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Winthrop Benefactor Descendant Establishes Endowed Scholarship for History Majors

Winthrop University

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Winthrop Benefactor Descendant Establishes Endowed Scholarship for History Majors

Quick Facts

- The John Winthrop Endowed Scholarship will support history majors at Winthrop.
- Winthrop lives in Charleston, South Carolina.



John Winthrop, descendant of Winthrop benefactor Robert C. Winthrop, gave a talk Feb. 22 about his family's ties to the university.

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – **John Winthrop** understands the importance of examining the past to prepare and plan for the future. A descendant of Winthrop University benefactor **Robert C. Winthrop**, he has embraced his rich family heritage and history to support Winthrop students with a new scholarship.

The Charleston, South Carolina, resident has established the **\$25,000 John Winthrop Endowed Scholarship**, which will support full-time students majoring in history. **Winthrop**, who was born in Boston, encourages recipients and faculty to use the **Massachusetts Historical Society** – the oldest historical society in the United States – as a reference in their work and studies.

Winthrop explained that he established the scholarship to **celebrate his ties to the university**

his ancestor, **Robert C. Winthrop**, helped fund with donations in 1886. He discussed his family heritage at a **Feb. 22 lecture** in Winthrop's Tuttle Dining Room.

"Feb. 22 was a very meaningful day, and my connection to Winthrop is a **very proud connection for me**," said **Winthrop**. He added that he believed it was time to give back, and noted that he wanted to right the mistake he made during his studies at Harvard University, when he opted not to take history courses.

"I care about making up for that big mistake I made years ago. I'm a big believer in liberal arts education, and I also believe that if you don't know where you came from, it's tough to plan for the future," said **Winthrop**.

To highlight the **importance of investing in the future**, **Winthrop** made an additional **\$1,000 gift** to the university's endowment – this one based on a story rooted in American history. The gift echoes two that **Benjamin Franklin** gave to the cities of Boston and Philadelphia in 1789. The gifts, both philanthropic trusts, were meant to grow slowly, compounding over time and building toward the future. Winthrop said he wants his gift to mirror Franklin's idea and "**force a long-term perspective**" for growing the university's endowment.

Winthrop President Dan Mahony noted that Winthrop’s scholarship and additional gift represent the forward-thinking perspective critical to the university’s mission.

“With his gifts, John Winthrop is supporting a student’s exploration of the past while also expressing confidence in Winthrop University’s bright future,” said Mahony.

After graduating from Harvard, **Winthrop** joined the U.S. Navy and worked as a journalist. He went on to earn his M.B.A. at Columbia University and continued his journalism career – first at The Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C., during the Kennedy administration, and later at The Boston Globe. Today he lives in Charleston with his wife, Libby, and runs his own financial services firm, **John Winthrop & Company, Inc.** Winthrop has served on a number of for-profit and not-for-profit boards, including the American Farmland Trust in Washington, the Fresh Air Fund in New York and the Board of Overseers at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

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