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Retiring President DiGiorgio and First Lady Honored at April 12 Arts Ceremony

Winthrop University

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Retiring President DiGiorgio and First Lady Honored at April 12 Arts Ceremony

Quick Facts

- Alf Ward, professor emeritus of fine arts, and David Wohl, dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, presented the award to the couple at the end of the evening's festivities.
- Another recipient, Collins, a member of the Class of 1981 and 1984, revealed that she has such a tremendous respect for Winthrop and her professors that she returns to campus for the first reading of any script.



Jerry Helton, front row from left, Karen Collins, Larry Barnfield, and Brookgreen Gardens President/CEO Bob Jewell. President Tony DiGiorgio, back row, and his wife, Gale DiGiorgio.

ROCK HILL, S.C. – Retiring President Anthony DiGiorgio and **First Lady Gale DiGiorgio** were surprise honorees at the April 12 **Medal of Honor in the Arts** ceremony.

Alf Ward, professor emeritus of fine arts, and **David Wohl**, dean of the **College of Visual and Performing Arts**, presented the award to the couple at the end of the evening's festivities. Also honored were:

- **Karen Collins** -- an Emmy nominated alumna who produces and directs for film and television
- **Brookgreen Gardens** -- a nationally known museum and sculpture garden located in Murrells Inlet, S.C. which boasts a collection of over 1,400 works by over 350 world-famous artists
- **Larry Barnfield** -- a visionary S.C. arts educator and **Elizabeth O'Neill Verner Governor's Award for the Arts recipient**
- Jerry Helton -- an acclaimed college voice instructor and performer who has received **Winthrop's Kinard Award for Excellence in Teaching**.

DiGiorgio quoted **poet Carl Sandburg** in saying that "Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have and only you can determine how it is spent."

He said the past 24 years he and his wife have spent in Rock Hill and at Winthrop have been "coins extraordinarily well spent."

"And among the most treasured of all the time spent has been time spent with the arts," DiGiorgio told a full capacity crowd at **Johnson Theatre**.

He cited several Winthrop faculty and staff members who formed a team to expand the public art offerings on campus and the time spent partnering with the extended arts community.

DiGiorgio also mentioned the discovery within himself for creating art, "a latent capacity to create my own style and kind of art, that not only brings me great joy and satisfaction but also a marvelous new world to explore as I transition to the next stage." Over the past decade, the president has created

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digital photography works and some are on display in Thomson Café, in Dalton Hall, Owens Hall and the president's office.

He thanked many in the audience for their cooperation. "You have all been partners in one way or another and together we have steadily and surely advanced the arts in our community and at our University," he added.

Another recipient, Collins, a member of the Class of 1981 and 1984, revealed that she has such a tremendous respect for Winthrop and her professors that she returns to campus for the first reading of any script. As she has entered semi-retirement, she pledged to help the arts in York County and at Winthrop in any way she could.

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