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Boyte to Speak on Community Grassroots Activism at Inaugural West Forum Lecture

Quick Facts

- Harry Boyte will deliver the inaugural West Forum lecture on Feb. 5.
- Organizers hope to build on election momentum to engage young voters in the political process.



Harry Boyte

ROCK HILL, S.C. - Winthrop will host the inaugural **John C. West Forum on Politics and Policy** lecture featuring **Harry Boyte** on Feb. 5.

Boyte, a senior fellow and co-director of the **Center for Democracy and Citizenship** at the **University of Minnesota**, will speak about community grassroots activism during a 7 p.m. lecture in McBryde Hall. The event is free and open to the public.

Boyte has been an architect of the center's "public work" approach to civic engagement and democracy promotion, a conceptual framework on citizenship that has gained world-wide recognition for its theoretical innovations and its practical effectiveness.

Since coming to the **Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs** in 1987, Boyte has worked with a variety of partners nationally and internationally on community development, citizenship education and civic renewal. For several months each year, Boyte resides in South Africa, where he works with colleagues to analyze models of citizen democracy across Africa.

He also served as national coordinator of New Citizenship from 1993-95, a broad nonpartisan effort to bridge the citizen-government gap. He presented the group's findings to President Clinton, Vice President Gore and other administration leaders at a 1995 Camp David seminar on the future of democracy, a presentation which helped shape Clinton's "New Covenant" State of the Union that year.

In the 1960s, Boyte worked for Martin Luther King Jr., as a field secretary with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the southern civil rights movement.

The West Forum moved to Winthrop this fall from the University of South Carolina following the retirement of USC Professor Blease Graham.

Karen Kedrowski, chair of Winthrop's **Department of Political Science**, noted that the excitement generated among young voters by the 2008 presidential campaign shows that many 20-somethings are eager to be involved in public affairs. Kedrowski said Boyte's visit will help build on this momentum by demonstrating the many ways in which citizens can become involved in the political process.

Other activities by the **West Forum** include an internship for a student to learn public policy, maintenance of a Web site and sponsorship of programs in March on women in politics, and in April on political parties. Programming will continue this fall and include the university's commemoration of Constitution Day in September.

Helping set up the forum is senior political science major **Colleen Forsythe**, who coordinated

students to move West's memorabilia at USC to a showroom in the Bancroft Annex. The belongings from West, who served in the State Senate for 12 years, as lieutenant governor, governor and as the U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia for four years, includes his Senate desk, awards, photographs and tapes. The West Foundation created the forum in 2002 as a way to honor former Gov. John West, husband of alumna Lois Rhame West '43, for whom Winthrop's state-of-the-art health and wellness center is named.

Meanwhile, **Cali Sandel**, a political science major from Lexington, S.C., will begin work this semester for the town of Fort Mill to learn about city administration and planning.

For more information, contact Kedrowski at 803/323-4662.

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