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Winthrop University

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## NCAA Selects Winthrop Team to Present on Successful Diversity Initiatives

January 24, 2019

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The NCAA's Pledge and Commitment to Promoting Diversity and Gender Equity, also known as The Presidential Pledge, launched in September 2016 to spotlight NCAA leaders' commitment to diversity and inclusion initiatives in intercollegiate athletics.
- Winthrop's interactive session introduced attendees to practical resources and strategic programs and initiatives to actualize diversity, equity and inclusion on their campuses and in their conferences.

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – The [National Collegiate Athletic Association \(NCAA\)](#) recently selected Winthrop University as a case study in how to effectively diversify a university athletics department.

[Winthrop President Dan Mahony](#), Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics and Athletics Director [Ken Halpin](#) and Senior Associate Athletic Director for Internal Operations, Chief Operating Officer and Senior Woman Administrator [Renaë Myles](#) were invited by Katrice Albert, the NCAA's executive vice president of inclusion and human resources, to present at a Jan. 23 NCAA Convention workshop, held in Orlando, Florida, entitled "**Presidential Pledge: From Commitment to Action.**"

"We were honored to be invited by the NCAA to discuss how we have successfully become a more diverse campus and athletics department, an initiative that was a high priority for Ken and me," said Mahony, who, since joining Winthrop in 2015, has been a champion of Winthrop's diversity and inclusion efforts. "To have the NCAA recognize our success and to use us as an exemplary case study is flattering, but we were more excited to use the opportunity as a means to share our success and the initiatives that got us there with our peers and colleagues, so that they too can effectively diversify their campuses and athletics departments."

The NCAA takes seriously its commitment to diversity. Its **Pledge and Commitment to Promoting Diversity and Gender Equity**, also known as The Presidential Pledge, launched in September 2016 to spotlight NCAA leaders' commitment to diversity and inclusion initiatives in intercollegiate athletics.

"We were very grateful to have our colleagues from Winthrop University join us for our NCAA Convention session discussing diversity and inclusion in talent management. Winthrop's efforts and success in having impact and tangible results in diversity and inclusion are exemplary and show the importance of presidential leadership in this work," said Sonja Robinson, the NCAA's director of inclusion.

Winthrop's interactive session introduced attendees to practical resources and strategic programs and initiatives to actualize diversity, equity and inclusion on their campuses and in their conferences. Attendees learned how Winthrop has supported and increased its hiring of ethnic and racial minorities and women.

"Our athletic department's vision is to be the model Division I athletic department. So presenting a very practical process to our NCAA colleagues as to how we embrace diversity and inclusion in our hiring practices at Winthrop, is in part, our vision being realized," said Myles, who joined the athletics department in 2016.

The university's commitment to hiring a diverse workforce is detailed in section 3.1 of the [Winthrop Plan](#), the university's strategic plan through 2025. The goal aims to attract and retain high quality and diverse faculty, staff and administrators. At the NCAA Convention, Mahony shared Winthrop's success in achieving its goals outlined in the plan.

"A little over two years ago the university set target and stretch target goals for the percentage of our faculty/managerial staff who are African American, Latin American, Native American, Asian or International from a baseline of 14 percent," Mahony said. "I'm proud to say that the university has already exceeded our 2025 stretch target goal of 20 percent, and we are currently at 21 percent."

Halpin outlined the athletics department's commitment to creating an environment that promotes inclusive excellence in its "[Drive to '25' strategic plan](#). The department is aiming to increase ethnic and gender diversity of staff and coaches, and he highlighted the success they have had in the presentation at the convention.

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