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Computer Science Students Showcase Problem-Solving Skills at Collegiate Programming Contest

Winthrop University

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Quick Facts

▪ Winthrop entered two teams in a computer science programming contest sponsored by IBM.
▪ The teams worked to solve complex, real-world problems over five hours.

Winthrop team members

SAVANNAH, Ga. - Two teams of computer science majors from **Winthrop University** competed in a regional programming contest Oct. 25 in Savannah, Ga., as part of the **33rd Association of Computing Machinery International Collegiate Programming Contest** sponsored by IBM.

The teams used their programming skills, creativity and mathematical sense to solve complex, real world problems under a grueling five-hour deadline. This year's regional competitions included thousands of students from universities in 83 countries on six continents, all vying for a spot at the world finals in April in Stockholm, Sweden.

The regional competition in Savannah was for students in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi. Winthrop students competed at Armstrong Atlantic University along with 73 teams from 30 other schools.

One Winthrop team consisting of Jason Deering, Andrew Smith and William Huffman placed 20th out of a field of 73. The other Winthrop team of Lauren Cairco, Chad Waters and Joshua Jones placed 24th. Both teams were coached by Will Thacker, associate professor of computer science.

The competition consisted of solving as many of the given 10 challenging problems in as short a time as possible. The Winthrop teams placed ahead of teams from, University of Mississippi, Nova Southeastern, Auburn, Mercer, University of South Alabama, Florida Atlantic, University of North Florida, University of Miami, Florida International University, Bob Jones University, Wofford, Georgia Southern, Francis Marion, College of Charleston and Florida Institute of Technology.

Thacker said the Winthrop students started meeting last spring with their coach to identify materials to study to prepare for the competition. During the beginning of the fall semester, the students and coach met twice a week to learn problem-solving techniques and strategies appropriate for the

competition. Several practice sessions mimicking the competition environment were held over the weekends before the competition.

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