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## Winthrop Leadership Society Creates New Wave of Donors, Sparks Giving Challenge

February 12, 2019

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Winthrop Leadership Society recognizes donors who pledge to make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to Winthrop over a five-year period.
- The \$100K challenge will encourage Winthrop Leadership Society membership growth
- A Winthrop Leadership Society member reception will be held Feb. 14.



ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – A new fundraising initiative is drawing praise for helping Winthrop University already surpass its 2025 annual giving goal.

Last month, Winthrop announced that in 2018 it had raised \$714,212 for the Winthrop Fund through the generosity of donors and, in doing so, surpassed one of the major 2025 fiscal goals of the university's strategic plan, the [Winthrop Plan](#).

A key strategy in the Winthrop Plan is to develop and implement innovative approaches to fundraising. One of the newest donor initiatives is the Winthrop Leadership Society, which recognizes contributors who pledge to make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to Winthrop over a five-year period. Eighty charter members of the leadership society have already pledged nearly \$1 million to support the Winthrop Fund and university-wide programs and initiatives over the next five years.

Alumni and Winthrop Leadership Society members like Tim '83 and Jewel '84 Hopkins of Lugoff, South Carolina, are dedicated to building a culture of giving that carries on the university's legacy for future generations.

"Jewel and I give because we believed in the Winthrop of yesterday; are fond of the Winthrop of today; and very excited over the possibilities of the Winthrop of tomorrow," Tim Hopkins said.

In an exciting twist, a new giving challenge will enhance the membership momentum. Under the \$100K challenge, for every donor who becomes a member of the Winthrop Leadership Society in 2019, an anonymous donor will match dollar for dollar the pledge amount designated to the Winthrop Fund, up to \$100,000.

For example:

If you become a Winthrop Leadership Society charter member in 2019 and pledge \$2,500/year to the Winthrop Fund, your \$2,500 pledge is worth \$5,000 to Winthrop.

If you become a Winthrop Leadership Society charter member in 2019 and pledge \$1,250/year to the Winthrop Fund and \$1,250/year to a specific designation, the \$1,250 pledged to the Winthrop Fund is worth \$2,500 to Winthrop.

The Winthrop Leadership Society launched in November 2017 and allows donors the flexibility to direct their dollars to multiple designations – from university-wide initiatives to academic colleges and programs, student life programs, the Winthrop scholarship program and Athletics.

"We are so appreciative of our donors who have embraced the Winthrop Leadership Society and are leading by example through their full support of this initiative," said Evan Bohnen, vice president for university advancement. "Offering this \$100K challenge is yet another unique way that donors' gifts can be enhanced, and we're grateful for the anonymous donor who offered to match these gifts dollar for dollar."

For contributors like Chelsea Brown '14 of Baltimore, Maryland, the giving society is a way to ensure students have access to a unique educational experience and the resources to become future leaders. Brown was able to attend Winthrop through the help of donors' scholarship dollars.

"With the past support of individuals and donors like myself, I have had the opportunity to gain an exceptional education at Winthrop University ... I want to continue helping others to have that as well," she said. "My support can help fuel the next group of leaders and graduates."

Contributor Mary Burger '66 of Reston, Virginia, agrees that alumni must pay it forward. "I encourage all alumni to continue to lead by joining the Winthrop Leadership Society."

A Winthrop Leadership Society recognition reception will be held Thursday, Feb. 14, at 7 p.m. in Johnson Hall. Society members will then attend the theatre and dance department's production of "Annie Get Your Gun."

For more information about supporting students by becoming a charter member of the Winthrop Leadership Society, please contact [Vice President Evan Bohnen](#) or [Associate Vice President RJ Gimbl](#) with the [Division of University Advancement](#) at 803/323-2275 or toll-free 800/801-1083.

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