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Winthrop to Celebrate Contributions of Women During March 24-29 Inauguration Activities

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Winthrop to Celebrate Contributions of Women During March 24-29 Inauguration Activities

Quick Facts

- Lectures, exhibits and a visit by a prominent South African development consultant will show how women have influenced higher education, families, literature and politics.
- The events lead up to the March 28 Investiture Ceremony when Comstock will become the second woman to be inaugurated as Winthrop president.



President Comstock

ROCK HILL, S.C. – In honor of **National Women's History Month**, Winthrop University will celebrate the contributions of women during the March 24-29 Inauguration activities for 10th President Jamie Comstock.

Lectures, exhibits and a visit by a prominent South African development consultant will show how women have influenced higher education, families, literature and politics.

The events lead up to the **March 28 Investiture Ceremony** when Comstock will become the second woman to be inaugurated as Winthrop president. The 2-4 p.m. ceremony will be held in **Byrnes Auditorium**. Attending will be presidents and representatives from universities and colleges across the nation, state and local dignitaries, faculty, staff and students. Following the ceremony is a campuswide reception in the **West Center**.

With March designated as **National Women's History Month**, **President Comstock** said the university embraces preparing the next generation of female leaders for service and excellence. "Winthrop is committed to producing graduates who have developed the integrity that makes them stand out as leaders in their communities and in their chosen professions," **Comstock** said. "I am excited that my Inauguration can help showcase the important achievements and contributions to the world around us that have been provided by strong and courageous women."

One way Winthrop prepares future leaders is through the **women's studies program**. The program draws on feminist ideas and scholarship to develop historical, theoretical, and cross-cultural frameworks for the comparative study of women and gender. Winthrop has expanded the program to include gender studies, men's studies, gay/lesbian studies, third world feminisms, and a greater focus on the intersection of gender, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, and sexuality among other identities, subject positions, and systems of oppression, said **Jennifer Leigh Disney**, program director and chair of the **Department of Political Science**.

"I am thrilled that **President Comstock's Inauguration celebration and Investiture** will take place during **Women's History Month**. As soon as planning got underway I began working hard to coordinate events from the campus to the local and the global community that would do justice to such a special occasion as the Inauguration of Winthrop's 10th president and second woman president," **Disney** said.

Below are the women's studies-themed activities planned during Inauguration week:

• **Monday, March 24**

Lunch & Learn

Noon-12:50 p.m.

Dinkins Auditorium

Amy Gerald, associate professor of English, will discuss "**Forgotten Daughters of South Carolina: The Grimké Sisters, Abolition, Women's Rights, and Rhetoric.**" The sisters -- **Sarah and Angelina Grimké** -- were 19th-century abolitionist agents and early women's rights activists who delivered nearly 100 speeches on a tour of New England, wrote public letters arguing for the right to speak out against the injustice of slavery, and lent their voices to the influential **American Slavery As It Is** (1839). Yet in Charleston, S.C., where they were born and raised, there is almost no public acknowledgment of them or their work.

• **Tuesday, March 25**

S.C. Mother of the Year Award Archives Commemoration and Tea

2-3:30 p.m.

Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections

Archives Director Gina White and **Jennifer Leigh Disney**, director of the women's studies program, will give a presentation on the **S.C. Mother of the Year Award Oral History Project**. In addition, an exhibit on notable women represented in the recent book "**Seventy Years of Remarkable Women: South Carolina Mothers of the Year**" will also be on display. Records from the S.C. Mother of the Year Committee are housed in the Pettus Archives.

• **Diving for Pearls: A Thinking Journey with Hannah Arendt**

8-9 p.m.

Dina's Place, **DiGiorigo Campus Center**

This lecture by **Kathleen B. Jones**, feminist political theorist and author of books, essays, short fiction and plays, is sponsored by the **Women's Studies Program**, the **departments of Interdisciplinary Studies, English, Philosophy and Religious Studies, Sociology**, and the **Global Learning Initiative (GLI)**. Jones will discuss her new book: "**Diving for Pearls: A Thinking Journey with Hannah Arendt**" in which she integrates personal memoir with the life and philosophies of **Hannah Arendt**. Her presentation will focus on Arendt's notion of "the right to have rights" in which she will integrate excerpts from her book around Comstock's inaugural themes of global, civic and student engagement.

• **Wednesday, March 26**

Lunch & Learn

Noon-12:50 p.m.,

Dinkins Auditorium

Gregg Hecimovich, professor of English and chair of the **English Department**, will discuss how he and his students identified **Hannah Bond** as the true author of "**The Bondwoman's Narrative**," the first novel written by an African-American woman. The manuscript was purchased in 2001 by **Henry Louis Gates, Jr.**, professor of African-American literature and history at Harvard University, who initially sought to verify its authenticity. Hecimovich's research went farther and identified which former slave of a plantation in North Carolina was the author. His work has received national attention in scholarly and popular circles and publications, and he currently is writing a book, "**The Life and Times of Hannah Crafts**," that is expected to contribute significantly to the study of slave narratives and 19th century transatlantic studies.

• **Model United Nations XXXVIII**

6:30-10 p.m.

Tillman Auditorium

Naomi Tutu, third child of Archbishop Desmond and Nomalizo Leah Tutu, will deliver the Model U.N. keynote speech on global development. Ms. Tutu has served as a development consultant in West Africa, a program coordinator for race and gender and gender-based violence in education at the African Gender Institute at the University of Cape Town, and has worked with organizations such as the Spiritual Alliance to Stop Intimate Violence (SAIV) and the Foundation for Hospices in Sub-Saharan Africa (FHSSA). To date more than 2,000 Winthrop students and 10,000 high school students have participated in Winthrop's Model U.N., a three-day program that deepens participants' understanding of international politics. President Comstock will deliver greetings to Model U.N. participants as well.

• **Thursday, March 27**

Student Writing Workshop: Writing Personal Narrative and Storytelling

11 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

G-01 Owens Hall

Conducted by **Kathleen B. Jones**, feminist political theorist and author of books, essays, short fiction and plays, the workshop will focus on integrating personal narrative and storytelling into students'

writing. The event is sponsored by the **Women's Studies Program**, the **departments of Interdisciplinary Studies, English, Philosophy and Religious Studies, Sociology**, and the **Global Learning Initiative (GLI)**.

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or e-mail her at longshawj@winthrop.edu.

About Winthrop and the Inauguration of 10th President Jayne Marie Comstock

The March 24-29 Inauguration of Jayne Marie (Jamie) Comstock as Winthrop's 10th president signals a new era in the history of this top-ranked regional public comprehensive university. Comstock has charted a bold course for Winthrop's future, redefining public higher education by prioritizing both quality and access in a single institution. Serving more than 6,000 students, Winthrop blends liberal arts, professional programs, global understanding, and civic engagement in a diverse community of learners. Students leave Winthrop prepared for successful careers, engaged in a democratic society, responsive to local and global concerns, and grounded in values that give meaning to their lives. Comstock's vision for Winthrop will ensure that all students - regardless of demographic category or life experience - have access to an exceptional public higher education. Comporium is the proud presenting sponsor of Inauguration activities.

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