fast, trust my own judgment and also learn how to seriously consider perspectives other than my own,” said Quackenbush.

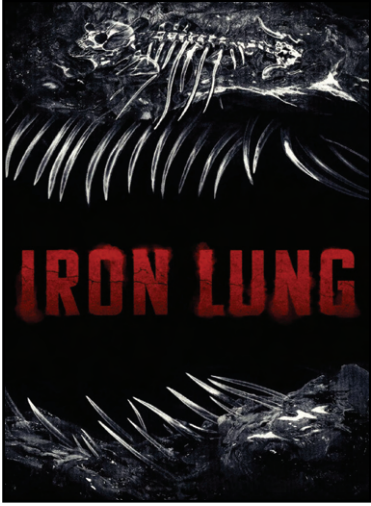
When he was not leading on campus, Quackenbush often split his time between the Fine Arts Center and Mud Hollow. Reflecting on his time in the Fine Arts Center, he described how deeply immersed he became in his work. “I’d go in planning to work for an hour, and suddenly it was midnight,” said Quackenbush. “I wasn’t distracted, I was locked in. Losing track of time there made me realize that art isn’t just something I enjoy; it’s something I’m genuinely committed to.”

His dedication did not go unnoticed by faculty. Professor Weedman praised Quackenbush’s approach to his work.

“Even from one of his first assignments in photography class, he demanded a lot of himself physically and mentally and went above and beyond,” said Weedman. “Tanner was extremely driven and intense within himself. He asks and questions a lot about his work. He has been extremely reflective in class and very detail-oriented, more than any other student I’ve ever seen. He is one of the most serious artists I’ve had. His best attribute is the bravery he shows in being vulnerable as an artist.”

The main takeaways he will leave when he crosses the arch is to embrace the hard and air on the side of doing too much as this is a lot better than its opposite. Embracing this challenge is always what life will present to any Wabash man as it is on us to keep doing what have been making this place special since 1832. After graduation Quackenbush plans to apply his liberal arts education and pursue graduate school to earn a Master of Fine Arts.

'Iron Lung' looks unassuming but bleeds ambition



COURTESY OF TMDB

NOAH MINTIE '29
FEATURES EDITOR

Last year, the tedious releases of “A Minecraft Movie” and “Five Nights at Freddy’s 2” spawned a strong argument against the practice of adapting indie games to the medium of film. Thankfully, a compelling counterargument has just been released from the most unlikely place. After several years of work, Mark Fischbach (better known by his YouTube name: Markiplier) has just completed his film adaptation of the indie game “Iron Lung.” Despite its many flaws the movie “Iron Lung” proves that adapting a story across mediums can still produce worthwhile results.

The film is set in an apocalyptic future where the stars have burned out and humanity barely stays afloat. Although this premise is rich with worldbuilding potential, do not expect to learn much more. The apocalypse is just a very distant backdrop to a small-scale story set on a distant moon. It follows a convict who was welded into a submarine and dropped into an ocean of blood. Yes, actual blood. It is every bit as horrifying as it sounds. The convict must explore this hellish ocean with an extremely limited view of the outside world from an untested submarine with a bit of a leak problem.

While the optics of a YouTuber directing a movie led me to expect

generic horror fare that disregards the advantages of the cinematic medium, I was actually quite wrong. The filmmaking is consistently effective and stylistically unique from the first scene to the finale. “Iron Lung” uses tight cinematography, immersive sound design and incredible makeup to sink the viewer into a claustrophobic nightmare. The blood ocean is barely even shown, but its presence is always felt. The viewer cannot shelter themselves from the sheer magnitude of the convict’s isolation, and his near-complete absence of action is terrifying.

I am a firm believer that the best way to adapt a videogame to a movie is to invoke the same feeling on the viewer as the game does on the player. “Iron Lung” excels at this translation. A relatively limited amount of player defense against an oppressive and unyielding threat is a staple of many indie horror games. It spins the player into a dizzying downward spiral of stress and panic, a feedback loop that only ceases when they die, quit or win. Both the movie and game versions of “Iron Lung” embody the anxiety of being trapped with a feasible yet improbable way out, which is arguably a more taxing fate than just accepting certain death.

To aid his narrow escape, the convict is only armed with a few primitive devices. Their functions are shown rather than told, with the star of the show being a shabby little camera. The photos which it takes look less like real pictures and more like abstract horror art, which was a neat touch.

Despite the filmmaking’s best efforts to keep it afloat, there are a few moments where “Iron Lung’s” production quality sinks. A handful

of flashbacks particularly reveal the extent of the film’s budgetary limitations. Additionally, while Markiplier’s directing shows promise, his acting takes some getting used to. Perhaps my brain is wired to associate his screaming with meme clips as opposed to actual danger, but even in his more reserved moments he feels less like a character stuck in a dangerous machine and more like a streamer stuck in a comfy chair.

Where these elements hold the film back, some aspects of the script push the film too far forward. Again, due to the YouTube stigma, I was shocked to find that my biggest complaint is that the film can be too high-concept at times. The film never clearly answers why the convict is in a blood ocean during the apocalypse, which would be fine if the third act did not so heavily rely on that answer for stakes. Much like the submarine itself, the film starts to drift into murky, indistinct territory without a clear plan of how to get out.

At least a bit of the third act is redeemed by its sheer spectacle. After ninety minutes in the same hot metal box, the setpieces and sequences become much more ambitious. It is also worth mentioning that the blood looks disgustingly realistic. In a sequence that starkly contrasts the rest of the film up until that point, reality itself even starts to shapeshift.

“Iron Lung” has its faults, but I believe its redemptive qualities still keep it buoyant. In an era where surface-level adaptations reap success by translating traits as opposed to deepening meaning, I hope that this film’s success inspires more of the latter.

**FINAL VERDICT:
3.5/5 WALLYS**



Guest professor dissects inflation

PHILLIP HARVEY '29
STAFF WRITER

Dr. Brain Cutsinger, Assistant Professor of Economics in Florida Atlantic University’s business school, spoke this past Tuesday in Baxter 101. Cutsinger has attained fellowships both at the Phil Smith Center for Free Enterprise and the American Institute for Economic Research. He is an Associate Editor for the Journal of Public Choice, which blends economics and politics.

In that capacity he has written numerous times in a variety of publications, including National Review, City Journal and the Wall Street Journal. Cutsinger has a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of Colorado at Boulder, and his Master of Art and Doctor of Philosophy in Economics from George Mason University, where he was granted the William P. Snavely Award for Outstanding Achievement in Graduate Studies in Economics. Dr. Brian Cutsinger had a unique pathway to becoming an academic.

“I actually dropped out of college in 2005 and a few years later, we ended up with the global financial crisis and the Great Recession,” said Cutsinger. “I wanted to understand what had happened, and that was what motivated me to start reading more economics, and then eventually re-enroll in college, finish my bachelor’s degree, and then go on to get a Ph.D. It wasn’t so much that I had a deep intellectual experience in college...There were these external events that were happening, and I wanted to understand them better.”

Cutsinger stepped on Indiana soil for the first time in his life to discuss his work, “Rethinking the Fed’s Framework: Lessons from the Post-Pandemic Inflation,” with the

“I’ve been an artist in all different kinds of genres and in all different kinds of ways, and the ride has continued,” said Gómez. “I knock on wood, and I say it very humbly and with a lot of gratitude, and we’ll see how long it goes. I hope I’m 90 and saying the same thing.”

Gómez’s visit included visits to classes, a workshop with student creators and, on Wednesday night, a performance of some of his poems and stories. Gómez wove narrative, personal anecdote, poetry and the audience’s own experiences into a coherent presentation. He touched on themes of belonging, masculinity, vulnerability and finding one’s place in the world. Gómez’s poet-

Wabash community. Recalling the COVID-19 pandemic, the nation saw then 40 year highs in inflation not felt since the Iranian Revolution disrupted global oil.

At that time the United States Federal Reserve made a number of claims regarding inflation. Primarily: it claimed by way of Chairman Jerome Powell that the government was not responsible for the growth in post-pandemic inflation, and that the causes were purely exogenous. Expertise of an academic like Cutsinger to break down the data and on its merits evaluate these ideas. If a supply bottleneck is the cause of inflation, then why didn’t prices fall once ships started moving again? If “greedflation” is to blame, then how did corporations magically hike prices without the extra money in the economy to support it?

The work of an academic like Cutsinger is to analyze claims and research questions about our world through the lens of economics. Economic forces broadly shape and af-

fect our lives in ways it is immensely important to have a handle on.

“You want to start with a question where the answer isn’t obvious,” said Cutsinger. “You might think of economic theory like a can opener. Economics provides you with a way of popping the top off of the puzzle and seeing what’s actually going on.”

As a micro and macro economics professor, Cutsinger emphasizes the need for economic literacy in our modern world; understanding market forces should improve everyone’s lives and decision making.

“A college graduate should have a basic understanding of supply and demand that they can’t use to understand the forces driving prices from oil to eggs,” said Cutsinger. “If you consider it from that perspective, you’ll ask, ‘what sorts of questions are people voting on? What sorts of questions do they know about how the inflation rate is determined, or what monetary policy is.’”



PHOTO BY JEREMIAH RUNGE '29
Brian Cutsinger meets with students after his speech.

ry itself was deeply vulnerable and honest. It roped in experiences from his childhood and young adult years, admissions which demonstrate his deeply reflective art and personality. In a packed Salter Hall, students took notice.

“Honestly, I came not really looking forward to being here and just dragging,” said Parker Cox '29. But I just feel good after listening to him talk; I feel empowered. His whole message was to be yourself, not shy away from attributes that others look down upon and to fully embody who you are. He did a really good job telling his story along with the story of embodying yourself.”

So much is written about how

much we are divided — as a nation, as political parties or in discussions about what we should value. Carlos Andrés Gómez’s art seeks to heal those divisions that exist both within ourselves and our communities. He’s straightforward about that goal in a time where people and art that accomplishes it is more precious than ever.

“I want people to feel permission to be emotionally aligned and wholehearted and empathetic and inclined toward tenderness and inclined toward humanity and inclined toward courage,” said Gómez.

Gómez’s first bilingual edition of poetry — “Patrilineation” — releases this summer.

Cory Wong's 'Lost in the Wonder' is not so wonderous



COURTESY OF SPOTIFY

PAUL HAWKSWORTH '28
ONLINE EDITOR

For how skilled of a guitarist and musician Cory Wong is, his latest solo album “Lost In The Wonder,” released on February 3, the emphasis is more on Wong’s work as a producer and composer rather than his playing. In contrast to a lot of Wong’s other solo work, his work with the band Vulpeck and his work with The Fearless Flyers, “Lost In The Wonder” ventures away from the jazz/funk style Wong is best known for and more towards a pop music sound. Furthermore, while Wong has never been known to be the loudest or flashiest guitarist, his presence on this album is the quietest I’ve seen from any work he’s been a part of. Even so, this album is not a complete dud and has plenty of redeeming qualities.

The first half of the album is definitely the weaker of the two, with most songs falling in the pop bin rather than the jazz/funk bin. Out of those first six songs, “Stay With Me” (feat. Stephen Day) and “Blame It On The Moon” (feat. Magic City Hippies) are the two big highlights. “The Big Payoff” (feat. Ellis) is a good instrumental, albeit definitely not Wong’s best.

“Stay With Me” is a fantastic track to draw listeners into this album. While it is a slight departure from Wong’s typical style, it stays true enough to intrigue fans and shows new listeners what they can expect from Cory Wong. The melody comes mostly from the vocals and horns and is backed up by a groovy bass line and Wong’s signature rhythm guitar playing.

Following a few of the album’s weaker tracks, “Blame It On The Moon” is where the album starts to pick up. “Blame It On The Moon” draws from ’70s funk and disco inspirations with a modern twist to give listeners something resembling of a Silk Sonic track, blending keyboards, guitar and a funky drum beat to produce a track to get your head bobbing.

The final five tracks are where “Lost In The Wonder” hits its stride. The music down the stretch of this album is a bit slower and more soulful than the first half and matches more closely to Vulpeck’s music.

While I mentioned “Blame It On The Moon” sounding like something you’d hear from Silk Sonic, “All Night, Alright” (feat. Taylor Hanson) sounds even closer to the Anderson .Paak and Bruno Mars duo. The mix of keyboards and vocal harmonies are wonderfully done and Wong’s guitar solo puts the cherry on top for this track.

“Lisa Never Wanted To Be Famous” (feat. Theo Katzman) is very story-driven lyrically and the vocal melody is the real highlight of the song. The title track “Lost In The Wonder” (feat. Benny Sings) is a spacier track which is best described as a “happy little song.”

Ending the album off are two longer tracks “Roses Fade” (feat. Devon Gilfillian) and “From Now On” (feat. Louis Cato). “Roses Fade” is a slow-building tune that is hammered home by a stellar vocal performance from Gilfillian. The guitar riff present throughout most of the track also lays a tremendous groove on which the rest of the song blooms. “From Now On” is an angelic ending track for this album. Its symphonic arrangement, stellar vocal harmonies and ending harmonic solo bring this album to a wondrous close.

“Lost In The Wonder” steps away from Wong’s role strictly as a player and towards his role as a composer and producer. While he is definitely present, the music on “Lost In The Wonder” sounds different stylistically than most of Wong’s prior work. While the transition wasn’t perfect, it most certainly wasn’t bad either.

FINAL VERDICT:
3.5/5 WALLYS



Don Toliver: 'Octane' review



COURTESY OF SPOTIFY

BRADY REEVES '29
STAFF WRITER

Don Toliver has been a staple of rap for the past decade, dropping hit album after hit album. Last Friday Don Toliver dropped his sixth studio album “Octane.” The album, comprising 18 songs, is surprisingly short with a runtime of fifty minutes; however, every moment mesmerizes the listener. The 50 minutes spent listening to this song are worth it. The album effectively uses 808’s and explores eccentric lyrics. Although many of the songs are provocative, Toliver achieves a flow state in his performance and sets the mood with a thrilling use of beats.

The album has an array of artists including Teezo Touchdown, Travis Scott, Rema, Sahbabii and Yeat. These artists dominated every feature, the most notable of which was Travis Scott on “Rosary.” With a sleepy melody and laminar flow from both artists, this song was captivating from start to finish. “Rosary” is the song one would choose to listen to if they were trying to relax after a long day; it would not put you to sleep, but it sets that tone. The smooth 808s are lovely in their peaceful notion. Travis

and helped with its popularity early on. This song grew on TikTok and has made headway to one of the more popular songs on the app. It is a very catchy song with very memorable beats and lyrics.

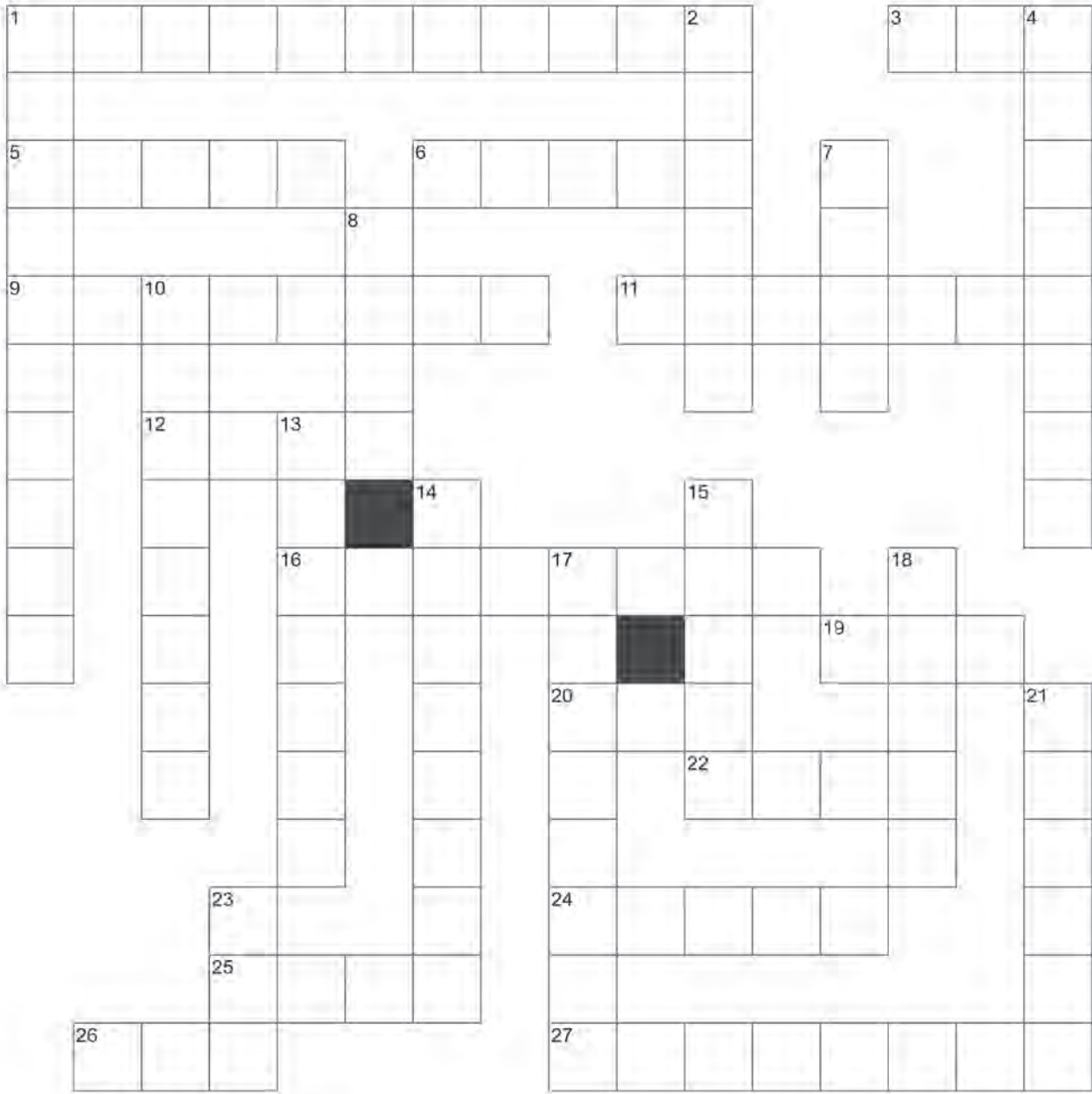
For being the solid album that “Octane” is, the last track, “Sweet Home,” is extremely disappointing. This song is a pop song attempting to be a rap song in the same way Post Malone tries to be a country artist. It starts off with a beat consisting of piano at the pace of an average pop song. This is immediately followed with a really unexciting vocal dub of the popular song “Sweet Home Alabama” by Lynyrd Skynyrd. This is where Toliver tries to turn it into a rap song but by this point it is too late to save. The song travels in three different directions and they all go the wrong way.

Overall this album is great with some hiccups here and there. Throughout the album, Toliver experiments with the depth of 808s and the use of questionable lyrics. What ultimately makes this album work well is the exploration of smooth vocals and voice changes. Additionally, the features shown on this album are nothing less than exceptional. Experienced listeners of Don Toliver and unsuspecting listeners in general will most likely enjoy what Don Toliver has to offer on this excellent piece of work.

“Tiramisu” has had some play time since it was released as a single in September. It has grown on most audiences and has a special part in the album. It continues the trend of smooth vocals with eccentric lyrics to follow. The voice changes in this song brought to the attraction of the album

'Super Bowl'

Crossword by Tanner Quackenbush '26



Across

- Big-budget ads that premiere during the Super Bowl
- Pro football league
- Santa Clara stadium named after a denim brand
- Numbering system used for Super Bowl LX
- Month when Super Bowl is played
- Northern California region hosting the game
- February 8, 2026, on the calendar
- Title earned by the winner
- What each team hopes to do on Sunday
- Conference of the Patriots
- Santa Clara’s role in the Super Bowl
- Surface where the game takes place

- Spectators at the game
- Airing game network
- Seattle’s franchise

Down

- West Coast state hosting Super Bowl LX
- Traditional day for the

- Super Bowl Name on the Super Bowl trophy
- _____ football, an Olympic sport pre viewed
- The big event itself
- Music star set to headline the halftime show
- Admission to the game
- New England’s NFL team
- Strategist pacing the sideline
- Games leading to the Super Bowl
- The Roman numeral LX translates to this number
- Promotions and celebrations surrounding the game
- Conference of the Seahawks

Scan for answers!



'shOUT faculty lunch

Wabash College faculty hosted the monthly 'shOUT lunch for Wabash students to promote inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community on Tuesday .





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

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

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

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Cut the charge: Address winter woes



Antonio Grandinetti '28

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As an international student myself, I was very conscious when choosing a school that would embrace me and my different background. For many of us, picking a college is a lot more than just academics, it is about finding a place where we feel safe and supported. Wabash College has a small but growing international student community, and overall, we are taken good care of with the help of Chris Dixon, Amy Weir and many others who consistently show up for us and make sure we are not overlooked.

That being said, there is still an issue that deserves more attention. We live in a community where some students need a little more help — not for extra benefits or special treatment — but simply to get through the week. Many international students have no choice but to stay on campus during winter break. This is not because they prefer to stay, but because leaving is unrealistic or impossible.

Flights to home countries can take over 24 hours and cost more than \$2,000. For many students, that alone makes traveling home financially impossible. Beyond the cost, returning home is not always a simple or comfortable option. The life we live in the United States is very different from the reality in some countries, whether due to political instability or personal safety concerns. These factors make staying on campus not a convenience but a necessity.

When talking with students who have had to stay on campus for most of their Wabash careers, many acknowledged that things have improved over time. “As a senior, I’ve definitely seen positive movement,” said Arman Lutra ’26. “Events have gotten better organized, and there’s been more integration between international students and the broader campus community. People are breaking out of their initial ‘cliques’ more than they used to, which is great.”

This progress is important and should be recognized. However, one major issue still remains unresolved. International students who stay on campus during breaks are charged \$30 per night. Over the course of winter break, this becomes

a significant financial burden, especially considering that this cost does not include food services. In many places, \$30 could get you a hotel room. At Wabash, it provides housing without dining options.

There have been kind efforts to help students manage during this time, and those efforts are appreciated. Vic Lindsay has organized a weekly shuttle to Walmart or Kroger, which has helped many students access food. However, this is not enough. Students are still left with limited options: walking long distances in winter weather, relying on friends or using the food pantry, which mainly offers canned goods. While these solutions may work short-term, they are not realistic or sustainable for the duration of the break.

For students coming from countries such as Vietnam, India, Uzbekistan or Mongolia, one change could significantly improve their Wabash experience: allowing international students to remain on campus during breaks for free or at least at a reasonable, subsidized cost. The support system has improved in many ways, but it has not yet caught up with the reality that some students face every year.

In addition to the financial burden, the current climate in the United States has made life more emotionally difficult for international students. Nishant Humagain ’26, president of the International Students Association, shared that “some students may face difficulties re-entering the U.S. due to current ongoing immigration issues, which makes winter housing especially important.”

With evolving immigration policies and unpredictable law enforcement, many international students live with anxiety. Some feel unsafe even when they are at school, unsure how changes in government behavior might affect their ability to return to their country or to come back to campus. In this environment, asking students to leave campus or to pay a high cost to stay adds unnecessary stress to an already vulnerable group.

Wabash has shown that it cares about its international students, and that effort does not go unnoticed. But winter housing remains an issue that needs stronger attention and action. This is not about asking for special privileges. This is about recognizing that for some students campus is the only place they can go and making sure they are supported during the times when the college is quiet while their needs are still very real.

HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

MOLDIS

Hi-Five to Student Senate for passing the Morris and Walcott Resolution. Unfortunately, this resolution won't fix the fact that you had to live in Morris and/or Walcott.

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE WHY WICK?

*Lo-Five to the National Act Committee for selecting Nardo Wick as the headlining act this year. Upon seeing the selection, half of the student body's first reaction was, "Who the f*** is that?"*

GLORIFIED GERBIL

Lo-five to Punxsutawney Phil for not spying his shadow, consigning us to another six weeks of this barren wasteland. We're not suprised, just disappointed (and seasonally depressed), Phil.

G-WIZ

Lo-five to Lakers center Jaxson Hayes for being suspended a game due to him assulting the Wizards mascot. I think the Wizards have suffered enough after losing their past two franchise players to injuries and sneaking in firearms.

IN A PICKLE

Hi-Five to the Pickleball Club for making their glorious return. This is a great content opportunity for all the Yik Yak karma farmers (and The Bachelor Hi-Fives section).

Wallies in the wild: Living by the law of averages



William Harvey '21

Approximately 56 months have passed since I stood in front of my classmates and sang “Alma Mater” during our graduation ceremony. My life was quite different at the time. I was single. My greatest concern was cramming for the MCAT. I was going to take a gap year to work, as I wanted to beef up my bank account before (hopefully) starting medical school. I was financially dependent upon my parents. I’m proud to say I’ve come a long way since I turned my tassle. Presently, I’m married, I’m 46 days away from learning where I’ll match for residency and I’m living quite comfortably in Carmel. I’m still financially dependent however, but now on my wife. I guess that’s a slight improvement.

Please forgive me if that sounded a bit pretentious. I wanted to lend some weight to what I’m about to suggest to you. Slightly abrupt paragraph transitions aside (it’ll be best if you can get used to that; through no fault of his own, Professor Himself was only partially successful in molding me into a good writer), with my remaining word count, I’d like to explain the winning formula I’ve concocted for navigating the world. Here it is: Every day, in everything you do, if you keep putting your best foot forward, you will eventually come out on top. That may sound overly optimistic, but it’s a fluid doctrine that allows for growth through failure.

To contextualize the above ethos, understand that my first semester of medical school hit me like a semi-truck. Indiana University School of Medicine, like many American medical schools, marches its first-year students through a rigorous cadaver-centric course. Right off the rip, I was given ten weeks to internalize the entirety of human anatomy, a sizable volume of pathology and an annoying amount of histology; this seemed a herculean charge. I quickly fell behind my peers, and

I couldn’t comprehend why. After all, I strived to be a perfectionist in my studies at Wabash, so why couldn’t I replicate that success as a medical student?

Truth be told, I held myself to a totally unrealistic standard in college. Matthew Broderick says of his character’s best friend in Ferris Bueller’s Day Off, “Pardon my French, but Cameron is so tight that if you stuck a lump of coal up his ass, in two weeks you’d have a diamond.” That was true of me. Just ask any of my pledge brothers. Unfortunately, there I was, beating myself up again in medical school. Thankfully, some time after I barely passed my first exam, I had an epiphany. I was only capable of doing my best, so why not hold myself to that standard instead?

I then unlocked a degree of potential I didn’t realize I possessed. Take it from me — you’d be surprised how much energy you have when you aren’t unreasonably high-strung. Once I crested that mental hill, I started to thrive in medical school. I passed all my pre-clinical courses and waded my way through my clerkships. I started making more time for myself, a habit that allowed me to participate in a

class trip to Six Flags in Chicago, where I met my wife.

Whether you fancy yourself a future physician or not, I encourage you, unnamed Wabash student, to similarly align your personal expectations. Rome wasn’t built in a day, and neither will your career, your relationship with your future spouse (if marriage is your thing) or any other important aspect of your life. Accept that you’ll have off days. Everyone does. Furthermore, understand that you currently live in a relatively forgiving environment surrounded by people who want to see you succeed. Cherish “these fleeting years,” as the lyrics of our college’s Alma Mater describes. You will never again have the privilege of focusing almost entirely on forming long-lasting, enriching friendships with guys your age.

Just keep doing your best, buddy. That’s all you can realistically ask of yourself. Oh, and doing your best better include being good to the people around you. Wabash Always Fights!

Walk out that Chapel

ventional, heterotypical, gender conforming, white, upper-class individuals. You see, gentlemen, we exist in a time where going against the current causes disruption for the standard day-to-day life of anyone who exists in these brackets that our president has made. In response to this, Wabash has tried her best to provide an environment where we can experiment and battle with these ideas without serious consequence, but we are losing something important in this fight: the ability to determine right from wrong.

In this bubble we only grapple with the ideas of each other creating an echo chamber. Individual and critical thinking skills have dissipated because there is simply no need to. People don’t have conversations anymore. People don’t want to know why someone may feel differently than them and instead would rather turn to anonymous platforms where they can’t be held accountable for their opinions, while the rest of us, those who care for humanity and the advancement of our nation, are left to fight

battles much larger than ourselves.

A battle that has found its way to our campus and even into our chapel, as we witnessed this Thursday. Which, may I remind you, had record low attendance and stands that weren’t even a quarter filled, so I find it unlikely that many of you actually witnessed my display of “performative activism” but I digress. This chapel talk attempted to spark conversation about Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and a post-Charlie Kirk America, but failed to approach this conversation with the nuance necessary to debate the killing of Black and Brown people in America (even white people recently). With this in mind, and a building rage in me, I left. I left because the person on stage, trying to convince us of each other’s humanity, failed to recognize his reckless bias and intentional disregard for human life. I left because the lives of these individuals, who our speaker, Stephen Kleitsch says “bodies didn’t even turn cold before calling it an execution,” was quite distasteful for me, as someone who has watched innocent young

people (much like us) be rounded up, murdered, tortured and deported without explanation or proper judicial process. It is beyond sickening that the action I took (walking out of a Chapel Talk) has gained much more traction than the absurdity of a speaker coming in and proposing that we should have more sympathy for the ICE agents killing innocent civilians in the street.

So, I leave you with this, students of Wabash: find your sense of humanity again. Find the value in human life and the world that we share with others. Find the ability to empathize with those who don’t share your life experiences. But most importantly, find the reason why you were so upset that my actions provoked you. Why is it that this young Black, queer and otherwise normal man disgruntled you so badly that you had to run behind a screen to find support for your outrage instead of addressing him directly? I have a suspicion why, but then again, I’d love to hear it from you.

Wally’s Wall: Super bowl predictions

William Reenie ’27

As the Super bowl draws near, I believe the Seahawks will win the game. Due to the momentum that has been carried with Sam Darnold having back-to-back 14 win seasons. We also see they have the top defense with 16.4 points allowed per game in the regular season. Seahawks have also gone 27 games without allowing a 100 yard rush.

Quinn Sholar ’26

Just because I want to see Jordan Tate’s team lose, I am rooting for a heartbreaking last-minute drive resulting in a 21-17 victory for the Patriots.

Harrison Wainman ’26

Colts win, 100-0.

Will Duncan ’27

I think the Seahawks win the game decisively, Sam Darnold for Super Bowl MVP.

Zev Wolverton ’27

Personally, as a Seahawks fan myself, I think that the Seahawks will demolish the Pats 31-13 and Kenneth Walker will run it in at least twice. No more dumb heartbreaks over dumb passes.

Paul Hawksworth ’28

Seahawks by a million.

Why movies matter



Features Editor,
Noah Mintie ’29

Reply to this opinion at
njmintie29@wabash.edu

“I don’t really watch movies” is something people will say to me quite often. Sometimes they expect me to be taken aback, given how much my own life orbits around the cinema. The thing is that I’m never surprised. In fact, I can’t even say I blame them. Maybe they prefer to spend their free time with TV, books, paintings or any other kind of art. Maybe they don’t even enjoy artistic analysis at all. With TikTok, Instagram Reels and an unending supply of long-form content free on YouTube, visual media has evolved far beyond the movie theater. Even the movies themselves are rapidly falling from the silver screen to streaming backlogs, where they may sit unwatched and undiscussed forever. All the while, store shelves once stocked with DVDs have disappeared and more showtimes glide by without a single ticket sold.

Although we’ve neglected it in recent years, the cinematic medium is still as important as it ever was. I’ll never argue that the movies are naturally superior to the book, the show, the video game, the painting or even the YouTube video, but I truly believe that film is both unique and irreplaceable among them. To understand why, one must explore what separates movies from other media.

A great place to start is the timeframe. The famed director Alfred Hitchcock once stated that “the length of a film should be directly related to the endurance of the human bladder.” The average runtime of the movies infrequently breaks this timeframe, although the massive sodas sold at concession stands can alter this calculus. Nonetheless, there is something uniquely appealing about the way movies are paced. In only two hours of your time a movie can introduce and then conclude any kind of story you could imagine. They’re more immersive than a book and more cohesive than a video game, all while being faster to take in than either. I’ve doom-scrolled shorts for two hours more often than I’d care

to admit, but none of those incidents has ever been as fulfilling as even the worst two-hour movie.

Not only are they efficient to watch, but they leave a hefty impact. The famous movie critic Roger Ebert once said that “the movies are like a machine that generates empathy.” He’s correct; once the theater lights dim, the viewer’s emotions are forfeited to the film. They can feel sadness, satisfaction, fear, retribution and laughter. Film uniquely aids these emotions, as its sequences can stretch on longer than a show, be more kinetic than the painting and far more visual than a book. The resulting concoction is a thrill ride contained in a single room, which is truly something special.

Some argue that movies haven’t aged as gracefully as other art forms. Since the turn of the century, original filmmaking has been pushed from the public eye in favor of bombastic franchises. As much as I love the cinematic universes and legacy sequels — which ushered my younger self into the world of artistic analysis — they have started to lose their luster. However, that does not mean that originality is dead. Hollywood’s more recent embrace of diversity has, if anything, allowed once-censored voices to finally tell their stories. Independent filmmaking and previously-established directors still crank out masterpieces at the same rate as the golden age, even though they get less attention. With the rise of social media like the film-logging platform Letterboxd, appreciation for original movies and the next generation of filmmakers are starting to thrive.

Plenty of people tend to think that I’m crazy because of how much I write, think about and watch movies. My aim is not to have everyone join my frenzy, but I hope that this article helps people understand what makes someone like me love the medium. If it has convinced you to make a little more time for movies in your life, I recommend checking out the Lilly Library’s virtual and physical collection of culturally significant and infinitely analyzable movies. I’ll also shout out the Wabash Film Club, which covers tickets, transportation and concessions for newly-released movies at the theater. There are still so many opportunities for anyone to engage with movies. The lights are on, the camera’s rolling and there’s still plenty of action!

Power, accountability and trust in a system built around elites



Chayce Howell ’27

Reply to this opinion at
cjhowell27@wabash.edu

The Bachelor, in partnership with Wabash Democracy and Public Discourse, launched this recurring column to reflect how students are thinking about campus life, current events and the broader world. Each week, a small group of randomly selected Wabash students gathers for a facilitated conversation. Participants are not quoted by name. That choice allows space for honest reflection without fear of judgment. Rather than offering conclusions or arguments, the column captures how students are making sense of complex issues in real time.

This week’s conversation focused on the release of documents connected to Jeffrey Epstein and what that case represents to the public. For participants in the room, the files were less about one individual and more about how power operates when wealth and influence concentrate.

Several participants described the case as confirming a belief they already held. Extreme wealth, they said, often insulates people from consequences. The discussion did not dwell on reconstructing events or assigning guilt. Instead, those in attendance focused on what the situation revealed about systems of power.

Participants pointed to the involvement of business leaders, celebrities, political figures and foreign elites as evidence that the issue extends beyond party lines or national borders. One student said the limited accountability made it difficult to believe the full story would ever emerge. Another argued that those involved were likely using their influence to protect themselves.

“They have done pretty evil actions, and they should be held accountable,” one participant said.

It was noted that only one person has been prosecuted in connection with the case, Ghislaine Maxwell the confidant of Jeffrey Epstein. Several said that the limited arrests felt insufficient given the scale of what has been reported. That realization led to a broader concern. If this happened once, how often does events like these happen without public attention?

From there, the conversation turned to how justice functions when money and status are involved. Participants repeatedly returned to the idea that while the legal system promises equality, access to resources shapes outcomes long before a case reaches court. Wealthy defendants can hire teams of law-

yers and public relations professionals. That level of protection is not available to most people. One participant referenced the recent Sean “Diddy” Combs case, noting reports that he hired eight attorneys. In stark contrast to defendants who rely on court-appointed counsel.

The difference creates an uneven starting point.

At the same time, participants drew a distinction between courts and the systems that lead into them. Several agreed that once a case reaches a courtroom, judges and procedures can offer a relatively level playing field. The deeper inequality, they argued, exists earlier in the process. Policing, investigations and access to legal support were all cited as areas where economic status matters most. Rather than blaming individual judges or lawyers, it was described as a structural problem. Wealth itself, and the power that it often buys, functions as a form of protection.

Students also discussed the gap between legal accountability and accountability in the court of public opinion. In the digital age, they said, social media platforms shape which stories feel visible and urgent.

If algorithms reward engagement rather than accuracy, then the simple act of interacting with a video can lead to seeing similar content repeatedly. Different students described encountering very different versions of the Epstein story online, depending on what their feeds emphasized. One participant said that even with more information, forming a clear response did not feel easier. Another noted that public discussion often requires far less evidence than a legal conviction. Reputations can be shaped long before courts intervene.

Despite the volume of attention, students expressed skepticism that public pressure alone would lead to accountability for people with significant power. Several agreed that the real question is not when those involved might face consequences, but whether they ever will.

Few expressed surprise at the allegations themselves. Several described elite misconduct as a recurring feature of history rather than an exception. One student compared the actions of the wealthy and powerful to a natural disaster: destructive, but difficult to stop. Others agreed that while the system is flawed, it feels resistant to meaningful change.

That recognition produced discomfort rather than outrage. The feeling was described as emotional distance to cope with perceived powerlessness. When injustice feels expected, detachment becomes a way to function.

Ultimately, participants said the control most people have is limited and personal. They spoke about looking out for friends and family and making choices that acknowledge the unequal structure of the world they inhabit.

Request for opinions

Have an opinion on campus culture or a hot take to share? Write an opinion piece!

If interested, contact ecbone26@wabash.edu

Poetry from Wallies

‘The Doe’ by Rowan O’Daniel ’28

I was watching a doe in a silk-shining prairie,

brushing past crab apples
and beautiful vices.

Angels in my pupils.
I wish those tremors—my heart—

could be bottled,
with the lid sealed tight,

so, I might keep awing
at those blooming willows,

so that I might cherish
the fleeting and vanishing.

The doe looks up again—
already gone, and still radiant,

a memory saran-wrapped
in the minds.
of those who were beholden to her.



Rowan O’Daniel
’28

Reply to this poem at
rmodanie28@wabash.edu

Request for Poems

Have a poem you want to share with campus?

If interested, contact ecbone26@wabash.edu

Wrestling hosts Wabash College Open and competes strongly

CARTER MCCALL '29
STAFF WRITER

The Wabash College wrestling team delivered an impressive performance on Saturday, January 31, when they hosted the Wabash College Open. The team showcased depth, resilience and championship-caliber wrestling in front of a home crowd at Knowling Fieldhouse. Although it was an open-entry tournament without team scoring, the Little Giants still made a roaring statement, piling up podium finishes across nearly every weight class and highlighting the strength of the program from top to bottom.

Michael Taheny '29 headlined the day with a championship run at 184 lbs., navigating a challenging bracket with poise and authority. After earning a first round bye, Taheny wasted little time asserting himself, recording back-to-back falls to reach the finals. He pinned Andrew Williamson of Trine University in the quarterfinals and followed with a semifinal fall over Purdue University's Quinn Herbert. In an all-Wabash title bout, Taheny beat teammate Zach Huckaby '28 3-2, capping a composed and disciplined tournament to claim the individual crown.

"I can't even express how blessed I am to have a guy like Huck in the room every day, pushing me to be the absolute best I can be," said Taheny. "All that happened in that match is what goes down in the wrestling room every day."

Huckaby's runner-up finish added to the Little Giants' strong showing at 184 lbs. Like Taheny, Huckaby opened with a bye before pinning Keaton Wilhelm of Blackburn College in just 87 seconds. He then advanced to the finals with an 8-5 decision over Gavin Malone of Trine, setting up the tightly contested championship match between teammates.

Wabash collected five third-place finishes, beginning at 149 lbs. with Carson Fettig '28. After a narrow quarterfinal loss, Fettig rebound-



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Brandson Weaver '29 flies through the air in an attempt to gain control over his opponent on January 31, 2026, in Knowling Fieldhouse.

ed in the consolation bracket, stringing together three victories. His run included a lightning-quick 51-second fall over Gaven Vollintine of Blackburn before he closed the day with an 8-2 decision over teammate Laban Green '27. Green finished fourth after a strong tournament of his own, highlighted by a first round fall and multiple wins on the backside of the bracket.

"I know that I can beat anyone, so just believing in that and executing is all it comes down to."

- Titus Waters '27

At 157 lbs., Michael Cain '29 wrestled his way to third place with

a series of bonus point performances. Cain opened with a fall before bouncing back from a quarterfinal loss to earn a major decision, a technical fall over teammate Grant Brewer '28 and a medical forfeit. He secured bronze with a 12-8 decision over Andrew Ross '26, who finished fourth after a hard fought run that included a 2-1 semifinal loss and a consolation win over another Wabash teammate, Chasen Kazmierczak '29. Kazmierczak placed fifth, tallying multiple pins throughout the tournament.

Jaylen Young '28 added another third-place finish at 174 lbs. After reaching the semifinals, Young responded to a sudden-victory setback with an 11-0 major decision and a 9-3 win over Mason Day from University of Indianapolis in the third-place bout. At 197 lbs., Spen-



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

James Day '26 attempts to gain control over his opponent on January 31, 2026, in Knowling Fieldhouse.

This week in sports

Swimming and diving prepares for the NCAC Championship, a freshman sprinter sets a new record in the 400 meters and more.

TY MURPHY '27
STAFF WRITER
SEAN BLEDSOE '26
SPORTS EDITOR

The Little Giants packed a full slate of competition in the last week, highlighted by record breaking performances in track and field, a season-opening split for volleyball and key individual efforts for the swimming and diving and tennis teams. Here's a rundown of the highlights from this week.

Swimming and Diving

The swimming and diving team faced tough Division I competition when they traveled to Indiana University Indianapolis to face the Jaguars on Saturday, January 31, at the IU Natatorium in Indianapolis. Despite several top-five performances, the Little Giants came up short in a 128-232 loss.

Ryan West '28 was the highlight of the meet with a first-place finish in the 100-yard individual medley with a time of 53.06 seconds. His performance earned him North Coast Atlantic Conference (NCAC) Men's Swimming and Diving Athlete of the Week.

Lew Sams '29 delivered one of Wabash's best performances in the 200-yard breaststroke, finishing in a time of 2:06.84 and placing

third overall. Nicholas Plumb '27 also took a third-place finish in the 50-yard backstroke with a time of 24.92 seconds.

Aidan Gubbins '29 contributed for the distance crew, earning a fifth-place finish in the 500-yard freestyle where he ended with a time of 5:01.55.

The swimming and diving team will travel to Granville, Ohio to compete in the NCAC Conference Championship hosted by Denison University from February 11-14.

Track and Field

The track and field team traveled over to Springfield, Ohio on Saturday, January 31, to face off against 22 teams in the Steemer Showcase at Wittenberg University. With 42 points of scoring, the Little Giants took sixth place in a very strong and competitive field.

Brock DeBello '29 made history for Wabash with a record-breaking time of 48.79 seconds in the 400 meters, earning fourth place and shattering the previous Wabash indoor record of 49.08 seconds set in 2012 by John Haley '13.

The mid-distance group recorded a pair of top-five finishes in the 800 meters. Haiden Diemer-McKinney '26 led the team with a third-place finish with a time of 1:53.89. David



PHOTO COURTESY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Brock DeBello '29 sprints down the track on January 16, 2026, at the Larry Cole Opener at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology.

Adesanya '27 followed closely behind with a fifth-place finish with a time of 1:55.05.

The field events accounted for several points with two top-five finishes. Sly Williams '26 placed fourth in the triple jump with a mark of 13.88 meters, and Quinn Scholar '26 threw 14.98 meters in the shot put to place fourth.

The track and field team will return to action on February 6 and 7 to compete at Illinois Wesleyan University in the Keck DIII Select meet.

Volleyball

The volleyball team opened their season on Saturday, January 31, with two games against Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU) and Maranatha Baptist University at Chadwick Court. The Little Giants dropped their opener against IWU with a 0-3 loss but came back to beat Maranatha Baptist 3-0.

In game one against the Spartans, Bawibawi Thang '27 led the team with 10 kills, followed by Patrick Volk '26 with nine. Matthew Stittle '28 directed the offense with 26 assists while Christopher Board '27 and Piotr Wolan '28 took control of the back row with 48 combined digs. The Spartans took control early each set, creating deficits that were too much for Wabash to overcome.

Against the Sabercats, the Little Giants proved dominant. Zev Wolverton '27 led all players with 17 kills while Andrew Hostetler '28 finished with seven points at the net. After pulling away early in the opening set, Wabash survived a rally in the second set before decisively closing the third set and completing the sweep.

The Little Giants will play another two matches on Saturday, February 7, against Dominican University (Illinois) and Concordia University Chicago in River Forest, Illinois.

Tennis

The tennis team split up on Saturday, January 31, with the varsity team traveling to Granville, Ohio to face Denison University for an NCAC matchup and the reserve squad staying back at home to face Manchester University at the Collet Tennis Center.

Wabash faced stiff competition against the Big Red, the number one team in the country. Denison swept both doubles and singles play to hand the Little Giants a 0-7 loss.

Against Manchester, Wabash proved themselves. With a victory from the duo of Matthew Haas '29 and Edmon Neto '29, the Little Giants set the tone early in doubles play. The teams of Blake Discher II '26 and Eric Tien '27 as well as

cer Watson '28 earned bronze by recovering from a semifinal loss and conquering teammate Hadyn Ball '27 4-2 in the third-place match. Ball finished fourth after advancing deep into the bracket.

Heavyweight Titus Waters '27 rounded out the third-place finishes with a powerful showing. Waters opened with two first-period falls and then responded to a semifinal loss by earning a 13-1 major decision before claiming third place by forfeit.

"I always just try to focus on the basics and do them the best I can," said Waters. "I know that I can beat anyone, so just believing in that and executing is all it comes down to."

Additional top-six performances underscored Wabash's depth. Isaac Ash '29 placed fourth at 125 lbs., James Day '26 finished fifth at 133 lbs., Branson Weaver '29 took fourth at 141 lbs. and Cooper McCloy '28 added a fourth place finish at 165 lbs.

The Little Giants will look to carry this momentum forward when they return to action Sunday, February 8, at the University of Indianapolis Greyhound Open.



PHOTO BY JEREMIAH RUNGE '29

A member of the swimming and diving prepares to launch off the blocks in the Indiana DIII Meet on October 18, 2025, in the Class of 1950 Natatorium.



PHOTO BY DIEGO BANUELOS '27

Bawibawi Thang '27 prepares to serve against Illinois Wesleyan on January 31, 2026, at Chadwick Court.

Basketball loses hard-fought game to Denison on the road

CARTER MCCALL '29
STAFF WRITER

In a tightly contested North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) showdown, the Little Giants went toe-to-toe with the Denison Big Red in a game defined by momentum swings and late-game drama. The game had huge implications in the NCAC standings as both teams came into the game in the hunt for the first seed in the playoffs.

"It's pretty special when you can be in February and can look at the standings and realistically have a chance to try to finish first," said Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett.

What started as a strong start for Wabash turned into a full 40-minute battle. Both teams exchanged runs and refused to pull away. In the end, a critical stretch in the second half and a controversial no-call proved to be the difference in an 84-91 Wabash loss.

"The conference tournament isn't played at the start of February, but it's important we keep making strides so that we are playing the best we can at the end of the month."

- Luke Ellspermann '29

The Little Giants jumped out to an early advantage and set the tone in the opening minutes, using strong defense and efficient shooting to stay in front. Denison responded each time Wabash threatened to extend the lead, keeping the game within reach and turning the first half into a steady back and forth battle. Despite the consistent pressure, the Little Giants maintained a slim edge for most of the half.

The rhythm was disrupted near the four minute mark when Denison put together a 10-4 run to flip the momentum and take a 39-33 lead. Wabash, however, closed the half with a late surge of its own, answering with key baskets from Gavin Schippert '26, Rich Brooks '26 and Nate Matelic '27 to trim the deficit and head into the break trailing



Members of the Sphinx Club cheer for the basketball team on January 28, 2026, at Neal Fieldhouse in Greencastle, Indiana.



Nate Matelic '27 finishes a dunk on January 28, 2026, at Neal Fieldhouse in Greencastle, Indiana.



Josh Whack '26 brings the ball up the floor on January 28, 2026, at Neal Fieldhouse in Greencastle, Indiana.



Luke Ellspermann '29 jogs down the floor on January 28, 2026, at Neal Fieldhouse in Greencastle, Indiana.

by just one point at 40-41. The beginning of the second half brought more of the same, with both teams trading baskets in an intense back-and-forth battle. Midway through the half, however, Denison built up an 18-8 run to build a commanding nine point lead with 4:30 remaining. Despite the deficit, the Little Giants showed resilience, converting key possessions to cut the lead to just four points. Momentum appeared to be swinging in Wabash's favor as they pushed for a final surge, but a controversial no-call on a potential goaltending play halted their rally and shifted the energy of the game. Denison capitalized in the closing moments,

knocking down crucial free throws to secure the victory. The Big Red held on for a 91-84 win in a hard-fought contest. The key to Denison's success was their bench as they scored 41 points, compared to only 15 from Wabash. Wabash was led in scoring by Luke Ellsperman '29 with 25 points along with six rebounds. Brooks followed that up with 14 points of his own. Josh Whack '26 and Schippert also contributed with 12 and 11 points, respectively.

"It's pretty special when you can be in February and can look at the standings and realistically have a chance to try to finish first."

- Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett

"This loss just gives us more motivation to keep working on the little things. We are close but not there yet," said Ellsperman. "The conference tournament isn't played at the start of February, but it's important we keep making strides so that we are playing the best we can at the end of the month." Wabash will return home on Saturday, January 7, to host Wooster. Tipoff is set for 2 p.m. EST.

The Bledsoe '26 breakdown: NCAC basketball power rankings

SEAN BLEDSOE '26
SPORTS EDITOR

This league is bizarre, and I love it! It's crazy how one week can change the standings - and power rankings - in an instant. Let's take a look at what happened.



#1 - Denison Big Red
Overall Record: (14-6)
NCAC Record: (9-2)

Wow. So impressive that the Big Red beat Oberlin. Hopefully you detect the sarcasm in my writing. The Big Red also had to play their best game of the year against Wabash just to beat the Little Giants by seven points. I hope Denison loses out because the tournament cannot be hosted in that ugly wooden barn that is Livingston Gymnasium. Also, their broadcast quality needs some serious help because there was some weird "Matrix" crap going on in the left half of the court, and their broadcasters' microphones can't pick up half their audio. Figure it out!



#2 - John Carroll Blue Streaks
Overall Record: (16-5)
NCAC Record: (8-4)

Awww! Who lost to a pathetic black and gold school from Greencastle, Indiana? This team did! I know the Blue Streaks also had some nightmares about Ohio Wesleyan after their loss to them the first time around they played. I can't imagine letting the worst defense in the league hold arguably the most efficient offense in the league to under 100 points, but the Blue Streaks made sure to right the ship in their second meeting with the Bishops on Wednesday night.



#3 - Wabash Little Giants
Overall Record: (13-7)
NCAC Record: (7-4)

The men in scarlet and white had a nice relaxing weekend with no game scheduled, but they could not relax on Wednesday night since Denison made pretty much everything they looked at (they shot 60% from the field) and the referees were too blind to call a goaltend or foul. The loss didn't help the Little Giants in terms of the conference standings, but we know Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett's teams tend to bounce back. These boys are ready for Wooster tomorrow.



#4 - DePauw Tigers
Overall Record: (14-7)
NCAC Record: (7-5)

This is the only moment in my life where I will say this but...shoutout to the Dannies! DePauw went into John Carroll and knocked off the top-ranked Blue Streaks, and they went to Wittenberg and beat the other Tiger team. These two wins helped Wabash in terms of keeping it in the hunt for hosting the conference tournament. It turns out that the people from down south are good for something - for once in their lives!



#5 - Wittenberg Tigers
Overall Record: (14-6)
NCAC Record: (7-4)

The Tigers beat Wooster on Saturday. Not sure what else to say besides that. They played their black and gold counterparts at home on Wednesday night, and in true Wittenberg fashion, they couldn't score. I don't have much else to say. See ya.



#6 - Wooster Fighting Scots
Overall Record: (7-14)
NCAC Record: (4-8)

The Fighting Scots just look pathetic. They are well on their way to having their first losing season since the 1986-1987 season where they went 8-18 (not counting the COVID-interrupted season, for obvious reasons). It's very refreshing to see them struggle, and honestly, I hope it continues. Cue evil and maniacal laughter!



#7 - Kenyon Owls
Overall Record: (10-11)
NCAC Record: (4-8)

This team continues to fall short, which is fitting considering how little their starting guard, Nick Nelson, is. The Owls lost to Denison... no surprise there. They also managed to let a win slip out of their fingers against Wooster. Just a tip to Langston Foster: don't foul someone shooting a three with one second left!



#8 - Oberlin Yeomen
Overall Record: (10-10)
NCAC Record: (3-8)

The Yeomen pulled themselves up from the depths of hell on Saturday where they beat Ohio Wesleyan to no longer be the worst team in the conference. I know they are thankful that they did not play a game on Wednesday night, so they had no potential to move back down in my power rankings.



#9 - Ohio Wesleyan Battling Bishops
Overall Record: (6-15)
NCAC Record: (3-9)

Back to the bottom the Battling Bishops go. That's what happens when they lose to Oberlin of all teams. That also happens when you score only 57 points in 40 minutes against a team of squirrels. They also failed to rekindle the magic they had against JCU the first time they played the Blue Streaks. It looked bad on Wednesday night. The Bishops need to learn how to score and how to play defense.