

# View from the Valley

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**OUR MISSION IS TO DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OUR STUDENTS AND TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITIES.**

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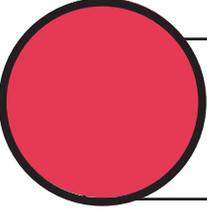
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**“Man’s mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.”**

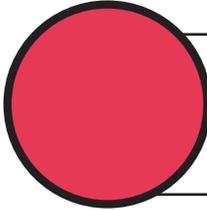
**— Oliver Wendell Holmes**

# Valley Briefs



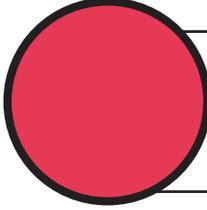
## WVC Holds GED Graduation Reception

Of the 10 GED students who recently graduated from Wabash Valley College, 6 were able to return for a celebratory reception. They received their certificates at the ceremony, along with food and cake.



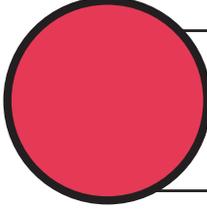
## Early Childhood Education Building Completes Move

The Early Childhood Education Department moved from the Science Building to the former International Student Center last fall, but did not complete the move...until now. Everything has been completely moved and placed.



## Student Population Update

With only a few more weeks before fall classes begin, WVC currently has 297 full-time students registered for the fall, with another 83 registered as part-time.



## Solar Savings Update

WVC's solar array has now produced more than 96 MWh of energy and saved more than 133,120 pounds of CO2. This reduction is equivalent to more than 1,000 trees being planted!

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**“It is not from ourselves that we learn to be better than we are.”**

**— Wendell Berry**

# Coach Fournier Resigns After 26 Years



Rob Fournier, Head Baseball Coach at Wabash Valley College for the past 26 seasons, has stepped down. He has accepted an Assistant Coach position with Western Kentucky University.

"This has been one of the most difficult decisions I have ever made," said Fournier. "I feel it's imperative to thank the City of Mt. Carmel and the campus community for their support of the Athletic Department. Also, a special thanks to Mike Carpenter for his tremendous support of myself and the entire Athletic Department. I also want to thank WVC Coaches Asa Deffendall, Mark Colvin, Luke Scheidecker, and Patrick Harris for their support over the years." Fournier added, "I also want to thank WVC President Dr. Matt Fowler for giving me the opportunity to grow both professionally and personally during my time at WVC. I have really enjoyed working at Wabash Valley College and appreciate the support given to me during my tenure."

WVC Athletic Director Mike Carpenter said of Coach Fournier, "We couldn't be more appreciative of the job he has done at WVC. He has a relentless approach to recruiting and has coached with incredible energy. His teams have been extremely disciplined, and Rob built one of the premier programs in the nation during his time here. We wish Rob and his wife Jen all the best."

Fournier leaves WVC as the all-time winningest baseball coach, earning a staggering 1106 victories and 14 GRAC Championships. The Warriors recently finished their 26th consecutive winning season under Fournier's guidance. In that time they won 50 or more games in eight seasons. Over the past 3 seasons Coach Fournier's teams had the best record in the country, going a combined 129-16 (88%). The 2022 season was a memorable year for Coach Fournier as his Warrior Baseball Team went an astonishing 59-9, won the GRAC Championship, and the Region 24 Title. Furthermore, Fournier led the Warriors to the NJCAA World Series where they finished 4th in the nation. To top it off, he was inducted into the 2022 NJCAA Hall of Fame Class.

Coach Fournier's teams have experienced much success on the field and in the classroom. During his first year he helped turn around a 1996 team that was 12-34 to a 37-16 team in 1997. Since then, the standard of winning has remained intact. In the past 24 seasons the Warriors have been ranked consistently in the top-25 in the country, and his teams have won 30 or more games every year. Fournier's teams have had 15 seasons with 40+ wins and have captured 14 regular season Great Rivers Athletic Conference titles. Fournier led the 2017 Warrior team to a third-place finish at the

NJCAA Division I Baseball World Series Championships. Among Fournier's accolades, the 2019 team won 49 consecutive games and spent 8 weeks ranked at no. 1, the 2020 team spent 3 weeks ranked no. 1 before the season was canceled due to COVID-19, and he has won the GRAC "Coach of the Year" Award eleven times.

WVC President Dr. Matt Fowler said of Fournier, "I am truly excited for Coach Fournier and this opportunity he has before him. While we would like to be selfish and hold on to our Hall of Fame Coach, it's important for all of us to celebrate when one of our students, faculty, or staff is able to take that next step in life because of their time here at Wabash Valley College."

President Fowler went on to say, "I have worked with Rob for 24 of his 26 years at Wabash Valley College, and I've always been impressed with his work both on and off the field. His teams have been ranked in the top 25 in the nation for over 20 consecutive years, but more importantly, he has continually taught young men the importance of doing it the right way. His 90 percent graduation rate and his team's service to the community through Adopt a Highway, leaf raking for the elderly, and camps for underprivileged youth have made lasting impressions on the community and nearly 1,000 young men over the years."

In the past 26 seasons, Fournier has sent over 390 WVC players to four-year schools in the SEC, Big 12, MVC, C-USA, Sun Belt, Big 10, A-Sun, OVC and others. Coach Fournier has also helped develop 93 players who were drafted to the MLB or signed professional contracts.

The College held a going-away party for Fournier on his last day and served Dairy Dee ice cream to all who attended.



# WVC Bass Warriors Hold Fundraiser to Continue Success



The WVC Bass Warriors are coming off their best season since the group's inception. They finished this season ranked 14th in the country and ranked #1 among Junior Colleges in the nation. That 14th national ranking is among all divisions, by the way.

There were 5 graduates from the Bass Warrior team this spring. Drew Gill, who is headed to Campbellsville University to continue his education and fishing career this fall, is one of the top anglers to come through WVC. Drew finished his freshman year ranked 16th in the country. By the end of his sophomore year he and Jonah Potts were ranked 8th in the country for "Team of the Year" (out of more than 400 teams in the Strike King Bassmaster Series). He is one of the 5 recent WVC graduates, earning a Degree of Associate in Science.

On Wednesday, July 6th, the Bass Warriors hosted an event called "Walk-Up Wednesday" in Mount Carmel. The event is located in Merchant's Park. The group provided BBQ and porkburgers to all diners along with lemon-shake-ups and several other side options. Dr. Todd Gill, the coach of the team, put some perspective on the event as follows: "We have a big group this year and will need lots and lots of gas money to fund our travels." Unfortunately

the team has to drive personal vehicles across the country to compete in fishing tournaments because they also have to pull each individual's boat to the event. Dr. Gill has expressed the difficulty many anglers have in competing because they have to personally fund the repairs to both their boats and the vehicles they use to pull them when there are issues, not to mention they have to provide gas money that isn't covered by these fundraising events. This doesn't even account for the thousands of miles anglers put on their engines each year traveling to tournaments in more than a dozen states. The fundraising event was met with community support; hopefully the Bass Warriors will be able to continue their success into this next season.

## Bailey Campaign Makes Local Stop at WVC



The primaries for Illinois offices of various categories recently took place. In the last weeks leading up to the primaries, Gubernatorial candidate Darren Bailey's campaign team made a stop in Mount Carmel to give one final appeal to local voters. Bailey himself was in Northern Illinois campaigning, but his pick for Lieutenant Governor, Stephanie Trussell, attended the rally in Mount Carmel to garner support for the campaign. Mrs. Trussell boasted that the Bailey campaign team has visited every single county in Illinois TWICE since beginning on the campaign trail last year.

A turnout of approximately 60 people came to WVC under the big tent to hear the campaign team's pitch. They made such promises as budgetary reform, installation of Christian values, bolstering the 2nd amendment, pension restructure, and more.

Most of the community in attendance seemed to support the Bailey campaign, but the rally was not without those who oppose the campaign. One woman in particular seemed to catch the team off-guard when she asked about state-police retirement pensions and what Bailey plans to do to allow retiring officers to keep their pensions. She produced a quote that seemingly implied Bailey proposes to severely diminish the money promised to officers in the

course of their careers. The campaign team seemed to consider the woman's inquisition with respect and assured her Bailey does not plan to take retirement savings from anyone who has earned them in Illinois. They did, however, claim reforms will need to be made to retirement plans for those joining the State Police (and other state-funded organizations) in future. The campaign team claimed state pensions are already on life support and something has to be done to fix the trajectory before it is too late. The entirety of the team's presentation was only between 30-45 minutes (they had several stops more to make that day), but before they rushed off to their next event they took the time to play a recording from Mr. Bailey promising he wouldn't strip anyone of their already earned pensions. He claimed in that recording to have proposed changes to pensions so that the state legislature would sit up and take notice of the need for change and begin to consider best options rather than ignore the problem.

One fellow, who is a retired corrections officer, voiced his opinion that "change to the pension system that calls for less flattering retirement would be better than losing retirement altogether." Since that campaign stop Mr. Bailey has gone on to win the Republican primary and will now face Gov. Pritzker in the general election.

Mrs. Trussell, Darren Bailey's running mate, delivers a speech to a Mount Carmel audience under WVC's event tent near the Spencer Sports Center.



# WVC Campus Events Last Month

## Women's Basketball Holds Camp



Head Coach of Women's Basketball Luke Scheidecker and several of his assistants put on a youth basketball camp in the WVC gym in June. More than 30 kids signed up and came for the event. The kids learned fundamentals of basketball, ran multiple drills, and got to play some exciting games during the camp, but most participants seemed to think the popsicles handed out at the halfway point each day were the highlight of the camp!

## Wabash General Hospital Continues Classes at WVC

Wabash General Hospital has been using several WVC classrooms to hold training sessions for their new electronic health records system called "EPIC." Various departments of the WGH staff are on campus several days a week for these training sessions. They began in early June and will run through July. WVC is proud to partner with WGH to continue education for their workers. WVC and WGH have an excellent working relationship on various fronts, including clinicals, shadowing, cadaver procedure events, host learning facilities, and more.

# Help Support Wabash Valley College

## WABASH VALLEY COLLEGE

Celebrating 60 years of excellence in education



**We are able to provide excellence in education and dedicate ourselves to student learning because of our donors.**

**We would like you to partner with us in that endeavor. We are inviting people to donate \$60 in honor of WVC's 60 years of excellence. Call the college at 618-262-8641 to learn more about donating.**

As boundaries that have separated nations, cultures, and individuals continue to dissolve, the role of education has become vital in equipping students for the changes and challenges that lie ahead.

We at Wabash Valley College understand that building a firm educational foundation which meets the demands of our world requires the support of our community.

We would like you to partner with us in that endeavor. Call the college at 618-262-8641 or scan the QR code to learn more about donating to WVC.



WVC