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## Winthrop Cited as a National Leader in Graduating Minority Students

Winthrop University

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# Winthrop Cited as a National Leader in Graduating Minority Students

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## Quick Facts

- The report, "A Look at Black Student Success: Identifying Top- and Bottom-Performing Institutions," found that Winthrop's black students graduated at an average rate of 56.2 percent during the 2012, 2013 and 2014 academic years. And the graduation rate of black students is 3.5 percentage points higher than Winthrop's graduation of white students.
- Winthrop President Dan Mahony said being included as a top-performing institution for black student success was affirming at a time when the university is focused on increasing overall student retention and graduation rates, including those of minority students.



Dan Mahony

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – For the second time in a decade, Winthrop University has been singled out in an [Education Trust national report](#) that identifies leading higher education institutions with high rates of graduation success among minority populations. Winthrop was #2 in a list of top-performing schools.

The report, "[A Look at Black Student Success: Identifying Top- and Bottom-Performing Institutions](#)," found that Winthrop's black students graduated at an average rate of 56.2 percent during the 2012, 2013 and 2014 academic years. And the graduation rate of black students is 3.5 percentage points higher than Winthrop's graduation of white students.

According to [Education Trust](#), the past decade has seen tremendous growth in black student enrollment. However, officials noted that only 41 percent of black students who start college as first-time, full-time freshmen earn a degree within six years — a rate that is 22 percentage points below that of their white peers.

[Winthrop President Dan Mahony](#) said being included as a top-performing institution for black student success was affirming at a time when the university is focused on increasing overall student retention and graduation rates, including those of minority students.

"When we announced our [Winthrop Plan](#) last fall, we made supporting inclusive excellence and increasing retention and graduation rates among our top priorities," he said. "The recognition from Education Trust is an affirmation of our efforts, and the Winthrop Plan will help us to build on this success."

Mahony credited Winthrop's [University College](#) as a major contributor in retention efforts with its oversight of several programs which encourage retention, including the [Academic Success Center](#) ([view success stories](#)). Faculty members also notify University College of students who are struggling academically early on and guide them into tutoring.

For this report, [Education Trust researchers](#) analyzed the success rates of 676 traditional public and private nonprofit colleges and universities that enroll nearly 60 percent of black first-time, full-time freshmen.

Education Trust officials said that [closing the national completion gap](#) between black and white students will require simultaneous work from the nation's higher education leaders on three fronts:

- Addressing inequities in completion within individual institutions;
- Changing enrollment patterns so selective institutions with higher graduation rates enroll more black students; and
- Improving completion rates at institutions where black students are more likely to attend.

“Where black students do and don’t enroll is key,” said **Andrew H. Nichols**, Ph.D., Education Trust’s director of higher education research and data analytics and lead author of the report. “To completely eradicate the completion gap and ensure more black students graduate, leaders at selective institutions need to enroll more black students who are clearly qualified. Data show over and over again that capable black students often go to colleges beneath their academic levels. This practice needs to stop.”

Winthrop, a public master’s institution that enrolls about 5,000 undergraduates, of which 30 percent are black, was cited as a leader in the 2010 Education Trust report, called “**Big Gaps, Small Gaps: Some Colleges and Universities Do Better Than Others in Graduating African-American Students.**”

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