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Winthrop University

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# Estate Gift Establishes Ernestine C. Player Endowment for Graduate Studies

## Quick Facts

- Player's \$25,000 bequest will establish the Ernestine C. Player Endowment for Graduate Studies in Social Work, which will provide scholarships, graduate assistantships, and discretionary funds to benefit students enrolled in the Master of Social Work program.
- One of South Carolina's earliest social workers, Player became known as the "matriarch of social work" in the state.



Ernestine Player

ROCK HILL, S.C. - The legacy of late social worker **Ernestine "Pete" Player '55** will live on through future generations of Winthrop students seeking graduate degrees in social work.

Player's \$25,000 bequest will establish the **Ernestine C. Player Endowment for Graduate Studies in Social Work**. This endowment will provide scholarships, graduate assistantships, and discretionary funds to benefit one or more students enrolled in the Master of Social Work program at Winthrop.

Player earned a B.S. in public school music at Winthrop in 1955. She worked initially as a music teacher, choir director, and organist at **Epworth Children's Home** in Columbia, S.C. In 1958, she earned her master's degree in social work at the **Richmond Institute of Virginia Commonwealth University** in Richmond, Va.

At the time she earned her M.S.W. in Virginia, no college programs in social work existed in South Carolina. This prompted Player to become one of South Carolina's earliest social workers; eventually, she became known as the "**matriarch of social work**" in the state.

In her long career, Player served as a consultant to other states in the field of social work, and she served as a speaker at the **National Association of Social Workers**. Player also helped establish a graduate school of social work at the **University of South Carolina** in Columbia.

In her field, Player earned numerous awards, including a lifetime achievement award from the **National Association of Social Work**. In 2004, the **Winthrop University Alumni Association** also recognized Player for her significant lifetime contributions to her professional, presenting her with the **Outstanding Alumni Professional Achievement Award**.

The **Ernestine C. Player Endowment** will continue Player's civic legacy, ensuring that talented students pursuing graduate work in the social work field have the support they need. Player's friends have contributed memorial gifts to the endowment; those interested in making memorial gifts may contact the **Office of Development** at 803/323-2145.

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