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# DiGiorgio Among 2013 Big South Conference Inductees Into Hall of Fame

## Quick Facts

- Winthrop President Anthony DiGiorgio, along with former Liberty volleyball player Anthonia Akpama and former Radford men's soccer player Ian Spooner, will be officially installed on Thursday, May 30, during a special ceremony as part of the conference's annual spring meetings at The Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Va.
- DiGiorgio said he has had the pleasure and the opportunity to oversee and participate in the development of both Winthrop's Division 1 intercollegiate athletics program and the Big South Conference from their infancy to young adulthood.



President DiGiorgio

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Honored for his many contributions to the **Big South Conference**, retiring **Winthrop University President Anthony J. DiGiorgio** will be inducted into its Hall of Fame this spring, conference officials announced this week.

DiGiorgio, along with former Liberty volleyball player **Anthonia Akpama** and former Radford men's soccer player **Ian Spooner**, will be officially installed on Thursday, May 30, during a special ceremony as part of the conference's annual spring meetings at The Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Va.

The Hall of Fame was created in 2003 as part of the league's 20th anniversary celebration, and now totals 52 former Big South Conference student-athletes, coaches, administrators and contributors.

DiGiorgio said he has had the pleasure and the opportunity to oversee and participate in the development of both Winthrop's Division 1 intercollegiate athletics program and the Big South Conference from their infancy to young adulthood. "Both have reached a level of maturity that is gratifying, and both have a bright future," he added.

DiGiorgio concludes his 24 years as Winthrop's president upon his summer retirement. He is the longest-serving president of any public university in South Carolina.

Appointed Winthrop's ninth president in January 1989, DiGiorgio led the institution's conversion from Winthrop College to Winthrop University, a comprehensive teaching institution now offering 89 undergraduate and 41 graduate degree programs and options.

During his 24 years in office, Winthrop has grown from a regional college to a national-caliber comprehensive university that is regularly rated among the top institutions of its kind in the South by **U.S. News & World Report**. DiGiorgio led the first two capital campaigns in the university's history, which have raised more than \$70 million to date for scholarships, academic program enhancements, and faculty development/research opportunities. **He also initiated the university's successful drive to achieve 100-percent accreditation in all Winthrop programs for which national accreditation is offered.**

DiGiorgio's service to the Big South Conference is just as impressive, as **he is the only individual to be elected Big South President two separate terms**, and served a total of nine years from 1992-98 and 2006-09 -- the most in league history. He was selected to serve on the prestigious **President's Commission of the NCAA** in July 1992 and has served two terms on the Board of Directors of the NCAA and its Executive Committee. During his first term as Big South President, the Conference membership reached 10 institutions for the first time in July 1992.

The Big South also received automatic bids in women's basketball, men's soccer and volleyball beginning in 1993-94. In addition, the Conference added five sports during his first term as league president -- women's soccer in 1993, men's and women's outdoor track & field in 1993-94, and men's and women's indoor track & field in 1997-98.

During his second stint as Big South president, DiGiorgio oversaw the additions of Gardner-Webb University and Presbyterian College as well as the return of charter member Campbell University. He currently chairs the **Big South Conference's Membership Committee**, one of several league committees on which he has served during his time as Winthrop's president.

During DiGiorgio's tenure, the Eagles have won 51 Big South championships and have made 43 NCAA tournament appearances -- including two individual at-large selections in men's golf. Winthrop softball player Janiva Willis was a finalist for the 2005 NCAA Woman of the Year award -- the Big South Conference's first-ever finalist for the prestigious honor. In addition, Winthrop has received **five NCAA Public Recognition Awards for APR Achievement** since 2006, the fourth-most of any Big South member.

Other notable achievements include the Eagles' historic NCAA Tournament win over Notre Dame in 2007, **Winthrop winning the Big South's Men's All-Sports Award trophy** for the 2006-07 campaign, and **Winthrop's Student-Athlete Advisory Council** winning the conference's **Kallander Cup Community Service award** four consecutive years since 2009.

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