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Jayne Marie (Jamie) Comstock Named Winthrop's Tenth President

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Jayne Marie (Jamie) Comstock Named Winthrop's Tenth President

Quick Facts

- Former Butler University vice president will succeed President Anthony DiGiorgio this summer.
- The new president's state salary will be set by the S.C. Agency Head Salary Commission. The board has recommended a state salary of \$169,970.



Jayne Marie (Jamie) Comstock

ROCK HILL, S.C. -- **Dr. Jayne Marie (Jamie) Comstock** was chosen Friday by the [Winthrop University Board of Trustees](#) to become the 10th president of the 127-year-old Rock Hill institution.

Comstock, currently director of the Executive Leadership Group for the [American Council on Education](#) in Washington, D.C., is on sabbatical from [Butler University](#) in Indianapolis, where she was provost and vice president for academic affairs. Prior to her work at Butler, Comstock was the chief academic officer and professor of communication at [Millikin University](#) and [Baker University](#). She also held administrative and faculty posts at [Saint Louis University](#) and the [University of West Florida](#).

[Winthrop Board Chair Dalton Floyd](#) offered Comstock the new position via a mid-day call to her Washington, D.C., office. Floyd reported the just-concluded unanimous vote of the trustees, then added, "so I am now authorized to officially offer you the opportunity to become the next president of Winthrop University. Do you accept?"

The answer he received was "Yes. I am so very pleased to have been selected as the next president of Winthrop. I am also honored by the confidence the Board of Trustees has given me and the trust they have placed in me for the care and advancement of this wonderful university. I am absolutely convinced that building upon the great progress of President DiGiorgio, that the university can move to even greater accomplishments in the future. I look forward to working closely with the faculty, the students, the staff, the alumni, and the board as we move forward together. I have said it several times during the search and interview process, but I firmly believe it: The best is yet to come," said Comstock.

Comstock, 55, is expected to schedule a return trip to Rock Hill in the near future to formalize the agreement, once the [S.C. Agency Head Salary Commission](#) approves a salary for her. The board has recommended a state salary of \$169,970.

Comstock will succeed **Dr. Anthony DiGiorgio** when he retires from the presidency this summer after leading Winthrop for 24 years. DiGiorgio did not attend the meeting, indicating he felt it was a time for the focus to be solely on Winthrop's future.

"I am, of course, very pleased for Winthrop and congratulate the new president on being selected," **DiGiorgio** said in statement released after the board meeting.

"For [wife] Gale and me, there is a decided sense of relief now that this milestone has been reached," he added, noting that, "for the past 24 years, Winthrop has been our vocation as well as our avocation. It is the right time for us to chart new paths on both fronts. Winthrop's vision of distinction

and national recognition have been realized. Now, we look forward to the transition ahead and giving Winthrop the best possible launch on its next challenge: to achieve national prominence."

For Comstock, the selection means preparing for a family move to the on-campus **President's House** at the corner of Oakland and Stewart Avenues in Rock Hill.

In residence there with Comstock will be her husband, **Larry A. Williamson**, a retired U.S. Navy captain with extensive experience in higher education administration and faculty positions, and **Cocoa**, their 9-year-old Chesapeake retriever. The couple stayed in the **President's House** earlier this month during a three-day visit, making the rounds and talking with members of both the campus and Rock Hill communities.

Trustees said Comstock impressed them during that visit, as well as during additional private interviews, and through comments they received from a variety of people as they checked the candidate's references and reputation over the past several weeks.

"Dr. Comstock over time simply emerged from the process as the best all-around candidate," **Floyd** said. "We were told from the outset by our search consultant that Winthrop would be viewed as a tremendous opportunity for someone with presidential aspirations, and that is exactly how we arrived at this day. This is a good match for Winthrop and a good match for her."

Kathy Bigham, board vice chair, who led the **Search and Selection committee** that narrowed the field to four finalists, extended thanks all the candidates, faculty, staff, and students, as well as Rock Hill leaders who participated in a rapid series of finalists' visits.

"The deep caring for Winthrop was evident across the board," Bigham said. "As both an alumna and a trustee, that says a great deal to me about the value placed on both the leadership we've had, and the leadership expected in the future."

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