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My experiences as a Chinese-American student at Wabash are connected to the history of how the American government treated Asian immigrants, particularly Chinese and later Japanese Americans during World War II.

Around the 1840s the U.S. was expanding westward. It needed laborers to work with dynamite to build the western half of the railroad across the Sierra Nevada mountains. China was a weak country under the Ching Dynasty and was ravaged by the European powers, forcing China into unfavorable economic and trade concessions.

England was the leader of this group that introduced opium to the Chinese population and forced China to pay various reparations after losing the Opium



Kai Chin at the class's 40th reunion in 2021.

War. Hong Kong was taken from China under a 100-year lease. China was in a state of internal and external turmoil caused by the weak and ineffective government of the Ching Dynasty. Famine and chaos were rampant throughout the country. During this period the U.S. signed a treaty with China to allow laborers into California.

After the railroad was built, the Chinese laborers without employment tried to pan for gold and compete with the white Americans. In 1875 the U.S. government enacted the Page Act, also called the "Oriental Exclusion Act." The purpose of this act was to prevent human trafficking of prostitutes, but the Act was really intended to prevent Chinese women from immigrating to the U.S. in order to limit the birth of Chinese children.

Shortly after the Page Act, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was enacted into federal law. This Act restricted Chinese immigrants from acquiring U.S. citizenship

Classmate Kai Chin shares his captivating story of the immigration of his family to the United States and his arrival at Wabash in 1967.

He has had a colorful career after graduation from Wabash, including service in the United States Navy and international banking. He conferred with North Koreans, collected debts in Borneo, and met Henry Kissinger.

He has been married to Charlotte, a true Wabash wife, for 51 years. Her reflections on Wabash follow Kai's. She wrote them in conjunction with the class's 50th in 2021. They live in Louisville, Colorado.

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through naturalization. The Chinese Exclusion Act was the first federal law to restrict immigration based on race.

The Chinese Exclusion Act was finally repealed in 1943 due to the realization that many Chinese-Americans volunteered and joined the military to fight against the Nazis and the Japanese. Although the Act was repealed, a small quota of only 105 Chinese per year could emigrate to the U.S. and only if the sponsor was the husband and was a U.S. citizen. It was not until 1965 that the quota for Chinese immigrants was eliminated.

My mother and I came to the U.S. under that quota. We waited almost six years under the quota system to come to the States in the spring of 1954, traveling from China via Hong Kong. We landed at La Guardia airport in New York City. I didn't know what my dad looked like. When I asked my mom about my dad, she told me he was in America and was an American soldier.

It was evening when I got off the plane, and the lights were glaring at my eyes. Under all the excitement to meet my American father, I grabbed the first white man I saw. You should have seen the look on the face of that man's wife. After I was directed to my dad, I was disappointed he looked Chinese. I was looking for an American (white) person in military uniform.

I grew up in Manhattan in the lower east side, a rough neighborhood in certain areas. My neighbors were a global mixture of immigrants from Europe and Latin America, not very many Asians. During that time, most Chinese immigrants lived in Chinatown.

From 1954 until 1960, my family and I lived in fear that we would be deported. Even though my father was a naturalized citizen, he came to the U.S. as a "Paper Son." He came to the U.S. under a false identity. Because of the Exclusion Act of 1882, no Chinese immigrant could ever become an American citizen. However, the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 destroyed all official documents to include birth and marriage certificates. A few clever Chinese using section 1 of the 14th Amendment, claimed they were bor

financial scholarship to attend a boarding school. This was my first great opportunity to experience a totally different lifestyle. I would be rooming, living, eating, and associating with students who came from wealthy homes with conservative values that I admired. I was like a chicken that couldn't fly or swim. I got to mingle and learn with the ducks and swans that could fly and swim. I was going to learn the culture of the Preppies and be able to intermingle with them hoping they did not notice I was different.

The boarding school, South Kent School, was a small Episcopal prep school with a student body of 140 boys. The school was very strict, and we lived a very spartan lifestyle. The school ran on three principles: Simplicity of Life, Directness of Purpose, and Self Reliance. The honor system and good sportsmanship were practiced and taught.

It was at South Kent that I first heard about Wabash. We had two students with Wabash connections: Harry Rogge, son of Professor Rogge, and Louie Ruwet, who was a Wabash student and a Delt. In 1965, I went to the Outward Bound School in Colorado. I met two Wabash students, John May, and Jerry Abernathy, co-captains



of the Wabash football team. Later, in my senior year at Kent, Jim Wood, Wabash alum and assistant director of admissions, invited me to visit Wabash in December 1966. I was picked up by three Delts at the airport. I stayed for a few days and fell in love with the school. I left campus with an acceptance. The Delts made such a favorable impression that I did not look at any other fraternities. I pledged Delt.

Kai became a trustee and treasurer at his old boarding school, South Kent School. Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State, spoke at the dedication of the Stockdale ice arena at the school in 2014. Vice Admiral James Stockton was a long-time prisoner of war. His three sons attended Kent. One son is at the right. Kai supplied the photo.

What did I like about Wabash? The Gentleman's Rule, the independence the college gave the students. The professors...great educators. They were there to teach and to mold the minds of young men. We were treated with respect by the professors. They made us feel relevant and important. We were treated like mature, rational, responsible adults. And the students? I was impressed with the academic seriousness of the students. Many had student jobs. I worked for the city of Crawfordsville while I was a student. I helped run the teen center three times a week in the evening. During the summer I stayed and

worked as the program coordinator for the Park and Recreation Dept. I would bring in musical bands from Indianapolis for splash pool parties and scheduled programs for the senior citizens.

Wabash can be considered a regional college, meaning the majority of the students came from Indiana or its adjacent states. This was not the case with my Delt pledge brothers. They came from Montana, Florida, Texas, New Jersey, Connecticut, New York, Indiana, and Illinois. It was a nice diverse group of brothers.

Wabash is a unique place I feel very lucky to have attended Wabash. I felt like every other student. Wabash for me was a place of enlightenment and tolerance. What I learned during those four years was not only in the books. I learned how to

listen to people and learned to anticipate how people would react given certain situations.

At Wabash I really started to understand the horrible treatment of Black Americans. I enrolled in many of the black history classes and was also friends with the Black students. Having grown up in the integrated neighborhood of New York, and as an immigrant myself, I felt an affinity with the Black students. I especially enjoyed the classes of Professors Finley Campbell and Peter Frederick. When I went to accept my diploma at commencement, the whole Black section gave me a standing ovation. My Chinese parents couldn't figure out why I was cheered by the Black students.

After Wabash I spent 10 years with the Navy both as an active and reserve officer.



Kai Chin, far left, meets with generals of North Korea. Kai supplied the photo.

The Navy would not have been possible if my pledge brother Alex Miller had not encouraged me to apply for the Reserve Officer Candidate Program. After graduating from Navy OCS, Alex and I were sent to the Defense Language School in Monterey, California to learn Russian for Alex and Mandarin for me. Our pledge brother Steve Wildman who was in the army joined us at the Defense Language School to learn Hungarian.

I was later stationed in South Korea as Deputy Chief, Language Branch, United

Nations Command, Armistice Affairs Division. My job took me to meetings with senior North Koreans military officers and the Chinese's People Volunteer delegation at Panmunjom, Korea in the DMZ.

After the Navy, I enrolled at Columbia University, School of International Affairs, and Business School. While in grad school, I was invited to a Christmas party at the home of Alton Amsterdam, another Delt pledge brother. There I met a senior international banker from Chemical Bank who encouraged me with my international background to join Chemical Bank, a/k/a JP Morgan Chase. It was this occasion made possible by the invite of Alton that I decided to make international banking my career.

During my banking career, my family and I lived in South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. When I returned to the U.S. I worked at the Bank of Hawaii in Honolulu and later at Wells Fargo and Sun Flower Bank in Colorado. I am retired, but I have been on various non-profit boards such as the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, South Kent School, an Aerial Dance School, and member of the University of Colorado Selection Panel for the Presidential Leadership program. I also serve as a director on a couple of engineering and construction companies to keep busy.

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In summary, Wabash gave me the tools and proper education to be happy and successful. Somehow, I think my path to Wabash was pre-destined. Wabash being an all-male school also propelled me into the search for female companionship. I attribute my happy marriage of over 51 years to my wife Charlotte to Wabash. To this day, I don't know if Charlotte would have married me if I wasn't a Wally Wabash.

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I'm Charlotte Chin, wife of Kai Chin, Delta Tau Delta, class of 1971. I was always a Wabash wannabe. But it was the wrong time. I was the wrong gender. I probably spent as much time in C'ville as I did in Bloomington where I paid my tuition. My parents would have been appalled to know how much time I spent in Crawfordsville, but that's another story.

Luckily I was dating a Wabash student who fell in love with Wabash from the first moment he set foot on its campus. For the four years we were both in school, he enthusiastically shared with me all things Wabash that he experienced from growing pains from living in a fraternity with some amazing guys to academic triumphs and failures (Bio 101 twice!) I happily watched from the sidelines and felt in many ways Wabash was mine, too.

In a speech to welcome incoming freshmen one year, the Wabash president, I think he was Pat White, talked about the "gifts " that Wabash gives to those lucky enough to attend this venerable institution. He discussed three that I distinctly recall.

The First Gift is a world-class high-quality education. What other school flies in a professor just to teach one student who wants to learn one obscure language(—think Swahili)??? I do not exaggerate.

Besides overcoming the challenging academics, Wabash men graduate acquiring what I call the 3 Cs—confidence, competence, and comfort—that rare quality of being very comfortable in their own skins because amidst all the studying, (for some not all), fraternity pranks, and partying, Wabash also allows her students to discover who they really are. And the best part is that after graduation they go forth and do good things, BIG things that leave the planet a better place than when they found it. They become leaders in their communities—"teachers of the year" in their chosen areas, union leaders, world renown professors, lawyers, distinguished doctors, innovative engineers, optometrists, international bankers, real estate moguls, even Navy admirals. (You know who you are.) That's a gift!

Second Gift—remember how people say you can't go home again? Well in reality that's not quite true. Every time we attend one of the alumni reunions Mother Wabash welcomes her alumni with open arms and for just a few days they are allowed to be 19 or 20 years old again and have the privilege of walking down Memory Lane to their hearts' content. Now that's a unique precious gift!



Charlotte Chin at the class's 40th reunion in 11. She wrote her speech to be said at the 50th but did not deliver it then.

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The last and Third Gift is to me the biggie—the mother lode: the Wabash experience gives lifelong friends! I married the Wabash student and love of my life whom I had dated for four years. He became an international banker. Because of his work we were fortunate enough to live in five Asian countries over a span of 30 plus years. (Yes time flies when you are having fun!)

In the course of this time overseas we met some really wonderful talented good people—colleagues who became dear friends, etc. BUT in all honesty at the end of the day when all is said and done, the folks who put a spring in my husband's step, a grin on his face, and makes his heart sing are his Delt PBs and other Wabash friends. These are the people he grew up with (and in a very real sense, me, too!) laughed with, cried with, got stupid with etc etc. Here's the kicker—they all know each other's worst faults, quirks and foibles and they STILL like each other!! Go figure. I'm just saying....but that's the best Gift! ◦

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Steve is now retired, formerly a co-founder and Director of Research & Development for of DeepSpace Industries, an asteroid mining company.

8, 07, reports an "amazing coincidence" involving the Class of 1971 over the past year. "I joined a club called DACOR here in Washington, D.C., which is for retired foreign service folks and includes in its membership those with significant international work experience like me. I was recommended by a good friend and neighbor who was with State. Well, the treasurer of the organization is Dick Morford, long-time State Dept. and member of our class!"

Information Science in Bloomington. While working on his degree, he completed internships at historically-focused organizations, including the Carnegie Museum of Montgomery County, the Indiana State Archives, Indiana University Archives, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, and the Tippecanoe County (Indiana) Historical Association.

Before becoming Wabash’s Archivist, Nolan served as the Assistant Archivist at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana, and as the University Archivist and Head of Special Collections at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Louisiana.



Evan Miller, left, and Nolan Eller '11 pose in the Archives with some archives, including two items donated by men of the Class of 1971. The “71” numeral sweater was given by Tom Williams. The book with the Wabash College book jacket was donated to me. The book jacket appears to have originated from Perry’s book store, a family business related to classmate Tim Perry.

Evan Miller, Wabash’s new Digital Archivist, came to Wabash in 2022. Among other responsibilities, he develops and curates the Archives’ digital collections and exhibits. Evan hails from Montgomery County and graduated from Hanover College in 2017 with a major in Computer Science and minors in Art and Design. In 2019, he earned a Masters in History and an MLIS at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. He has worked at several Indiana-centric archives, museums, and cultural heritage organizations including the Hanover College Archives and the Butler University Archives.

Nolan and Evan both hold associated faculty status. In a later class agent letter, I will discuss the educational benefit they provide to students and professors.

The Archives consist of tangible items such as the letter sweater of Tom Williams '71, the portrait of Thad Seymour that Andy Dziubinskyj '71 painted when he was a student, and the life-size stand-up cardboard of Dean Moore from our 40th reunion.

While such items as those are fantastic, the Archives is not limited to physical materials. Nolan and Evan are building upon the College’s digital collections and are actively working to expand access to the amazing collections of the archival center. So, the gentlemen of the Class of 1971, sitting in their lounge chairs with a laptop, can read the *Bachelors* starting from 1908, yearbooks from 1881-1929 (with more going up weekly), the scrapbook and letters of our founder Edmund Hovey, Wabash College Black Oral History Project (including interviews from Keith Nelson '71 and Anthony Partee '71), lots of photos, and other things.

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Thanks to classmates, spouses, and widows who have donated so far in the new fiscal year through December 6. Last year, the Class of 1971 was slightly higher than 43% of our solicitable role for the entire fiscal year.

When we donate, we say "thanks" for our own good fortune, for our great Wabash professors, and our Wabash friendships. If you are reading this letter, you care about Wabash. Thanks for caring.

Please donate to the college by mailing a check to Wabash College, Annual Giving, P.O. Box 352, Crawfordsville, IN 47933 or by contributing online at wabash.edu/egift, or by calling the college at 877-743-4545.



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Thanks for reading *Pactoracles*. It is my honor and responsibility to serve the Class of 1971. Please contact me with news, comments, or questions.

Your Brother In Wabash,

Jon Pactor '71
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