

AGENCY NAME:	Winthrop University		
AGENCY CODE:	H470	SECTION:	021

AGENCY'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Excel, the first pillar of Winthrop University's strategic plan, *United in Excellence*, focuses on recognizing Winthrop's unique distinctiveness; broadening regional presence; elevating institutional prominence; and establishing prestigious institutes of excellence.

Winthrop University retained its highest ranking in [2025 US News Best Colleges](#) for the second year in a row. Winthrop ranks as one of the top five institutions among public universities in the South. Winthrop also remains a top university in the South for veterans, social mobility and affordability.

The [ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge](#) recognized Winthrop University for its nonpartisan democratic engagement efforts that fostered high levels of student engagement in the 2022 midterm elections. The university received the Silver Award, reflecting its commitment to ensuring that nonpartisan democratic engagement is a defining feature of campus life.

Winthrop University has added [research](#) to its Carnegie Classification. Winthrop was placed in the third level of the classification, meaning in a single year it had at least \$2.5 million in research and development. Winthrop's research offerings are available to all students who conduct important and impressive research alongside faculty and staff.

The South Carolina Historic Preservation Office presented Winthrop University with the [2025 Stewardship Award](#) for the renovation of the university's historic Byrnes Auditorium. Byrnes was built in 1939 and is among four campus buildings erected with Works Project Administration funds and state money. Byrnes houses the David Bancroft Johnson Memorial Organ, which has more than 5,000 pipes in 78 ranks and is one of the largest and finest instruments in the South.

Winthrop University has been designated a [voter friendly campus](#) by NASPA and Campus Vote Project. The initiative recognizes institutions that planned and implemented practices that encouraged their students to register and vote.

Educate, the second pillar of Winthrop University's strategic plan, *United in Excellence*, focuses on advancing comprehensive student intellectual development; providing high quality academic advising and mentoring; innovating forward-looking academic programs; re-envisioning the general education curriculum; and ensuring timely degree attainment.

Winthrop University launched a new Competency-Based Education (CBE) modality, entitled [Elevate](#). Elevate allows students to advance through their coursework based on the ability to master a skill or competence at their own pace. Winthrop Elevate aligns with best practice for serving professionals, adult learners, military and veterans.

Beginning in Fall 2025, [Winthrop University](#) will offer its first doctoral degree, an Ed.D. in Leadership and Innovation. In addition to the doctoral degree, Winthrop will also offer two new undergraduate degrees: the BS in Artificial Intelligence, in which graduates will be able to develop artificially intelligent systems to solve a wide range of problems, and the BS in Financial Technology, designed to build on traditional finance topics and equip students with knowledge of data-driven financial modeling and fintech tools.

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[Winthrop University and Central Piedmont Community College](#) have partnered together to ensure that students across the region will have access to a high-quality education. The partnership will guarantee in-state tuition and eligibility for university academic scholarships for Central Piedmont students who transfer to Winthrop. The partnership will offer nearly 40 degree pathways for students who are seeking a bachelor's degree.

[Dr. Kent Miller](#), assistant professor in the College of Business and Technology, was named one of four finalists in the Charles M. Hewitt Master Teacher Competition. The competition highlights the best classroom teaching, particularly the incorporation of new or evolving course subject matter, cultural contexts, pedagogy and technology, with the goal of deeper engagement with students.

Winthrop University and Spartanburg Community College announced a [partnership](#) that will help students transition from Spartanburg Community College to Winthrop. The guided meta-majors allows students to complete both their associate and bachelor's degrees efficiently.

Enrich, the third pillar of Winthrop University's strategic plan, *United in Excellence*, focuses on elevating the campus life experience; expanding experiential learning opportunities; boosting student retention and graduation rates; and elevating student well-being and the residential experience.

[The National Science Foundation](#) awarded Winthrop University a \$2 million grant to pay for scholarships for 30 students majoring in chemistry, computer science, or mathematics. The initiative, called the TIPS Scholars Program, supports degree completion of high-achieving undergraduates from low-income backgrounds.

Winthrop University and the [Post and Courier](#) are partnering to build a pipeline of journalists for South Carolina. The partnership will enable mass communication majors and other students to work internships with professionals in the field while remaining on campus. Up to six interns will gain experience in news writing, marketing, and advertising.

[Dr. Daniel Stovall](#), associate professor of biology, was awarded an \$800,000 federal grant from the Support for Research Excellence First Independent Research (SuRE-First) from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. He and his students will use the grant to study how a particular protein is involved in driving aggressive brain cancers.

Eight Winthrop University students with disabilities participated in the inaugural [Workforce Recruitment Program](#), which connects federal and select private-sector employers with college students, graduate students, and recent graduates with disabilities. The students received access to federal and private sector internships and job opportunities.

[The Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate](#) (CPED) invited Winthrop University to its growing consortium of colleges and universities dedicated to transforming the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree by working to redesign professional practice preparation in education.

Winthrop entered into a ten-year lease with The Thread to develop [The J. Robert Bazemore Design Center](#), a newly developed 5,000-square-foot space for interior design students, which features five modern classrooms fully equipped with advanced technology to foster creativity and collaboration.

Winthrop University's [esports teams](#) captured four national titles in two months. Winthrop also received the Collegiate Esports Commissioners Cup (CECC) School of the Year Award.

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During its inaugural season, Winthrop University's [cornhole team](#) achieved the pinnacle of the sport by winning two coveted national titles. Rock Hill is the home of the American Cornhole League headquarters, and the Rock Hill Sports and Event Center routinely hosts regional, national or world championships.

Engage, the fourth pillar of Winthrop University's strategic plan, *United in Excellence*, focuses on cultivating alumni for life; fostering strategic alliances and corporate partnerships; Winthrop's becoming the epicenter of community engagement and development; and bolstering fundraising for future growth.

[The Winthrop Fund](#) saw a 15% increase in dollars raised during the 2024 fiscal year. The Winthrop Fund consists of unrestricted gifts that offer immediate support to students and the university. The fund allows the university to address the areas of greatest need. Winthrop also saw an increase in donor retention from 51% to 56% in 2024, which is the highest since 2017.

Winthrop University's Richard W. Riley College of Education, Sport, and Human Sciences, WinthropLIFE, and special education programs partnered with Impact Church to host a ["Night to Shine"](#), a dance for individuals with disabilities age 14+. Parents and caregivers were also treated to a fun evening of respite at Knowledge Perk.

All 23 students in [WinthropLIFE](#), a two-year and four-year program for adults with intellectual disabilities, worked in local businesses. The city of Rock Hill and Winthrop partnered to support these students in their employment. Students worked in flower shops, grocery stores, landscaping companies, offices, bookstores, hotels, and retirement homes in the community.

The South Carolina Association of Certified Public Accountants (SCACPA), the South Carolina Association of Certified Public Accountants Educational Fund, BNA CPAs, and Winthrop University's College of Business and Technology teamed up to offer a [dual credit accounting program](#) serving high school students from the Fort Mill School District (FMSD).

Winthrop University honored [five accomplished alumni](#) for their service and professional achievements. Glenda Pittman Owens '59 and J. Edward Lee '83, respectively, received the Mary Mildred Sullivan Award and the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award, both of which recognizes alumna/us for selfless dedication of time, energy and talent in service to others. The Alumni Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes alumna/us who significantly contributes to the quality of life in his or her community, the development of values and moral within others, and serves as an outstanding citizen, was presented to Erin Duffy Patel '07, '09. The Alumni Professional Achievement Award, which recognizes alumna/us who have made significant contributions to her or his professional field while exemplifying high moral and business ethics, was presented to The Honorable DeAndrea Gist Benjamin '94. The Outstanding Young Alumni Award, recognizing alumna/us age 35 or younger whose service to the university and the community and professional achievements have reflected positively on all alumni and the university, was awarded to Jeff Robinson '14, '20.

With support from a \$6 million grant from the US Department of Education, Winthrop University's College of Education, Sport, and Human Sciences partnered with Clemson University, Columbia College, the University of South Carolina, and SC's Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) on a five-year project called [SC RISE](#) (South Carolina Residencies Impacting Schoolwide Equity) to create a model for year-long teaching residencies in an effort to recruit and retain aspiring teachers.

Winthrop University's [Macfeat Early Childhood Laboratory School](#) was selected as a Grow Outdoors South Carolina 2025 site, which is a joint initiative of the SC Department of Social Services and SC Department of Public Health. The designation comes with professional landscape design and planning assistance from the National

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Wildlife Federation's Early Childhood Health Outdoors (ECHO) initiative to rework the Macfeat playground into a naturalized outdoor play and learning environment.

[Winthrop Elevate](#), South Carolina's first competency-based education (CBE) program for working adults, has signed its first industry partnership with Rock Hill's Affinity Health Center. This three-year partnership will allow Affinity Health Center's employees and their family members to pursue a degree at their own pace and in their own timeframe.

Teams from Winthrop University competed in the [Employer Provided Innovation Challenge \(EPIC\)](#), a collaborative initiative designed to empower students to solve real-world business challenges. The challenge, sponsored by York County Natural Gas Authority in partnership with the York County Regional Chamber and Winthrop, tasked students with answering a complex question: "How can a natural gas company effectively promote its environmental benefits to their customers while addressing common misconceptions about natural gas?"

Dr. Edward Lee '83, History Professor, was awarded the [Order of the Palmetto](#), based on his lifetime achievements as a professor, historian, and government official. The award is South Carolina's highest civilian honor and recognizes lifetime achievements and contributions that have significantly benefited the state.

Winthrop University hosted the [26th Annual United States Disc Golf Championship](#) (USDGC) in October. The championship brought more than 100 players to Rock Hill, with thousands more in attendance and another 200,000+ watching the livestream.

Enhance, the fifth pillar of Winthrop University's strategic plan, *United in Excellence*, focuses on ensuring financial resilience; developing a next-gen campus; fostering a collective excellence; and forging strategic public-private partnerships.

Winthrop University Athletics and [Founders Federal Credit Union](#) have expanded their partnership with a \$1.5 million investment over five years. The Founders investment allows for the opportunity to enhance athletic facilities, the Coliseum, and to support student-athletes.

Winthrop University's Board of Trustees have approved [projects](#) to improve campus facilities. Joynes Hall's mechanical system will be removed and replaced by Climate Control Systems Inc. The project will replace the mechanical room and the first and second floor fan-coil units. Also approved is a project to replace the underground steam and condensate lines between Byrnes Auditorium and Joynes Hall.

Winthrop University and the Rock Hill Economic Development Corporation partnered to launch [Student-Made Rock Hill](#). The partnership supports and engages student-creators and small business owners at the university by allowing students to take advantage of the small business resources provided by the Rock Hill Economic Development Corporation (RHEDC) and includes online sales and the sale of student items at the Hickory Post in downtown Rock Hill.

Winthrop University's Board of Trustees, in alignment with the university's strategic plan initiatives, approved an overhaul to how the institution presents and charges its [tuition and fees](#). The Board agreed to a tiered approach to 2025-26 tuition, which will be charged on a per credit hour basis. The decision reflects a new and more transparent approach to help students and their families better understand the charges they encounter as they pursue their degree.

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At their June meeting, [Winthrop University Board of Trustees](#) approved a \$158.7 million operating budget for the fiscal year 2025-2026. The balanced budget is based on anticipated revenues and budgeted expenses.