



Summer 6-11-2009

Winthrop Awarded \$442,474 Federal Grant for Undergraduate Research

Winthrop University

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Winthrop University, "Winthrop Awarded \$442,474 Federal Grant for Undergraduate Research" (2009). *Winthrop News 2009*. 72. <https://digitalcommons.winthrop.edu/winthropnews2009/72>

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06/11/2009

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Winthrop Awarded \$442,474 Federal Grant for Undergraduate Research

Quick Facts

- The INBRE award marked the fifth consecutive year of funding for Winthrop.
- The grants have brought to Winthrop more than \$2.2 million in National Institutes of Health funding for biomedical science research.



Pat Owens

ROCK HILL, S.C. - The [National Institutes of Health](#) recently awarded Winthrop University a \$442,474 grant under the IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) program to expand its undergraduate research.

This INBRE award marked the fifth consecutive year of funding for Winthrop and completes South Carolina's five-year INBRE I program that began in 2005 and will end in spring 2010.

[Pat Owens](#), chair of the [Department of Chemistry, Physics and Geology](#), said the INBRE grant funds have resulted in greater numbers of Winthrop students heading to graduate biomedical science programs and allowed Winthrop science faculty members to be more competitive for other grants.

The five-year INBRE I program has brought to Winthrop more than \$2.2 million in National Institutes of Health funding for biomedical science research. More grants are anticipated, said Owens, as Winthrop and other South Carolina INBRE schools will submit more proposals in July. "Winthrop's INBRE program has been high acclaimed and very successful," he added.

In its 2008 report to the National Institutes of Health, South Carolina's INBRE External Advisory Committee noted that Winthrop University's INBRE program "should be the poster child for what INBRE can do."

Over the past four years, 90 Winthrop undergraduate students have engaged in biomedical science research. Of those students, 21 undergraduates have transitioned into biomedical science Ph.D. programs. The number of students involved and awards are impressive:

- This fall, eight Winthrop INBRE graduates are matriculating into Ph.D. programs. Three chemistry graduates will be attending the University of Notre Dame, another will begin the chemical biology Ph.D. program at Harvard Medical School, and a fifth will begin at Virginia Commonwealth. Three recent biology graduates will be entering graduate schools at Duke University, Case Western University, and Wake Forest University.

- This spring, INBRE chemistry-biology graduate Bethany Bush won the national undergraduate research competition at the 2009 meeting of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology for her colon cancer studies conducted under the mentorship of chemistry faculty member [Takita Sumter](#).

- This past fall, chemistry INBRE students Brad Angel and Erin White earned honorable mention honors for research presented at the Southern Regional American Chemical Society meeting. At the

spring S.C. Academy of Science meeting, INBRE biology student Katie Wessinger was recognized with an outstanding undergraduate research award and was later chosen as the outstanding female undergraduate scientist presenting at the meeting.

Meanwhile, over the past four years, Winthrop INBRE faculty members have demonstrated a significant track record in winning grants for undergraduate research from non-INBRE sources. Chemistry faculty members Sumter, Cliff Calloway, Jason Hurlbert and Robin Lammi together have been awarded five major grants totaling more than \$1 million in funding for Winthrop undergraduate research from the National Science Foundation or from the National Institutes of Health, the two major sources of government-sponsored science research. INBRE biology faculty member [Laura Glasscock](#) also has been awarded more than \$85,000 in grants from a number of foundations to support prostate cancer research that involves both undergraduate and graduate biology students.

These funds are enabling Winthrop researchers to measure individual molecule amyloid associations that occur during the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease, to understand molecular events that trigger cell transformations into colon cancers and to develop portable nuclear forensics instruments to meet U.S. homeland security needs.

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