

June 2026

STATE CHORAL ANTHEM

[S.C. Adopts Choral Anthem Written by Alumnus James Kevin Gray](#)



James Kevin Gray '99 received news last month that he had been waiting on for years. The song, “While I Breathe, I Hope,” that he wrote more than a decade ago, was voted on by the S.C. General Assembly as the state’s official choral anthem. [Listen to the official choral anthem here](#). Gray shared the anthem publicly for several years through local performances and online recordings. The first of the recordings was by Jay Forrest '87, '90, and his choir, the Clover High School Choraliers. [Read more](#) about how Gray wrote the song, how he envisions it being used and his new job in France.

INSTITUTIONAL NEWS

[Winthrop Inspire Soccer Team Forming for Intellectually Impaired](#)



Winthrop will join the Inspire Soccer League, the first nationwide, year-long competitive soccer league tailored for individuals with intellectual impairment. The initiative is drawing together former Eagle soccer players, alumni and coaches to make the program successful as the league's first inaugural collegiate team. The co-founder of the Inspire Soccer League is Nil Vinyals '18. To kick off the training sessions, there will be an event on June 29 at 6 p.m. at Rock Hill's Miracle Park. Families can learn more about the team and meet those involved.

COMMENCEMENT

[Octogenarian Completes Degree After 20 Years of Classes](#)



Jocelyn Sturgeon Davis, one of Winthrop's oldest graduates at 86, received a standing ovation as she walked across the Coliseum stage during the May 9 Commencement ceremony. After taking classes for 20 years, Davis earned an English degree all while demonstrating her perseverance, intellectual curiosity and a sincere joy for learning. Davis' achievement was [featured in The Post and Courier](#).

LEGACY PROGRAM

[Legacy Students Celebrated at Orientation](#)



This month, the Alumni Association welcomed legacy freshmen at Orientation sessions. A legacy student is a Winthrop undergraduate who is a child, grandchild, or sibling of a Winthrop alumnus. Legacies and their families were able to take fun photos at the photo booth during Orientation and will have additional special opportunities throughout the academic year. Learn more about the [Legacy Program](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

[Welcome to the City Events Coming to Charlotte and Columbia](#)



Calling all Charlotte and Columbia alumni! You are invited to welcome Winthrop's newest alumni, the Class of 2026, to your areas during two July events. Welcome to the City: Charlotte will take place on July 16, from 6-8 p.m., at [Dilworth Bar and Grille](#). Welcome to the City: Columbia happens on July 23, from 6-8 p.m., at [Savage Craft Ale Works](#). Light appetizers and beverages will be provided by the Alumni Association at both events. Come out to catch up with your alumni friends and to welcome the newest graduates to your area. [RSVP here](#).

UPCOMING EVENT

[Meet the Coaches, Charleston Eagle Fans!](#)

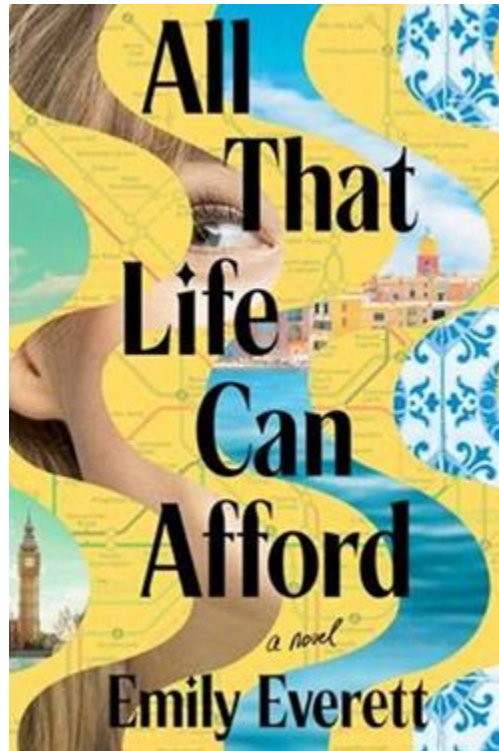


Winthrop coaches are hitting the road and visiting Charleston on July 22. Come out to [The Rutledge Room](#) to hear updates from head coaches [Kendall Fuller](#), Big South

Softball Coach of the Year; [Dale Parker](#), men's soccer; [Mark Prosser](#), Big South Men's Basketball Co-Coach of the Year; and [Semeka Randall Lay](#), women's basketball. Submit your questions for the coaches to alumni@winthrop.edu and register to attend [here](#) by Friday, July 17.

ALUMNI BOOK CLUB

["All That Life Can Afford" Is Latest Book Club Selection](#)



The third book for the 2026 Virtual Alumni Book Club is "All That Life Can Afford" by Emily Everett. The book is a taut and lyrical coming-of-age debut about a young American woman navigating class, lies and love amid London's jet-set elite. The reading period is through July 24. [Read a summary and reviews](#) for it. Everett will hold a live author talk on July 16 at 6 p.m. via Zoom. [Register](#) for the author talk. [Join the free Virtual Alumni Book Club.](#)

[A Message from the Alumni Director](#)



We loved welcoming the newest cohort of legacy students to Winthrop during Family Orientation! The energy and excitement surrounding these Orientations have all of us excited to officially welcome our newest students at the Aug. 24 Convocation ceremony. The event will kick off a busy and fun fall semester filled with Ring Days, alumni networking opportunities, and Homecoming and Reunion! We can't wait to see you at some of these upcoming 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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MORGAN-HOLCOMBE ALUMNI CENTER
The Stewart House, Rock Hill, SC 29733
803/323-2145
www.winthrop.edu/alumni



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701 Oakland Ave Rock Hill, SC 29733

