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Donors Enhance Close Scholars Program

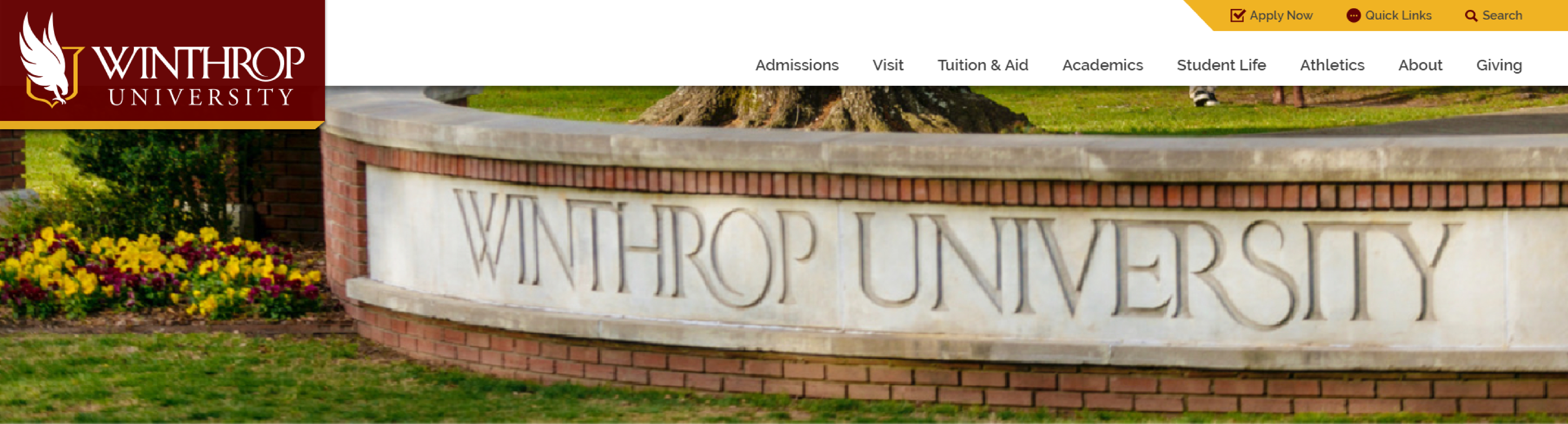
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Donors Enhance Close Scholars Program

April 18, 2019

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Close Scholars program will provide an additional \$5,000 per scholarship, per academic year to students
- The scholarship program will add a new study abroad component called Close Exploration



ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA - Winthrop has received two new pledges to enhance its longstanding **Close Scholars Program** in celebration of the program's 20th anniversary.

The **Springs Close Foundation's** Board of Directors increased the annual scholarship award to each student selected as a Close Scholar to \$5,000 per academic year, beginning in the 2019-20 academic year. Funds to implement a new study abroad component to the program also have been pledged.

"The Close Scholars program, one of our most prestigious scholarship offerings, aligns with Winthrop's emphasis on global and community engagement," said **Winthrop President Dan Mahony**. "We are thankful for the Close family's continued support to provide life-changing educational experiences for our students."

Derick Close, CEO, **Springs Creative** and president of the **Springsteen Foundation** has made a multi-year commitment to implement the new study abroad component, called

Close Exploration.

"It's truly impactful for students to go out there and see the real world during their college experience," Close told scholars during the annual senior sendoff picnic hosted April 14 by the Springs Close Foundation. Megan Baggarly, coordinator for the Close Scholars program, said additional support to the program also illustrates the university's commitment to investing in students who are civically engage beyond their undergraduate years.

"I am confident that the enhanced scholarship dollars and the study abroad cultural experience will make a lifetime impact on our current scholars and pave the way for future students in the Close Scholars program," Baggarly said.

The Springs Close Foundation established the Close Scholars program 20 years ago to combine community volunteer service along with a Winthrop education. As a Close Scholar, students volunteer **112** hours per semester with selected nonprofit and community agencies in York, Lancaster and Chester counties.

Through the Close Scholars program, students are prepared to become future leaders in their communities and further their civic engagement. Since inception, there are 81 Close Scholars alumni.

Through the Close Exploration component, students will have an opportunity to travel internationally and explore unique cultures up close and personal. **Close Scholar Jewel Edwards**, a freshman studying fine arts, is eager to immerse herself into a different world.

"I have always dreamed of traveling abroad. With this sponsorship, I will be able for the first time to travel beyond the United States to experience a once in a lifetime opportunity," she said. "As a future artist and art teacher, this cultural experience will further my professional growth and cultural development by learning different cultures, languages and environments."

Sophomore Justin Rose is invigorated by the new way the scholarship program is enabling students to learn more about the world around them.

"I am inspired and encouraged to know that the foundation believes enough in myself and others to increase the scholarship amount and also provide a cultural experience for the Close Scholars," said Rose, a business administration major.

Samantha McCall, a junior studying early childhood education, agrees the enhanced program "opens the doors for even more opportunities."

During the spring picnic, students shared their volunteer experiences throughout the scholars program and made a special presentation to **Anne Springs Close**, noted philanthropist and Close family matriarch.

For more information about The Close Scholars Program or how you can support the Winthrop scholarship program, 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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