



August 2026

CONVOCATION

[Convocation Officially Ushers in 141st Academic Year](#)



More than 1,300 freshmen and new transfer students were officially welcomed into the Winthrop family during the Aug. 24 Convocation ceremony that was held in Byrnes Auditorium. The annual ceremony serves as the kick off to the academic year. Attendees received words of welcome from university and student leaders, and participated in "Lighting the Winthrop Way." Each person lit a battery operated candle to symbolize the light of learning, shared values, and the connection between past, present and future members of the Winthrop community. After the ceremony, President Edward Serna '02 and First Lady Lauren Serna led the Blue Line procession

past Joynes Hall and the main entrance sign to the Kinard lawn where a picnic lunch was enjoyed. [View photos](#) from the special day!

STRATEGIC PLAN

[Completed Initiatives Underscore Progress and Successes](#)



Winthrop wrapped up its 2025-26 [Winthrop: United in Excellence strategic plan](#) initiatives this summer. Nine initiatives were identified last year to support academic program innovation, student success and enrichment, enrollment growth, alumni engagement, professional development and employee satisfaction, and campus space optimization. The next set of strategic plan initiatives will be shared with the campus and community in the coming weeks.

PARTNERSHIPS

[Rock Hill Symphony Moves to Byrnes for Upcoming Season](#)



Over many decades, scores of prominent musicians have performed at Byrnes Auditorium. The [Rock Hill Symphony](#) will join the list of Byrnes performers this fall when the orchestra opens its ninth season. Led by musical director and conductor Christopher James Lees, the 65-member Rock Hill orchestra plans [five concerts in the next year in Byrnes](#), which reopened last spring after extensive renovations.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

[Lewis Named VP for Finance and Business Affairs/CFO](#)



Jennifer (Jenni) Lewis has been named vice president for finance and business affairs/CFO, effective Oct. 1. The role is a promotion from her previous position as the university's associate vice president for fiscal services/controller. As associate

vice president, Lewis oversaw nearly 25 employees who work in budget services, student financial services and cashiers, procurement and insurance, accounts payable, accounting services and payroll. Lewis joined Winthrop in 2024.

HOMECOMING T-SHIRT

[Order Your 2026 Homecoming T-Shirt by Sept. 18](#)



Purchase your [2026 Homecoming T-shirt](#) through Friday, Sept. 18. Homecoming T-shirts are \$25, which includes shipping. T-shirts will be shipped to the address indicated on the order by Friday, Oct. 2. The shirts are adult unisex Gildan - SoftStyle™, 100% ring-spun cotton. The Homecoming graphic will be printed on the front of a heather navy T-shirt. Learn more about how the [T-shirt design pays homage to Winthrop's first mascot!](#)

HOMECOMING TAILGATE

[Purchase Your Homecoming Tailgate Spot Beginning Sept. 10](#)



Homecoming tailgate reservations will be available for purchase starting Sept. 10 at 10 a.m. [here](#). If you would like to tailgate using tents ahead of the Nov. 14 women's and men's basketball games you will need to purchase a 30'x40' tailgate spot for a \$100 nonrefundable fee. This fee includes one parking pass (a \$20 value). Tailgating will be available from 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. on Nov. 14. Purchase for the tailgating spots will be on a first come, first served basis. Those who have purchased a tailgate spot will have the opportunity to set up their tailgate on Friday, Nov. 13, from 4-8 p.m. [View the map of tailgating areas](#) and [purchase your spot](#) starting Sept. 10 at 10 a.m. For more information on Homecoming, including answers to FAQs, please visit the [Homecoming website](#).

WINTHROP MAGAZINE

[Read the Latest Edition of the Winthrop Magazine](#)



In case you missed it earlier this summer, take a few minutes to read the latest edition of the [Winthrop Magazine](#). In it you'll find a feature on the Center for Career Development and Internships, a look at Macfeat Early Childhood Laboratory School's 130th anniversary celebration, compelling features on James Kevin Gray '99, Aaron Fountain '14 and Norah Mendoza '20, and the latest campus happenings, alumni news and giving updates.

[A Message from the Alumni Director](#)



We have officially kicked off the fall semester, and our newest students have participated in their first traditions - Convocation and the Blue Line! Each new student received a copy of the Garnet & Gold book that outlines our treasured traditions, history and other important information. Take a look at the [Garnet & Gold book](#) and reminisce about your Winthrop experience! Our events calendar is starting to show a busy fall ahead of us. We have Flight Paths with the Provost in Charleston, Welcome to the City: Orlando, Ring Days, Ghost Tours and Homecoming and Reunion to just name a few! I hope to see you at some of our events! Check out

our [upcoming events calendar](#) to see what's coming up next!

The mission of the Alumni Association is to honor the traditions and values of Winthrop University through the engagement of alumni worldwide.

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